

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support

Domain 3: Educator Support

Baltimore Polytechnic Institute

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

March 20-21, 2024



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Overview of Maryland School Site Reviews

PURPOSE

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is committed to supporting school systems in improving student outcomes. MSDE conducts comprehensive school reviews to identify promising practices and opportunities for growth in curriculum, instruction, interventions, socio-emotional and mental health services, educator support, and school management. School reviews are a collaborative process among local education agencies (LEAs), schools, and MSDE aimed at accelerating student learning, supporting the whole child, and enhancing educator practice.

SCHOOL REVIEW PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

All school reviews are facilitated by an Expert Review Team (ERT) led by MSDE. ERT members consist of trained teachers, school leaders, and education experts with experience in improving student outcomes. Members participate in extensive training led by MSDE to calibrate the review process to ensure a consistent approach to school reviews. To identify effective practices and opportunities for growth in a school, the ERT analyzes school data, reviews documents submitted by the school, and conducts a one or two-day site visit that includes classroom observations, focus groups, and a principal interview.

The Expert Review Team uses a rubric (see Appendix B) to form a consensus rating for each measure based on student data, documents, observations, focus groups, and a principal interview. The rubric consists of three domains:

- **Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction** - High-quality curriculum, instructional materials, teaching practices, and assessments are implemented to support student learning.
- **Domain 2: Student Support** - Schools use data to identify students and implement a multi-tiered approach to support all student groups.
- **Domain 3: Educator Support** - Educators at all levels are provided with support to improve results and shift instructional practice.

Each domain contains indicators and measures. Indicators specify criteria within the domain that will be reviewed. Measures identify the component that will be rated within the indicator. Each measure can earn one of four ratings:

- **Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement** - evidence reviewed demonstrates that a school fully addressed action(s) while implementing measures and attaining outcomes and demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement.
- **Accomplishing** - evidence reviewed demonstrates that a school fully addressed action(s) while implementing measures and attaining outcomes.
- **Developing** - a plan and/or process is observed; however, actions towards attaining measures and outcomes have not yet been implemented.

- **Not Evident** – a plan and/or process towards implementing measures or obtaining outcomes was not observed.

In cases where the measure and/or component does not apply, it will be marked as not applicable.

MSDE will collaborate with LEAs for any school that earns a rating of Developing or Not Evident for any measure to develop recommendations, a support plan, and a timeline for the school to make progress toward the Accomplishing or Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement rating.

STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

The following report is organized into three different sections.

Executive Summary: In this section, you will find a summary of the school's review. This includes:

- Information about the school, with more detailed information, can be found online in [the Maryland School Report Card](#).
- The summary of findings is a snapshot of the ratings the school received by each domain, with more detailed ratings of each measure embedded in the complete school rubric in Appendix B.
- Overall recommendations for the school to focus their school improvement work.

Findings and Recommendations by Domain: Each domain contains a section that outlines ERT findings, including strengths and areas for growth. For each domain, targeted recommendations are provided with evidence, action steps, and resources to address the recommendation. Resources are currently being reviewed for accessibility.

Appendices: Two appendices expand on information provided in the body of this report. They provide detailed information on the specific methods used by the ERT during the site visit and a deeper dive into the ratings the school received on the School Review Rubric.

Executive Summary

ABOUT BALTIMORE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE SCHOOL

Baltimore Polytechnic Institute School, located in Baltimore City, serves a total of 1,601 students in grades 9th – 12th. The enrolled population is made up of 5% Asian, 61% African American, and 13% Hispanic. The school's population includes approximately 32% of students who receive free or reduced meals and less than 5% of the population includes either students with disabilities or students with 504 plans. More detailed information, including enrollment, attendance, demographics, and student outcome data, can be found in the [Maryland School Report Card](#).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following table summarizes the school's ratings on Domains 2 and 3. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement in Career Growth and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Observation and Feedback. A comprehensive list of measures, indicators, and ratings can be found in the full School Review Rubric in Appendix B.

Domain 2: Student Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support	85%	Accomplishing
Opportunities and Access	94%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	75%	Accomplishing
Professional Learning	84%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	96%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following actions are recommended to support improvement in the areas identified as needing improvement through the School Review process. More detailed information about these recommendations, linking them to specific findings in each domain and providing action steps and resources to implement them, can be found in the following sections.

- Provide clear communication tools that allow stakeholders to have clarity about the postsecondary career pathways and how they are offered and supported within the school. Expand and improve the communication system to include multiple access pathways to the school community to ensure that all stakeholders are informed and able to connect and utilize these supports effectively.
- Extend the professional learning opportunities to include Fine Arts instructors that are specific to the course. Consider leveraging the current PLC structure to include teachers and instructional roles of non-core content to provide job-embedded professional learning for all Fine Arts teachers systemically. Use the current master schedule to design model-teacher opportunities for teachers in the fine arts courses.

Domain 2: Student Support

Student Support

Schools use data to identify students and implement a multi-tiered approach to support all student groups.

Findings and Recommendations

STRENGTHS

The school's stakeholder groups shared a common appreciation of the intentional focus on ensuring that the structure for student support was adjusted to support all student and community needs. There is a unified understanding of common knowledge of systems used for communication.

- All the focus groups shared that Instagram is the primary form of communication for school events, announcements, and other activities beyond information related to academic progress.
- During the principal's interview, he explained the master schedule was adjusted from an eight-period daily schedule to an "AB" four-period day which allows extra instructional time in classes for students to receive help as needed.
- Students, teachers, school leaders, parents, and the principal interview provided robust evidence for the tiered support systems for individual students and groups. One student shared, "I have a 504 and an IEP because I have autism. I breezed through elementary and middle school, but when I got to high school I hit a roadblock. In October my mom and I got my IEP adjusted, and now I have extra time on tests and essays. The IEP office is always open."
- All ten teachers and ten school leaders in the focus groups provided statements regarding the academic support for specific digital platforms to support student learning needs. An example of this was, "We use Achieve 3000. All students take a level-setting test which provides a Lexile Score that identifies where students can get articles from their levels. The platform auto-adjusts throughout the year, according to their progress (every other B-day). It adjusts Lexile, based on performance, if you do 4 articles a month."
- Multiple participants in each focus group shared that there were rigorous academic pathways that are designed with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) in a school-designed pathway. Although this is not a post-CCR pathway, as defined by MSDE, it is a signature program pathway designed for student learning.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The school has a solid foundation for student learning and achievement. However, there is room for improved academic support for students not yet meeting the CCR standards and ensuring there are opportunities for Dual Enrollment programs for accelerated achievers.

- None of the focus group participants mentioned any Dual Enrollment program or course that is available or promoted.

- Most of the students shared they would like more opportunities to balance their rigorous academic courses with fine arts courses. They shared that while it is offered, they would like to be able to balance the offerings rather than feel like they have to compromise their love of art to excel academically.

While focus group participants offered the communication strategy as a strength of the school, other parent and student group stakeholders expressed that a single communication system was insufficient. and further stated that special events, celebrations, etc... should not just be broadcasted on Instagram.

- Student Focus Group: there should be more learning for staff around the LGBTQI+ community. For example, students said they should not have to consistently remind adults of their preferred pronouns.
- One of the nine students stated, “The communication between administrators and the teachers and the students could be improved. Our primary way to receive information is through Instagram. Say you wanted to know when you wanted to know about a sports game and when it is, it’s on Instagram, but I would appreciate it if the school had more news available about the school – like celebrating the teams that have won state championships. Robotics goes to “Worlds” every year.”
- Another student shared, “We do get a lot of our information through Instagram...(referencing another student) he has developed a Polytech website with articles about sports teams, a calendar about stuff that is in the school. Our school website doesn’t get updated as much as it should. Poly Tech (our website) has fizzled out – we do it on our own – we ask students to do this work without getting paid – maybe getting student service learning (SSL) hours – for the good of the school.”
- One of the ten parents in the focus group stated, “Outside of teachers, the schoolwide communication could be a lot better. I have found myself having to seek out the information because my daughter mentioned a piece of something.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are meant to support school leadership in improving in the areas that were identified as needing growth. Each is closely connected to the evidence presented above under “Areas for Growth,” and includes specific action steps and resources to support the implementation of these improvements. Domain-specific ratings can be found in Appendix B.

FOCUS AREA 1

Provide clear communication tools that allow stakeholders to have clarity about the postsecondary career pathways and how they are offered and supported within the school. Expand and improve the communication system to include multiple access pathways to the school community to ensure that all stakeholders are informed and able to connect and utilize these supports effectively.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Conduct an audit of the current communication method used to inform students, parents, teachers, and school leaders about available Dual Enrollment opportunities.
 - Convene a multi-layered stakeholder committee to refine or develop a process design model to explore the best (or most commonly used) communication tools and pathways.
 - Create a collaboration between the committee and central office liaison to explore opportunities for students to receive SSL hours for the work of maintaining portions of the communications system.
- Utilize this platform to communicate Dual Enrollment opportunities to the community stakeholders.

RESOURCES:

1. [Student-Centric Communication Starts with These Three Steps](#)
2. [To Improve Learning for Each Learner, Turn the Mirror on Your System](#)
3. [Building Effective Collaborative Teams](#)

Domain 3: Educator Support

Educators Support

Educators at all levels are provided with support to improve results and shift instructional practice.

Findings and Recommendations

STRENGTHS

The school has developed a solid structured approach to observation and feedback process, with a continuous cycle of learning for the professional growth of teachers to improve student performance.

- One of the ten teachers shared being formally observed twice a year. Explaining that informal observations can be anytime the feedback is almost immediate with a conversation or a Google form that I filled out. The forms connect to in-house coaching and mentoring to set personal goals aligned with departmental goals.
- An administrator explained, “I am a first-year AP at Poly and I have a mentor. Every month we go to Talent Development Tuesday and I get training with all of the APs (from the district). I have a beginning-of-the-year, mid-year, and end-of-year evaluation. Daily check-ins around the tasks that were discussed.” “We get feedback from the Director and the ILSD – get feedback from teachers and students to help us improve.”
- All teachers in the focus group were aware of the school coaching cycle and the roles that are included in the cycle.
- One teacher stated, “I am a full-release full-time mentor, and the coaching is aligned with LEA coaching for new teacher mentoring (0-3 years).”
- Another teacher from the focus group described the improvement of the process over time. “When I started, it was a year with a lot of teacher turnover, and I didn’t get a lot of top-down support that first year, but I got a lot of support from my own departments. Ten years ago, I approached the principal and wanted to start a school-wide program for those new to teaching and those new to the building and brought in teachers in August. I worked with them throughout the year.”
- Some content areas will have a district mentor as well and new teachers will get a mentor in their content areas. I used my new teacher mentor so many times and it has improved my practice a lot.
- All departments have micro-PD and the expectation is that everyone receives coaching in four-week cycles.
- The Career Ladder was innovative in Baltimore until June 30th. There was a standard pathway, professional pathway, and model pathway and you could demonstrate a lot of success in the classroom, and you could skip many years through a portfolio. We are aligning more with National Board Certification and that is a state incentive.”

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The evidence provided by professional focus group participants shows the school has a solid structured system for supporting instructional roles. However, there should be continuous job-embedded professional learning for groups that are outside of the LEA target.

- While the school documentation provides consistent documentation of regularly scheduled professional development, one of the ten teachers in the focus group stated, “We have a regular systemic PD and I wish it was more regular like at the beginning of the year. I collaborate with another teacher at Western on topics like data review, best practices, and looking at the curriculum. The content teachers are the people who go to teaching practice and SEL practice. As a fine arts educator, I can do a fine art PD.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are meant to support school leadership in improving in the areas that were identified as needing growth. Each is closely connected to the evidence presented above under “Areas for Growth,” and includes specific action steps and resources to support the implementation of these improvements. Domain-specific ratings can be found in Appendix B.

FOCUS AREA 1

Extend the professional learning opportunities to include Fine Arts instructors that are specific to the course. Consider leveraging the current PLC structure to include teachers and instructional roles of non-core content to provide job-embedded professional learning for all Fine Arts teachers systemically. Use the current master schedule to design model-teacher opportunities for teachers in the fine arts courses.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Include a Fine Arts teacher representative in the current structure of the learning walk structure team to represent the needs and goals of the staff to assist cross-functional learning opportunities.
- Consider designing PD for the Fine Arts Integration and include job-alike systemic educators to support continuous improvement for all course specific content.

RESOURCES:

1. [Treating the “Instructional Core”: Education Rounds](#)
2. [Arts-Powered Professional Development for Educators](#)

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Dr. Stefan Lallinger, Executive Director, Next100
2. Dr. Martha James, Associate Professor, Morgan State University
3. Adrin Leak, Instructional Specialist, Prince George’s County Public Schools
4. Dr. John Seelke, Mathematical Instructional Specialist, Montgomery County Public Schools
5. Dr. Genevieve Floyd, Supervisor of Career and Postsecondary Partnerships, Montgomery County Public Schools
6. Jamila Denney, Principal, Montgomery County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Sixteen

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, March 20, 2024	Thursday, March 21, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP Calc AB • Honors English II • Honors Biology • ESOL II-A, • AP US Gov. & Politics • AP African-American Studies: Reconstruction-Present • Honors Civil Engineering • AP Chemistry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors English • AP 2D Art/Drawing • AP English Lit & Comp • AP Psychology • AP Calc BC • Pre-AP Algebra 1 • AP Statistics • Honors Probability & Statistics

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 9 students
- 10 school leaders
- 10 teachers
- 10 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Baltimore Polytechnic Institute

The Expert Review Team Rubric is used by the review team to form a consensus on a rating for each measure based on all collected evidence. Collected evidence includes documents submitted by the school prior to the on-site review; outcomes of classroom observations; answers to focus group questions from teachers, administrators, students, and parents; and student data. Items checked were reviewed through data documentation or during the on-site school review.