



# Blueprint for Maryland's Future: Expert Review Team Program

Maryland State Board of Education  
August 24, 2021

# Purpose of the Expert Review Team Program



- Analyze the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future in schools,
- Determine the underlying causes for student performance problems,
- Evaluate behavioral health services provided in schools, and
- Develop recommendations, measures, and strategies to address identified issues.

- Maryland State Department of Education must establish, administer, and supervise an expert review team program.
- Expert Review Team must be deployed to
  - at least 10% of public schools (145 schools) in at least three different school systems each year beginning July 1, 2023.
  - Schools in which students demonstrate learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2022-2023 school year.
- MSDE must submit a plan to the Accountability and Implementation Board to deploy the expert review team.

# Expert Review Team Program Draft Plan Overview



- Selection
  - Composition
  - Selection Process
- Training
- Deployment
- Implementation Timeline
- Reporting
- Funding
- Aligning Review Teams



## Blueprint for Maryland's Future: Expert Review Team Program



Draft Report for the  
Accountability and Implementation Board

July 2021

# Composition of Expert Review Team



## Blueprint Requirements

- Teachers represented by a teachers' organization
- School leaders
- Others with expertise in the purpose and duties of the expert review teams
- Teams must represent the racial, ethnic, linguistic, and gender diversity of public school students

## MSDE Proposed Team for Each School Reviewed

- Two teachers with experience in the grade band, content, or type of school being reviewed
- One school leader with experience in the type of school being reviewed
- Two experts from entities with expertise in effective school improvement practices
- One behavior health expert from the Maryland School Mental Health Response Program Team

# Expert Review Team Selection Process



- Team members will be selected based on their experience, expertise, and geographic, racial, ethnic, and gender diversity
- Team members will be recommended from:
  - Maryland State Education Association,
  - Baltimore Teachers Union,
  - Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals,
  - Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals,
  - Maryland Promising Principals' Academy Alumni,
  - Maryland School Mental Health Response Program Team,
  - Organizations with expertise in effective school improvement practices,
  - And others.
- All applicants will be reviewed and selected by a team from MSDE

# Expert Review Team Members will Participate in Training on the Following Topics:



1. Maintaining confidentiality.
2. Using the reporting system to capture evidence, report outcomes, and develop recommendations.
3. Collecting objective, un-biased, and factual evidence to support findings and recommendations.
4. Reviewing school data and use it to inform recommendations.
5. Preparing for school visits and adhering to expectations during school visits.
6. Engaging in instructional walks within a school.
7. Observing instructional practices, classroom environment, student work, student engagement, and student behavior.
8. Calibrating observations.
9. Conducting interviews with teachers, students, parents, school administrators, central office staff, and other stakeholders.
10. Developing achievable recommendations grounded in evidence of effectiveness.
11. Building consensus for findings and recommendations.
12. Engaging in debriefs to discuss initial findings with school level and school system staff.
13. Collaborating with school level and central office staff to develop recommendations for improvement.
14. Completing reporting requirements to summarize outcomes and consolidate recommendations.
15. Engaging in post-visit protocols.

# Deploying Expert Review Teams: School Selection



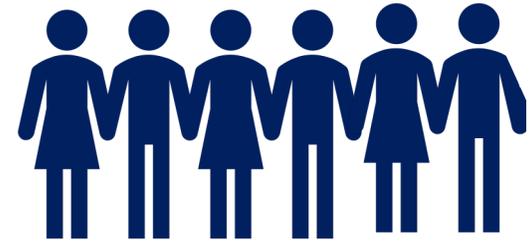
1. Schools determined to be the lowest performing in the state;
2. Schools determined to be the highest performing in the state;
3. Schools identified by the Accountability and Implementation Board;
4. Schools that request an expert review team visit;
5. Schools where students continue to demonstrate learning loss that began in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic; and
6. Schools selected by a randomized process.

The lowest and highest performing schools will be determined by student performance on state assessments. Identification of schools will also be based on data collected by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act and American Rescue Plan.

# Deploying Expert Review Teams

- 145 schools in three different school systems must participate in the expert review process each year
- 60 total expert review team members will form 10 teams of 6
- Approximately 15 schools will be visited by each team of 6

## Expert Review Team 1



# Proposed Structure for On-Site School Visits



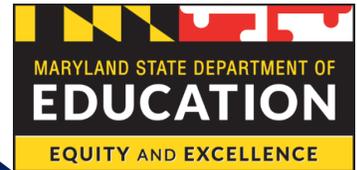
- A team of six will visit a school
  - Three team members will observe classroom instruction
  - Three team members will facilitate interviews
- Internal team debrief to identify initial findings
- Debrief with school leadership and central office staff to discuss initial findings
- On-site school visits will occur over the course of one – two days

# Overview of the On-Site Review Process



- **Prior to On-Site Visit (2 Weeks)**
  - Central office staff and school leadership meet with review team members to prepare for the visit.
  - On-site visit schedule and agenda are established and shared.
  - Any additional information or documents for the visit are shared.
- **During Visit (2 Days)**
  - Classrooms are randomly selected by the review team to observe for at least 20 minutes per class.
  - Instructional observations and evidence collection will follow a researched-based protocol.
  - Interviews are conducted on-site according to a researched-based protocol with defined questions.
  - Expert review team engages in a verbal debrief with central office staff and school leaders to discuss initial findings and next steps.
- **After Visit (~4 weeks)**
  - Draft report is developed based on findings and includes recommendations (2 weeks).
  - Draft report is shared with school and school system leaders to provide the opportunity to make factual corrections and provide comments. Comments will be included in the appendix of the final report (1 week).
  - Report is finalized (1 week).
  - Final report is submitted to the school, school system, and Accountability and Implementation Board. Final report is posted on MSDE's website.

# Proposed Timeline



# Funding Expert Review Team



Funding will be used to:

1. Hire MSDE staff members to lead the expert review team program. Staff members will prepare training materials, develop reports, collect data, schedule school visits, coordinate training of expert review team members, and coordinate cross-agency support of the review team.
2. Purchase equipment and supplies for the expert review team program.
3. Pay for background checks for expert review team members.
4. Secure space and facilitate training sessions.
5. Pay for travel and hotels for the expert review team.
6. Pay stipends to members of the expert review team.

# Next Steps



- ✓ Secure resources to facilitate the Expert Review Team
- ✓ Prepare training materials
- ✓ Review data to begin school identification
- ✓ Begin to build the bench of expert reviewers
- ✓ Implement the expert review team program