



anthony carnevale elementary school

providence

The SALT Visit Team Report

February 14, 2003



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 2246 or salt@ridoe.net.

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1. THE PURPOSE AND LIMITS of this report

Overview

This is the report of the SALT team that visited from February 10-14, 2003. 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 Anthony Carnevale 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 Carnevale School.

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

◆ *The team spent a total of over 126 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 9 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 student work with teachers*

◆ *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 Anthony Carnevale School

district strategic plan (Providence One Plan 2002-2003)

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

Balanced Literacy Trainer's Guide 2000-2001

English Language Arts (K-5) Scope and Sequence Binder

KIDSPEAK Standards

LIFT Framework for Teaching and Learning

Math Scope and Sequence, Investigations Overview/Performance Standards

Performance Standards Vol.1 Elementary School New Standards for English Language Arts, Math, Science, Applied Learning

Reading and Writing Grade by Grade

School Improvement Team By-Laws

School Handbook for Anthony Carnevale School

Special Programs and Initiatives binder(Community Connections)

Teacher Support Team binder

Administrative Procedures binder

Professional Development binder

Contract Agreement between the Providence School Board, Department of Public Schools and Rhode Island Council 94, Providence, Rhode Island School Clerical Employees Local1339, Affiliate of AFSCME, AFL-CIO

Laborers Agreement between Providence School Board, Rhode Island Laborers District on behalf of Local Union 1033, Laborers International Union of North America AFL-CIO

Agreement between Providence Teachers Union AFT Local 958 and the Providence School Board

District-wide Code of Behavior Grades K-5, Providence Public Schools

Teacher Evaluation Handbook for Probationary and Tenured Teachers

Report Card Sample

SAT 9 Information-Stanford-Compendium of Instructional Objectives folder

Visual Arts Standards folder

Technology Plan for Providence Public Schools 1997-2000

Harassment Policy folder

Providence One Plan Guidelines 2002-2003 Elementary Edition-School Improvement Plan

Descriptive Portrait of Anthony Carnevale School

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 27.5 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 the school considering the importance it places on 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 Anthony Carnevale Elementary School

Anthony Carnevale Elementary School opened its doors for the first time to children of the Hartford Avenue neighborhood in Providence, Rhode Island, in September of 1999. The area surrounding the complex comprises predominately one-family homes or tenement houses. The elementary school is one of three new buildings located on a ten-acre educational complex. The other two schools in this complex are middle schools. The ultimate goal is to develop a school design plan in conjunction with the middle schools to promote a feeling of continuity and stability for the students and their families.

Carnevale School consists of 25 classrooms; eighteen are regular education; two are self-contained special education; three are intensive resource; one is a special education pre-school class; two are 230-day special education classrooms; and five are ESL. Of the 497 students, 14.7% are African-American, 9.5% are Asian, 60.8% are Hispanic, .2% are Native American, and 14.9% are white.

Technologically, Carnevale School is equipped with 230 state-of-the-art computers, which are networked and Internet connected. There is a spacious media center, the focal point of the school, which exemplifies the Providence School Department's focus on literacy. To provide students with a wide array of art experiences, the art studio contains a variety of art supplies and equipment, including a kiln. The music suite includes multiple practice rooms and a full complement of musical instruments.

The teachers at Anthony Carnevale Elementary School share the philosophy that all children will learn and that effort creates intelligence. Along with a strong parent leadership group, teachers are actively working to involve all parents in their children's education. In its fourth year in existence, the PTO continues to make many contributions to promote a positive school climate. They assist with many school events, including Parent/Teacher conferences, Open House, regular monthly meetings, and numerous special events.

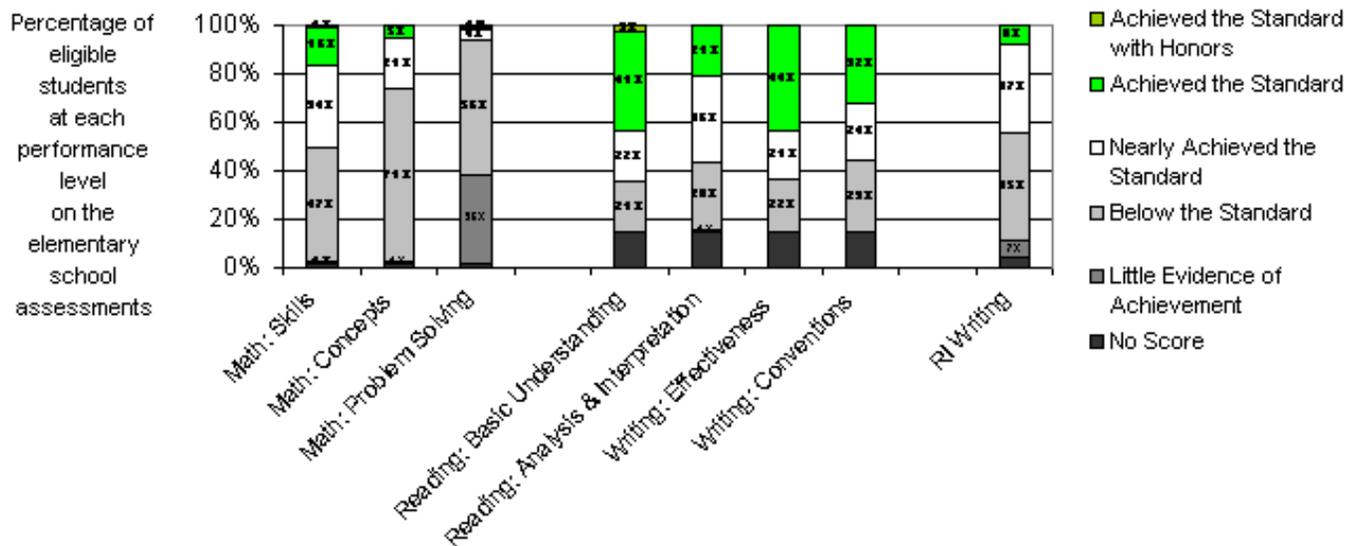
State Assessment Results for Anthony

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*.

Table1. 2001-02 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments

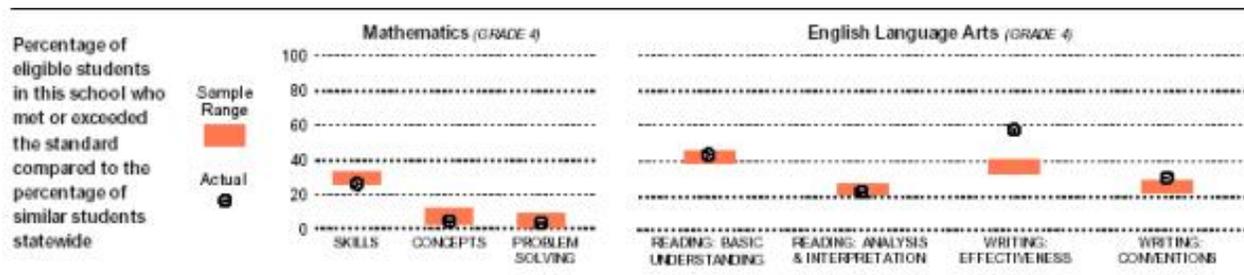


Students perform poorly on Math sub-tests with a range of 2-17% reaching the standard. Their performance on reading and writing subtests is considerably better, with a range of 21-44% reaching the standard.

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



The students at Carnevale School performed similarly to their peers on every subtest of the 2001 New Standards Reference Examination except writing effectiveness. On the writing effectiveness subtest, student performance is higher than similar students statewide

Table 3. 2000-2001 Student Results across Subgroups

This is a new school. There is insufficient prior achievement data available.

Table 4. 2002 Student Results Showing Change Over Time

The Anthony Carnevale Elementary School has been categorized as a low performing, not improving school on the basis of its

assessment results from 1999 to 2002. The following tables show if the school improved or not in each area that defines improvement (*Yes* denotes improvement and *No* denotes no improvement.)

Mathematics: Skills		Mathematics: Concepts		Mathematics: Problem Solving	
<i>Increase in Percent Proficient</i>	<i>Decrease in Percent in Lowest Performance Levels</i>	<i>Increase in Percent Proficient</i>	<i>Decrease in Percent in Lowest Performance Levels</i>	<i>Increase in Percent Proficient</i>	<i>Decrease in Percent in Lowest Performance Levels</i>
No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Reading: Basic Understanding		Reading: Analysis and Interpretation	
<i>Increase in Percent Proficient</i>	<i>Decrease in Percent in Lowest Performance Levels</i>	<i>Increase in Percent Proficient</i>	<i>Decrease in Percent in Lowest Performance Levels</i>
No	No	No	No

Writing: Effectiveness		Writing: Conventions		Rhode Island Writing	
<i>Increase in Percent Proficient</i>	<i>Decrease in Percent in Lowest Performance Levels</i>	<i>Increase in Percent Proficient</i>	<i>Decrease in Percent in Lowest Performance Levels</i>	<i>Increase in Percent Proficient</i>	<i>Decrease in Percent in Lowest Performance Levels</i>
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

It is notable that student performance improved on every subtest in writing, while there is no improvement on any subtest of the reading component. On the math subtests of skills and concepts, student performance shows no improvement. However, student performance did improve on the more difficult subtest of math problem solving.

Information Works! data for Anthony Carnevale Elementary School is available at <http://www.rido.net>.

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

The Anthony Carnevale Elementary School is a state-of-the-art facility located in the Hartford Avenue neighborhood of Providence. As you walk through the front doors, you pass under a canopy supported by colorful crayon pillars. You immediately are struck by the spotlessly clean hallways and brightly decorated walls. Display cases are filled with student work, pictures of community involvement activities, lists of students of the month, and the monthly calendar of events.

The different colors on the crayon pillars outside the building mirror the diversity of the children inside the school. Walking through the hallways, you see eager, friendly students who are actively involved in the learning process. They love to share their work and enthusiastically celebrate their successes. They are eager to please their teachers who, in turn, embrace them with caring and nurturing.

The entire staff is committed to providing a quality education for all students. Teachers set clear, high expectations. The learning environments within the classrooms are rich with books, charts, rubrics and student work. Each climate supports the diverse learning styles of its learners.

Many new programs are in place to raise the level of student achievement. Teachers are working diligently to implement a Balanced Literacy program. Despite their efforts, the student test scores in reading remain low. Also, teachers struggle to implement a new math program in order to improve student learning. Although key personnel are available to help support teachers, not all teachers take advantage of this opportunity.

Although efforts are in place to develop a cohesive learning community, a breakdown of communication exists at all levels from administrator, to teachers, to parents. A dynamic leader is in place, who encourages the distributive leadership model. However, many teachers do not take advantage of the opportunities to lead that are offered. While the school has ample technology many teachers do not use it in their everyday classes. Issues of school safety and parent involvement also exist.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *2002 Information Works!*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards Reference Examination results*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *meeting with students and parents*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *following students*

Conclusions

Students at Carnevale School are confident, eager writers. They enjoy sharing and celebrating their writing with their peers and their teachers. Students believe they are good writers, and they love to write. They write every day throughout the curriculum for a variety of purposes and in many genres. Moreover, they obviously understand the importance and value of communicating their ideas and feelings clearly and effectively. They consistently use student-generated, as well as teacher generated, rubrics and criteria to evaluate, support and improve their writing. They enthusiastically brainstorm ideas; they write rough drafts; they revise and edit through peer and teacher conferencing; and they publish final writing pieces. Student writing is organized, expressive, and detailed. Students take great pride in their work and are becoming critical, effective writers. This finding is consistent with high student performance on all writing subtests of the 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination and with student performance on all writing subtests showing change over time. (*observing classes, following students, talking with students, teachers, staff, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, discussing student work with teachers, 2002 Information Works!*)

While they readily decode words, overall, students at Carnevale School struggle with reading comprehension. However, they are learning the skills and strategies used by effective readers. Moreover, students report they enjoy reading and are excited about what they read. Notably, students understand the importance of reading as a tool to use in all subjects. They read with a focus. At every grade level, students are learning to predict, reflect on and summarize what they read. They readily choose books appropriate for their independent reading levels. Some students identify the basic story elements with ease, cite details to show their understanding, and connect what they read to their own lives. Although some students self-correct while reading orally, many continue to read despite their mistakes, without fully understanding the text, thus limiting their comprehension. (*observing classes, following students, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, talking with students and teachers, meeting with students*)

Students do not demonstrate proficient skills in problem solving in math. Although they enjoy the math game component of the newly adopted math series, *Investigations*, they report that math is difficult. They are beginning to use manipulatives, calculators and various strategies as effective tools for solving problems. Some students clearly describe their thought processes by using mathematical terminology, while others struggle to do that. Students develop their math sense by finding patterns, estimating,

collecting data, making predictions and sharing their ideas with their peers. Students at every grade level solve problems. However, because the amount of time they spend on math is limited, students are prevented from fully developing their understanding of the underlying math concepts and math skills. (*observing classes, following students, talking with students and teachers, meeting with students and parents, 2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary, reviewing completed and ongoing student work*)

Students at Carnevale School are happy, smiling, engaging learners. They eagerly participate in activities throughout the day, help their peers, share their work with them, and celebrate their successes. It is very evident that students respect the diversity of their learning community. They conscientiously follow classroom routines and clearly understand the expectations for proper behavior within the classroom. This behavior allows students to make the best use of their learning environment. However, student behavior in the cafeteria and in some classes outside of the regular classroom is inappropriate, resulting in a non-productive time for all. (*observing classes, following students, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with students, talking with students, teachers, and school administrator*)

Commendations for Carnevale Elementary School

Student proficiency in writing

Accountable talksm

Student respect for diversity

Recommendations for Carnevale Elementary School

Increase time students spend solving math problems throughout the day at every grade level.

Continue and expand the opportunities students have to read critically and to write. Expand students' use of strategies for comprehending both narrative and expository text.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing school improvement plan*
- ◆ *reviewing district strategic plan*
- ◆ *2002 SALT Survey report*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *reviewing records of professional development activities*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments*
- ◆ *following students*

Conclusions

Teachers skillfully implement the Balanced Literacy program throughout the school. A literacy coach supports many teachers in their successful delivery of this literacy model. Effortlessly and effectively, teachers use guided reading groups to meet the needs of individual students. They read aloud daily to foster a love of reading. Through modeling and mini lessons, they instruct the identification of the basic story elements, reading comprehension strategies and phonics. However, higher order comprehension skills are not evident at all grade levels, limiting opportunities for students to develop the skills they need to become critical readers. While teachers use a variety of assessments, many of these mainly identify reading levels and basic understanding, which results in a limited view of a student's ability to analyze and interpret text. This evidence is supported by low student performance on New Standards English Language Arts subtest for analysis and interpretation. (*observing classes, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, following students, reviewing classroom assessments, talking with teachers and school administrator*)

Teachers integrate writing throughout the curriculum, thus providing more meaningful and relevant writing opportunities for their students. A print-rich environment serves as a support for students to improve and enhance their writing skills. Rubrics and criteria charts help raise the bar for student expectations and achievement. Teachers encourage students to collaborate, share, and critique their writing. Students report that constructive feedback motivates them to improve and encourages them to celebrate their success. The literacy coach partners with many teachers to model lessons and to help them plan further instruction. Some teachers enthusiastically share their expertise with others. Teachers report that the sharing of this knowledge helps them improve their teaching skills. The effectiveness of these teaching practices is evident in the writing effectiveness subtest of the 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary. (*observing classes, following students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, talking with students, teachers, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments*)

Teachers are struggling with the implementation of the new math program, *Investigations*. Two math coaches and lead teachers assist with this implementation. Coaches and lead teachers report that, because they are learning the math curriculum material as they go, this reduces their effectiveness as coaches for their colleagues within the classroom. Despite these challenges, teachers encourage a positive student attitude towards math. They teach students to use manipulatives, math games, and calculators to solve problems. They effectively model problem-solving strategies. They require students to explain their thinking processes and their solutions to math problems in writing. These practices deepen student understanding of underlying math concepts. While there are many materials available for the instruction of the new math program, some teachers report lack of sufficient problem solving activities and the need to supplement with practice from other series. Many teachers report difficulty in scheduling the amount of time they need to teach the full math program effectively. These time constraints, as well as the use of supplementary materials, result in a fragmented approach to the successful delivery of this model. (*observing classes, 2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary, talking with teachers, following students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work*)

Teachers at Carnevale School are hard working, dedicated professionals, who provide a safe, caring and nurturing learning environment for their students. An impressive number of teachers, including two who are National Board Certified, act as teacher leaders and mentors. Many use their common planning time to collaborate, plan and share ideas with others to ensure that their expectations and content throughout each grade are consistent. Some teachers encourage students to work with students at other grade levels within the school, as well as, with middle school students. Teachers report that this collaboration provides students with the opportunity to serve as role models for the younger students and to develop a sense of responsibility and a positive self-image. Both older and younger students report that they enjoy the opportunity to work with each other. While there are many opportunities for professional development, not all teachers take advantage of them, resulting in misunderstandings regarding the equity of professional development. Many teachers and the school administrator report a strong sense of camaraderie, while others indicate that this is lacking, thus negatively impacting the cohesiveness of the faculty and the learning community. (*observing classes, talking with teachers and staff, 2002 SALT Survey report, reviewing records of professional development activities, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing district strategic plan, observing the school outside of the classroom*)

Commendations for Carnevale Elementary School

Dedicated, hard-working teachers, who have whole-heartedly implemented a Balanced Literacy program
Effective, enthusiastic teacher leaders

Recommendations for Carnevale Elementary School

Provide students with more opportunities to analyze and interpret text.
Increase participation in professional development opportunities for all teachers in both math and literacy.
Increase time for math instruction.
Open the lines of effective communication to ensure collaboration among all staff members.
Continue and expand the effective use of literacy and math coaches.
Continue and expand the effective use of job-embedded professional development.

Recommendations for the Providence School District

Continue and expand professional development opportunities for all teachers.
Continue to encourage teachers to use literacy and math coaches within their classrooms.

6. FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents*
- ◆ *reviewing school improvement plan*
- ◆ *reviewing district strategic plan*
- ◆ *2002 SALT Survey report,*
- ◆ *2002 Information Works!*
- ◆ *talking with many students, teachers, staff, parents and school administrators*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *reviewing records of professional development activities*
- ◆ *reviewing the District Strategic Technology Plan*
- ◆ *reviewing Special Programs and Initiatives binder*
- ◆ *reviewing Descriptive Portrait of Anthony Carnevale School*

Conclusions

The school administrator promotes the distributive leadership model by developing and encouraging teacher leaders. The district superintendent, as well as some teachers, reports that the principal provides opportunities for teachers to optimize job-embedded professional development. As an educational leader, she encourages and supports her staff to implement many new initiatives to improve student learning. (*meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, talking with teachers, reviewing records of professional development activities*)

Anthony Carnevale Elementary School is a modern educational facility. Both the exterior grounds and the interior classrooms and hallways are meticulously kept. Many accommodations exist within this building to support all facets of learning. These accommodations include separate areas for teaching music, art, library, physical education, health, science, and computer technology. While these facilities exist, some areas lack essential materials. The library is well equipped with computers and an automated checkout system, but its inventory is limited. As a result, it does not adequately serve the needs of the entire learning community. (*observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents, talking with students, teachers, following students*)

While Carnevale School boasts state-of-the-art technology, effective and consistent integration of technology is not evident in all classrooms. Many students report they infrequently use the computers in their classrooms. While a computer lab specialist guides students in the use of the Internet to reinforce their classroom learning, a lack of technology curricula limits the potential of this program to link technology with all subject areas. The availability of adaptive technologies in special needs classrooms helps meet the needs of these students. Fourth grade students participate in the Media SmART program to increase their critical awareness of advertising and to integrate reading and technology. Although these programs exist, teachers report a need to increase their knowledge of technology use within their classrooms. The present technology plan, written before Carnevale

School was built, does not adequately address these needs. This outdated plan diminishes the ability of both teachers and students to use technology to its full potential. *(reviewing school improvement plan, observing classes, reviewing district strategic plan, the District Strategic Technology Plan, talking with students, teachers, 2002 SALT Survey report, following students, reviewing Special Programs and Initiatives binder)*

Parent involvement at Carnevale School is limited. A language barrier hinders parent participation. While all school-home communication is written in English and Spanish, parents report a need to have these notices translated into other languages. A very active, enthusiastic, yet frustrated, PTO board schedules a variety of events to encourage parent participation. However, they report that involvement continues to be low despite their efforts. While some programs are instrumental in bringing both parents and teachers together, others are cancelled due to lack of participation. Although a goal of the school improvement plan is to develop a partnership between teachers and parents, where teaching and learning are a shared responsibility, this has yet to be realized. *(meeting with the school improvement team and parents, reviewing school improvement plan, talking with students, teachers, staff, 2002 SALT Survey report, Descriptive Portrait of Anthony Carnevale Elementary School, reviewing district strategic plan)*

School safety is an issue during dismissal. A dismissal procedure, developed by a committee of teachers and the principal, exists. However, teachers and staff report that this procedure is not followed consistently, resulting in unidentified adults in the hallways at dismissal time. Parents also express concerns that during dismissal, when traffic is congested, students cross Springfield Street without supervision. Inconsistent monitoring of dismissal procedures jeopardizes the safety of all students. *(talking with teachers and staff, meeting with the school improvement team, parents and school administrator, observing the school outside of the classroom, following students)*

A lack of effective communication exists at Carnevale School. Teachers, staff and parents report that gaps exist in the lines of communication at all levels, resulting in the fragmentation of instruction, misunderstandings, and lack of cohesiveness among the adult learning community. While, the school improvement plan indicates the importance of team building at all levels, pockets of isolation exist, preventing everyone from sharing their beneficial resources and expertise. Opportunities abound for input from all members of the learning community. Teachers have two hours of common planning time per week. However, few take advantage of the optional opportunities they have for professional development. Teachers and staff report that, when they provided input in the past, they perceived they had not been heard. *(observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with teachers, staff, parents, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrators, parents, 2002 Information Works!, reviewing school improvement plan, 2002 SALT Survey report)*

Commendations for Carnevale Elementary School

A dedicated and enthusiastic PTO board

Meticulously clean building

State-of-the-art technology

Recommendations for Carnevale Elementary School

Continue and expand regular communication in languages representative of the school community.

Encourage and increase the use of parent volunteers within the classrooms.

Activate the Family Center, as reported in the school improvement plan.

Improve team-building strategies to include all classroom teachers, specialists and the principal.

Establish more effective communication among all members of the learning community: administration, teachers, teacher assistants, specialists, support staff, custodial staff, and parents.

Develop a school-based technology plan that encourages further integration of technology in all classrooms.

Provide more books and periodicals for the library.

Consistently follow dismissal procedures.

Recommendations for Providence School Department

Provide Carnevale School with additional resources to address the ethnic gaps in language communication.

Fund a crossing guard at dismissal time.

Provide professional development for the effective implementation of technology within the classroom.

Provide professional development to examine School Culture issues.

7. Final Advice to the School

We have enjoyed our stay at Anthony Carnevale School. Your commitment and dedication to improving student learning in the areas of Balanced Literacy and Principles of Learningsm is commendable. If you implement the new math program with the same dedication, hard work, and enthusiasm, your students will succeed.

The care and nurturing you provide for your students fosters a sense of family. Mutual respect among teachers and students is extremely evident throughout the school. Strengthen this sense of family by opening the lines of communication among the entire learning community. Work to understand, respect and value the perceptions and beliefs of all school members. Resolve inter-group issues. Strive to include all parents in the education of their children so that the strong connections made in the classroom will extend deep into the community. Continue to grow, continue to share, and continue to celebrate your successes. As your school creed so eloquently states:

“Strive to be the best you can be.... so all can succeed in your school family.”

The Anthony Carnevale School Improvement Team

Ed Payne
Physical Education teacher

Dina Spaziano
Third Grade teacher

Mary Mackillop
Special Education teacher

Pat McCarthy
Special Education teacher

Ilyssa Grant
First Grade teacher

Nina Bachini
Art teacher

Dan DeCesare
Fifth Grade teacher

Prudy Janis
Special Education teacher

Joan Baccala
Union Representative

Kim Mattera
Librarian

Carla Lopes
Second Grade teacher

Arthur Rice
Teacher Assistant

Nanci Fitzhugh
Community Member

Kathy Fogarty
Parent/PTO

Sandy Hicks
Community Member/URI

Audrey Carnevale
Community Member

Fran Rotella
Principal

The SALT Visit Team

Ruth Haynsworth
Grade 5 Teacher
Stony Lane Elementary School
North Kingstown, Rhode Island
On leave to the
Office of School Improvement and Accountability
Rhode Island Department of Education
As a SALT Fel
SALT Visit Team Chair

Charlene Connors
Grade 1 teacher
Ashton School
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Anna Fitzgerald
Literacy Teacher
Oak Haven Elementary School
Coventry, Rhode Island

John Haidemenos, Jr.
Principal
Agnes Little School
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Georgina Hepburn-Morris
Grade 1 teacher/ESL
Robertson School
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Deborah Mellion
Aspiring Principal
Garden City Elementary School
Cranston, Rhode Island

Leslie Pettingell
Grade 5 teacher
Curvin-McCabe Elementary School
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Andrea Savignac
PK-3 Art Specialist
North Smithfield Elementary School
North Smithfield, Rhode Island

Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

Carnevale School

February 14, 2003

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Catalpa review of this visit and this report was not routine. An original team member left the team the third day of the visit.

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

two observations of a portion of the visit

discussion with the principal, chair and team member regarding a team member leaving the team

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. The problems that resulted in the a team member leaving the team were not related to the visit. The resulting size of the team still conformed with guidelines. The team member, the principal and the chair handled the situation well and it had no marked influence on neither the quality of the conduct of the visit nor on the legitimacy of the team's conclusions.
3. 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.
4. The conclusions are legitimate SALT visit conclusions.

5. The report is a legitimate SALT visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



Thomas A. Wilson, EdD
Catalpa Ltd.
March 15, 20023