



Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

Providence

The SALT Visit Team Report

March 7, 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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1. THE PURPOSE AND LIMITS of this report

Overview

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School from March 3-7, 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 Mary E. Fogarty 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 Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School.

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

- ◆ *The team spent a total of over 152 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 student work with teachers*
- ◆ *analyzing five 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 Mary E. Fogarty Elementary 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*
 - Grievance Report Form*
 - Contract between the Providence School Board and the Association of Providence Public School Administration*
 - Agreement between the Providence Teachers Union, AFT Local 958 and the Providence School Board*
 - Agreement between the Providence School Board and the RI Council 94 Providence, RI Clerical Employees*
 - Counting on Ourselves, The Providence Demography Initiative/A First Portrait/ Schools 2002 RI Kids Count Fact Book*
 - District-wide Code of Behavior, Providence Public Schools K-5*

Disciplinary Codes

Teacher Evaluation Handbook for Probationary and Tenured Teachers

Harassment Policy

LIFT Frameworks for Teaching and Learning

Balanced Literacy in Providence Schools

Literacy Instruction Frameworks Primary and Intermediate

Providence Public Schools, Strategic Technology Plan

Technology Plan Overview /Draft 3/1/10

Providence Public School Department, "Rekindling the Dream-A Learning Plan"

New Standards Performance Standards, Vol. 1 Elementary

Reading and Writing Grade by Grade

State of RI Arts Frameworks, K-12

Visual Arts Standards

Providence Schools Standards, Scope and Sequence for Reading, Writing, Math /K-5

Stanford Achievement Test scores

Providence School Department Report Card

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 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 Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

Background

Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School, located on the Southside of Providence, Rhode Island, opened its doors in December 1961. A new modular wing was built approximately eleven years ago. The school was named for Mary E. Fogarty, the first woman to chair the Providence School Committee. She was committed to improving the quality of education for all students. Today the school tries to continue her vision by focusing on increasing student achievement, developing a community of learners, and strengthening parental and community involvement.

Many administrative changes in recent years have affected the direction and vision of Mary E. Fogarty School. The school has had three different principals since September 2002. This has slowed down the implementation of many new school initiatives, including Balanced Literacy. Also, a lack of sufficient supplies and materials, as well as a lack of consistency in managing student attitudes and actions, arose during this period of time. Under the leadership of a new principal, the faculty and staff are beginning to address these issues in hopes of improving teaching and learning.

A diverse blend of students from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds comprises the learning community. Of the 525 students, 26% are black, 11% are Asian/Pacific Islander, 55% are Hispanic, 6.5% are white, and 1.1% are Native American. Ninety-three percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. In addition to the regular education program, Fogarty has a Limited English Proficiency Program (LEP), which services 32.4% of the students, a Gifted Program, which services 3%, and a Special Education Program, which services 8.3%. Fogarty houses two mild/moderate special education classes, one 180-day extended school year class and one Kindergarten inclusion class.

The faculty consists of 20 classroom teachers, 14 teaching assistants, four one-on-one aides, two certified nurse assistants, four special education teachers, two math coaches and one literacy coach. Two physical education teachers, one music teacher, one art teacher, one librarian, one gifted resource teacher, one computer teacher, one science teacher and a school nurse also service the students, along with two special education resource teachers, a school psychologist, a diagnostic prescriptive teacher, three social workers, a speech pathologist, two occupational therapists and a guidance counselor. Two part-time band and string teachers provide instrumental instruction.

In 2000 Fogarty implemented an all-day kindergarten program for all kindergarten students. The music program includes instrumental instruction, as well as choir and bell chimes instruction. Computer technology also plays an important roll in the curriculum through the use of networked computers in every classroom and the 30 computers in the computer lab.

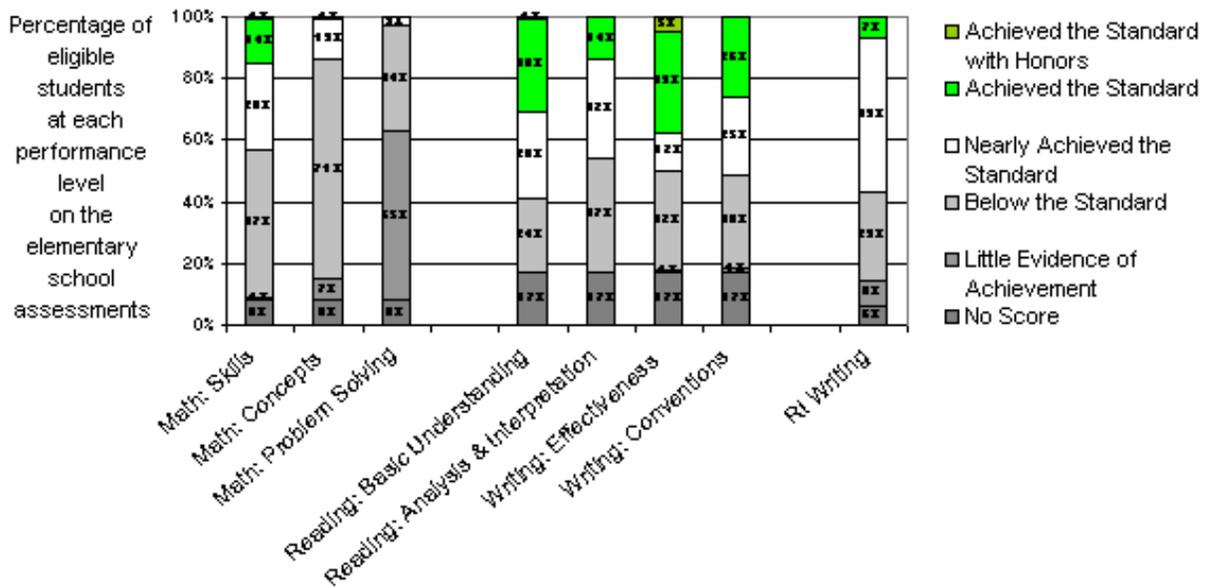
State Assessment Results for Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

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

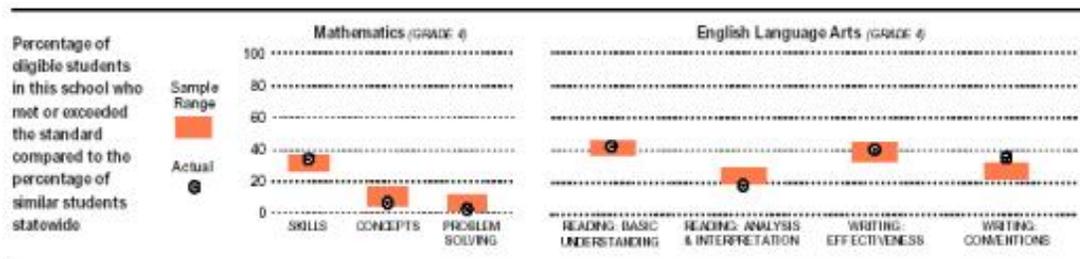


Students perform poorly on all math subtests with a range of 0-15% reaching the standard. Their performance on the reading and writing subtests is considerably better, with a range of 14-38% reaching the standard. However, overall the test scores in both reading and math are low.

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

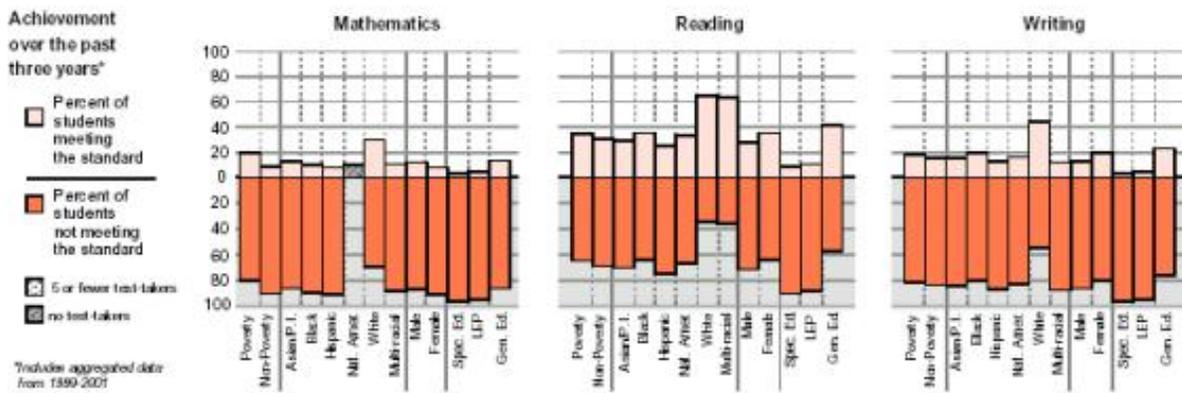


The students at Mary Fogarty School performed similarly to their peers on every subtest of the 2001 New Standards Reference Examination.

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 exist for all ethnic subgroups when compared to whites in reading, writing and math. Equity gaps also exist for special education students and limited English proficiency students in reading and writing.

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. 2002 Student Results Showing Change Over Time

The Mary Fogarty School has been categorized as a low performing, not improving school on the basis of its assessment results from 1998 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>
Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

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	Yes	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

Mary Fogarty Elementary School is categorized as a low-performing not improving school due in part to the decrease in student performance on all subtests of the 2002 New Standards Reference Examination.

Information Works! data for Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School is available at <http://www.ridoenet.net>.

3. PORTRAIT OF Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Mary E. Fogarty School is located in the heart of the “Southside” of Providence, Rhode Island. The surrounding neighborhood is one of tenement houses, abandoned buildings and a neglected city park. The drab exterior of the school belies the warm, welcoming, safe interior, where friendly students and teachers attend to their daily routines.

Due to many administrative changes during the past few years, Mary Fogarty School has been floundering with no direction or common vision. The school community expresses that it has been and continues to be the “forgotten school” in the district. However, a sense of change and renewal is evident throughout the school. Hallways have been freshly painted and brightened by new light fixtures. A new principal is now at the helm. Working with her teachers, she is setting a course to improve student learning and is demanding high expectations for both teachers and students.

While many students demonstrate excitement about learning, this feeling has not permeated the entire school community. Problems that students have in their worlds outside of school interfere with their learning in school. Absenteeism and tardiness interrupt the flow of instruction. Students find that reading, writing and math are difficult.

Although new initiatives are underway, their implementation is slow. There is a lack of teaching consistency and teacher training and conflicts between groups of teachers. All of these undermine the school’s ability to establish a forward momentum. These issues, as well as safety, scheduling, and low parent involvement, discourage many teachers from jumping on board.

The new principal has much work to do before she can bring “the forgotten school” of Providence into the community limelight.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, parents*
- ◆ *2002 SALT Survey report*
- ◆ *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*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom textbooks*

Conclusions

Students use some of the tools of process writing to improve their work. They write often and for a variety of purposes, including writing about their own lives. But they have a way to go before their understanding of these tools actually will improve their writing. Students do not organize their ideas effectively, provide enough supporting details, or revise and edit their work. Many students report that they enjoy writing and believe they are beginning to improve. However, their inadequate understanding of effective writing tools limits their ability to communicate their ideas clearly and effectively. Student writing contains numerous errors in grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. This evidence supports their low performance on the writing conventions subtest of the 2002 New Standards Reference Examination. (*observing classes, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, discussing student work with teachers, following students*)

Students at every grade level struggle to solve math problems. While they are beginning to grasp that math problems can be solved in different ways, they are unable to move forward to more advanced learning because of the difficulty they have in basic computation. They are learning to use manipulatives and calculators as effective tools for solving problems, but they do not understand the language of math. Students report that math is difficult, and they often do not know where to begin, when they are solving word problems. They are unable to explain clearly, either orally or in writing, how they solve problems. It is not surprising that student performance on the math subtests ranged from 0% to 15% of students meeting or exceeding the standard. (*observing classes, following students, 2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers*)

In all grades many students read below grade level. Yet, students report that they are reading more books this year and that they are beginning to like to read. They want to ‘move up’ to reading more difficult leveled books, which they can read successfully. However, students do not use multiple strategies for tackling unfamiliar words or understanding what they are reading. While some students easily select books that are appropriate for their independent reading levels, many do not. This limits the practice they need in fluent reading. During read alouds, students successfully use story clues to predict logically, but few of them

effectively use higher order thinking skills to analyze and interpret text. Low student performance on both subtests of the 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination supports these findings. (*observing classes, following students, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary, talking with students, teachers, meeting with students and school administrator, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing classroom textbooks*)

Students at Mary Fogarty Elementary are newly excited about school and what is happening in their classrooms. They say school is better this year. They report that school is more demanding, the work is harder and they are learning more. They feel more responsible for their learning and their behavior. However, this excitement does not permeate the entire student body. Too many students disrupt learning both within the classroom and outside of it. Many students report that they want others to be “quiet and nice” so that they can do their work. (*observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrators, parents, 2002 SALT Survey report, following students, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator*)

Commendations for Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

Growing student excitement about school

Recommendations for Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

Focus on students revising and editing their work. Continue to help students learn to organize their ideas and support them with details.

Increase opportunities for students to use computational skills. Continue to encourage them to explain their problem-solving strategies, both orally and in writing.

Help students learn to select the appropriate books for their independent reading.

Encourage and increase student use of critical thinking skills in response to text.

Take advantage of student excitement about learning and their sense of responsibility for learning. Address student behavior problems with meaningful consequences so that effective student learning can occur.

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING

Sources of Evidence

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, school and district administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *reviewing classroom assessments*
- ◆ *following students*

Conclusions

Although the balanced literacy model is in its third year of implementation, most teachers are just beginning to put it into effective practice. Because many teachers are not comfortable teaching the various components, many of the essential elements have only limited use. For example, some teachers effectively use guided reading groups to meet the individual needs of students, while others struggle with the guided reading process. Teachers, who analyze running records along with anecdotal evidence, adjust their instruction to meet the needs of individual students. In contrast, teachers, who solely rely on their subjective observations, fail to provide appropriate instruction. Teachers report that many students are reading below their grade levels. The limited and inconsistent use of effective teaching practices leads to gaps in reading performance. (*observing classes, meeting with students and school administrator, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, talking with students, teachers, staff, and district administrator, following students, reviewing classroom assessments, discussing student work with teachers*)

Investigations is the second new math program that has been introduced within the school in the last three years. Most teachers reluctantly implement it. They struggle to instruct students in the underlying concepts behind this student-centered program. Teacher frustration with this program transfers to the students. Students and teachers report that math is difficult. Because teachers have not “bought in” to this program and feel no ownership of it, its implementation throughout the school is fragmented. Although teachers use The Problem Solver program to supplement their instruction in problem solving, they do not consistently require students to explain their mathematical reasoning fully and clearly. Overall, there is insufficient time allotted in the daily schedule for teachers effectively to deliver math instruction. All of these attitudes and practices result in low student performance. (*observing classes, discussing student work with teachers, talking with students, teachers, and staff, following students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2002 New Standards Mathematics Reference Examination School Summary*)

During writing instruction, most teachers emphasize the effective use of brainstorming, drafting, and conferencing. However, many teachers place little instructional emphasis on the importance of students organizing what they write, providing supporting details, and revising and editing. Failure to teach all steps of the writing process effectively results in low student performance in the classroom, as well as on the 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination. (*observing classes, following students, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, 2002 New Standards English Language Arts Reference Examination School Summary*)

There are pockets of teaching excellence throughout the school. However, teacher factions limit the possibility for teachers to collaborate and share their professional expertise with one another. While some teachers report “a sense of family” among the faculty, others feel excluded and misjudged. These undercurrents are counterproductive to consistent and effective teaching and

reduce optimal student learning. (*talking with teachers, staff, and school administrator, observing classes, following students, meeting with the school improvement team and school administrator*)

Commendations for Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

Pockets of excellent teaching

Recommendations for Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

Continue and expand professional development and support for the implementation of the Balanced Literacy and the *Investigations* curriculums.

Expand the amount of time teachers spend on math instruction and student-centered activities.

Increase the use of consistent, formal assessment practices in reading at all grade levels.

Promote open communication among teachers and staff. Participate in team building activities.

Implement all steps of the writing process on a daily basis, emphasizing student revising and editing.

Recommendations for the Providence School District

Provide additional professional development in *Investigations*, Balanced Literacy and writing instruction.

Provide resources for team building activities.

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*
- ◆ *2002 SALT Survey report*
- ◆ *2002 Information Works!*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school and district administrators*
- ◆ *following students*
- ◆ *self study for Mary Fogarty School*

Conclusions

The new principal sets a positive tone throughout the school. She provides the school with vision and leadership. Students, teachers, staff, parents and the district administrator report that, in the span of two months, she has increased morale, improved student behavior and raised academic standards. She brings calm to the chaos in the “forgotten school.” (*meeting with the school improvement team, students, district administrator and parents, following students, talking with students, teachers and staff, observing the school outside of the classroom*)

Safety is an issue both within the school and outside of the building. The schoolyard is full of trash and broken glass. Play areas do not drain properly. The sidewalks surrounding the school are neglected. Appropriate security measures are not in place. Teachers report that their cars in the parking lot have been vandalized and stolen. There is a crossing guard at only one of three busy intersections. Inside the building, there are chained, padlocked fire-exit doors, as well as exposed wires from audio-visual equipment. The school administrator reports that the design of the school office does not provide adequate measures for containment during emergencies. These conditions are unsafe for the entire school community. (*observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, school administrator, and parents, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, following students, 2002 SALT Survey report*)

Scheduling is a problem for teachers and students. While there are weekly meetings for needed professional development, specialists and teachers have few opportunities to plan together. Since there are no regularly scheduled times for teachers to plan or discuss their expectations for student achievement across grade levels, it is difficult for them to establish consistency throughout the school. Students participate in numerous pullout programs. However, some students state that during these times they “miss out” on their classroom activities, and it is difficult for them to make-up their work. These scheduling practices make team building more difficult; decrease communication, fragment instruction and limit effective implementation of curriculum. (*observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrator, following students, 2002 Information Works!*)

Special education students receive services in three settings, each having limitations: the pullout model fragments instruction; the in-class model is not well planned; and the inclusion model for self-contained students within the classroom is unsupported. Since teachers have only limited time to plan, they are unable to establish the collaboration and teamwork they need for all classroom models. These practices impair the learning of all students and reduce the effectiveness of these programs. (*observing classes, following students, talking with students, teachers, and school and district administrators*)

Parent involvement at Mary Fogarty School is limited. Parents report that they are prevented from becoming involved in the

school because of language barriers, transportation problems, childcare issues, and the set meeting times. Some do not feel welcomed. According to the school self-study survey, parents desire teachers to provide them with increased guidance on how they can help their children learn at home. The absence of an effective partnership between parents and teachers is detrimental to student learning. *(reviewing school improvement plan, meeting with the school improvement team, school administrator, and parents, 2002 SALT Survey report, talking with teachers and school administrator, observing the school outside of the classroom, self-study)*

Although professional development opportunities are available, some teachers choose not to participate. Teachers and the school administrator indicate that the teachers at Mary Fogarty School did not receive the same training as other teachers throughout the district. Training is lacking in Principles of Learningsm, Balanced Literacy and *Investigations* math. Teaching assistants request training in behavior management, as well as in academics. The school community reports that the district has provided only minimal support. Because of the inequity in professional development, as well as the reluctance of some teachers to participate, teachers have not been able to teach the new initiatives effectively or attain the goals stated in the school improvement plan. *(talking with teachers, staff, and school administrator, meeting with the school improvement team, school and district administrator, reviewing school improvement plan, 2002 SALT Survey report, 2002 Information Works!)*

Commendations for Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

Dedicated principal who sets high expectations for the entire school community

Recommendations for Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

Provide consistent maintenance of the schoolyard. Hire a security guard and additional crossing guards. Address security and safety issues throughout the school.

Investigate various scheduling alternatives with teachers and staff.

Include specialists and itinerants in grade level planning time. Provide time for cross-grade level articulation.

Provide opportunities and support for a school-wide inclusion model.

Continue efforts, and investigate new ways to include parents in the school community.

Continue and increase professional development in the areas of Balanced Literacy, *Investigations* and Principles of Learningsm

Recommendations for the Providence School District

Provide funds for maintenance of the schoolyard, as well as for security and safety personnel.

Mentor and support the new principal in her school improvement efforts.

Provide professional development to implement district initiatives fully.

Provide resources to support more effective and inclusive special education models.

7. Final Advice to the School

Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School is “a work in progress.” You have endured many changes in leadership, as well as neglect from the district, yet you continue to persevere. Many of you continue to teach here, even though it is “easy to leave and harder to stay.”

With your new principal at the helm, you have the leadership to steer you in a unified direction. Resolve your individual differences and break down the barriers that interfere with student success. Open your classroom doors. Learn to work together to share your expertise. Take pride in what you have accomplished. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.

Set your course to achieve new and greater levels of success. Demand higher expectations by motivating your teachers, as well as your students, to achieve their personal best. Find unique ways to include your parents in the learning community. Knowing the daily challenges that face your students, create a “safe haven” where they can learn. Use this report to transform “the forgotten school” into an unforgettable showcase of learning.

The Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School Improvement Team

Sandra Meekins
Fifth Grade Teacher
Chairperson

Theresa Holihan
Union Representative
Computer Resource Teacher

Christine Jennings
Library/Media Specialist
Recording Secretary

Peter Kay
Special Educator Grades 3-5
Vice Chairperson

Susan Chin
Principal

Nancy Barnes
Grade 3 Teacher

Carol Bliss
Art Teacher

Catherine Brazil
4/5 ESL Teacher

Nandine DiStefano
Kindergarten Teacher

Maria Lourenco
Grade 1 Teacher

Nora Thurber
Nurse

Stephanie Beatty
Parent

Cindy Burgess
Parent

The SALT Visit Team

Ruth S. 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 Fellow
SALT Visit Team Chair

Dawn M. Castaldi
Grade 1 Teacher
Hopkins Hill School
Coventry, Rhode Island

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Hopkins Hill School
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Thornton School
Johnston, Rhode Island

Jennifer D. Daigneault
Kindergarten Teacher
North Smithfield Elementary School
North Smithfield, Rhode Island

John J. McCabe
Principal
Flora S. Curtis School
Pawtucket, Rhode Island

Judith Nangle
Grade 1 Teacher
Garvin Memorial Elementary School
Cumberland, Rhode Island

Deana Pellegrini
Speech-Language Pathologist
Meadowcrest Early Childhood Family Center
East Providence, Rhode Island

Endorsement of SALT Visit Team Report

Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School

March 7, 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 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 two portions 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.
DATE: April 21, 2003