

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support

Domain 3: Educator Support

Cold Spring Elementary School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

March 20-21, 2024



Table of Contents

Overview of Maryland School Site Reviews	2
Executive Summary	4
Domain 2: Student Support	7
Domain 3: Educator Support	11
Appendix A	14
Appendix B	16

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 COLD SPRING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Cold Spring Elementary School, located in Montgomery County, serves a total of 351 students in grades K-5th. The enrolled population is made up of 44% White, 39% Asian, and 7% Hispanic. 7% 2+ races, and 4% African American. The school's population includes approximately 5% of students who receive free or reduced meals and 7% or less 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 Observation and Feedback and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Professional Learning. 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	71%	Accomplishing
Opportunities and Access	79%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	88%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Professional Learning	69%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	75%	Accomplishing

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.

- Formalize the established mental health support system at the school to ensure that all members of the school community are fully aware of the available resources and how to access them.
- Develop a plan to effectively manage behavioral situations and classroom disruptions and provide professional learning for teachers on de-escalation strategies and restorative practices.
- Increase the awareness regarding opportunities available to teachers and school leaders. Provide teachers with information on the benefits of achieving National Board Certification (NBCT) and acquiring advanced degrees.

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 has established a comprehensive support system that addresses students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs. This system ensures that all students receive the appropriate level of assistance, guided by data-driven instructional strategies tailored to meet varying levels of need.

- School leaders, teachers, students, and parents in their respective focus groups shared that continuous academic and social-emotional support systems are in place to support students.
- In the teacher and school leader focus groups, it was shared that regular and systematic analysis of student data informs instructional practices.
- During the parent focus group, parents stated that special education support is robust and seamlessly incorporated into daily lessons.
- In the students focus group survey, eleven out of eleven students indicated that they have at least one adult to approach if they face a non-academic challenge at the school and

The school has established a comprehensive system to guarantee that every student can participate in advanced and rigorous academic courses.

- During the teacher focus group, educators shared that advanced coursework is offered to all students, ensuring everyone can participate in challenging classes.
- Parents in the parent focus group stated that the Centers for Enriched Studies program is available as an option for advanced study, in addition to various other advanced classes being offered to students.
- In the student focus group survey, six out of six students indicated that the school offers advanced classes and that they feel challenged by the schoolwork that the school provides.

The school effectively provides students with a comprehensive curriculum that extends beyond core academic subjects, encompassing art, career and technical education, world languages, and STEM, complemented by a variety of extracurricular activities.

- In the student focus group, students stated that they have access to a diverse range of subjects including art and music as well as extracurricular activities.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

While the school has a mental health support system in place, there is a need to formalize the process further. This would ensure that all members of the school community are fully aware of the available resources and how to access them.

- During focus groups with school leaders, teachers, students, and parents, it was shared that while the school has established mental health support for students, the system is currently ad hoc and could benefit from further formalization. Suggestions from focus groups for improvement include providing additional preemptive support, offering professional learning for teachers on handling challenging situations, and collaborating with outside mental health service providers.
- During the teacher focus group, it was shared that there is a need for a comprehensive mental health program with concrete resources.

There is a need to provide professional learning to teachers on de-escalation strategies and restorative practices that address behavioral situations and classroom disruptions.

- In the teacher focus group, eight out of eight teachers expressed the need for additional professional learning on de-escalation and restorative practices to effectively address behavioral challenges and classroom disruptions.
- In the teacher focus group, six out of eight teachers reported behavioral disruptions were a challenge in their classrooms.

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

Formalize the established mental health support system at the school to ensure that all members of the school community are fully aware of the available resources and how to access them.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Gather detailed feedback from school leaders, teachers, students, and parents regarding the current mental health support system.
- Create a structured mental health program that includes clear protocols and procedures.
- Offer training sessions for teachers on handling challenging situations and recognizing mental health issues.
- Establish partnerships with local mental health service providers.
- Launch a communication campaign to inform the school community about the mental health support system.

RESOURCES:

1. [Implementing School Mental Health Supports](#)

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 2

Develop a plan to effectively manage behavioral situations and classroom disruptions and provide professional learning for teachers on de-escalation strategies and restorative practices.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Survey all teachers to identify specific challenges related to behavioral disruptions and their familiarity with de-escalation strategies and restorative practices.
- Based on the needs assessment, create a targeted professional learning plan that includes workshops, training sessions, and follow-up support focused on de-escalation strategies and restorative practices.
- Schedule and conduct professional development sessions on de-escalation and restorative practices. Include both theoretical knowledge and practical applications.
- Collect feedback from teachers and monitor the impact of professional learning on classroom behavior and disruptions. Use surveys, classroom observations, and behavior incident reports for evaluation.

RESOURCES:

1. [National Center for Safe Supportive Learning Environments](#)
2. [International Institute for Restorative Practices](#)

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

There is an established system and protocol that ensures that teachers and leaders are regularly observed and receive actionable feedback from their supervisors designed to support professional growth and improve student outcomes.

- In the school leadership focus group, school leaders stated that they are provided with frequent feedback both for formal and informal observations.
- In the teacher focus group, teachers indicated that the principal frequently conducts classroom walk-throughs and observations while providing actionable feedback.
- Teachers further shared that the school is currently conducting a pilot program for teacher-peer classroom observations.
- During the teacher focus group survey, nine out of nine teachers indicated that they are regularly observed and provided with actional feedback designed to improve their teaching practice.

The school allocates time throughout the day for teachers to engage in peer collaboration sessions, providing opportunities for them to plan together, collaborate, and review student data.

- School leaders in the school leader focus group stated that the master schedule is strategically designed to allow more time for student support by limiting the school day to two lunch periods, which facilitates additional in-classroom support from teachers and specialists, as well as extra planning time for teachers.
- In the teacher focus group, eight out of eight teachers state that they regularly engage in planning and collaboration with peers focused on improving student outcomes.
- In the teacher focus group survey, eight out of nine teachers indicated that they have dedicated collaborative time throughout the day to plan with colleagues.

The school leadership team has established a mentoring and coaching program for novice teachers aimed at providing novice teachers with job-embedded induction and support.

- School leaders in the school leader focus group stated that there is a staff development teacher available to support, particularly in planning for novice teachers.

- In the teacher and school leadership focus groups, it was shared that the Implementation of a new educator orientation program system-wide directly supports novice teachers in improving their teaching practice.
- Teachers and school leaders further stated that first-year teachers receive mentoring from a consulting teacher who is not part of the school and undergo a formal evaluation. Post the first year, evaluations continue via administration, and it is the responsibility of the schools to support staff.
- In the teacher focus group, teachers stated that new experienced teachers in the district are also provided with a mentor.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

There is a need for incentives for the growth and advancement of both teachers and leaders, to maintain teachers in the classroom and leaders at the school-based level.

- School leaders and teachers shared that although the LEA offers incentives like tuition reimbursement, there's a consensus that incentives for remaining a classroom teacher are insufficient.

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

Increase the awareness regarding opportunities available to teachers and school leaders. Provide teachers with information on the benefits of achieving National Board Certification (NBCT) and acquiring advanced degrees.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Organize a series of workshops aimed at disseminating this information among faculty. These sessions should encourage teachers to plan their professional growth and incorporate these opportunities.
- Implement a system for regular feedback from teachers regarding the clarity and usefulness of the information provided about the growth opportunities.

RESOURCES:

1. [MSDE Blueprint Pillar 2: High Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders](#)
2. [MCPS Department of Professional Growth Systems](#)

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Miguel Del Toro Cervantes, Principal, Baltimore City Public Schools
2. Brooke Gardner, Teacher, Frederick County Public Schools
3. Paul Fer, Principal, Freder County Public Schools
4. Andrea Johnson, Assistant Principal, Charles County Public Schools
5. Natalie Gay, Coordinator, Frederick County Public Schools
6. David Bell, Teacher, Baltimore City Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

12 classroom reviews

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, March 20 2024	Thursday, March 21 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math AMP • Literacy • PE • ELD • SCI • Art • Math 1st • Literacy 4th 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lit 2nd • Lit Kindergarten • Math 5th • Math 3rd • Music 5th

Number of Interviews

One principal Interview

Number of Focus Groups

Five

- 13 students
- 5 school leaders
- 8 teachers
- 7 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Cold Spring Elementary School

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.