

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

Collington Square Elementary/ Middle School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

April 17, 2024



Table of Contents

Overview of Maryland School Site Reviews.....	2
Executive Summary	4
Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction.....	7
Appendix A	10
Appendix B	12

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 ERT 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 COLLINGTON SQUARE ELEMENTARY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Collington Square Elementary/ Middle School, located in Baltimore City, serves a total of 265 students in grades PreK-8th. The enrolled population is made up of more than 95% African American students. The school's population includes approximately 85% of students who receive free or reduced meals and 20% 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](#).

Schools identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Low Performing and/or CSI Not Exiting in the 2022-2023 school year and selected for an ERT visit, received a differentiated visit to avoid duplication of data requests and integrate into the school improvement process in collaboration with the Office of School Improvement and Transformation at MSDE.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following table summarizes the school's rating on Domain 1. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing in Curriculum and Instructional Materials and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Classroom Instruction. A comprehensive list of measures, indicators, and ratings can be found in the full School Review Rubric in Appendix B.

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Curriculum and Instructional Materials	81%	Accomplishing
Classroom Instruction	64%	Accomplishing
Assessment and Timing	79%	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.

- Provide a series of professional learning on leveraging collaborative learning sessions with student-driven learning to empower student agency. Amplify the use of higher-order questioning techniques such as probing, inquiring, evaluating, analyzing, and/or hypothesizing, along with strategies to encourage students to justify their answers.

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum and Instruction

High-quality curriculum, instructional materials, teaching practices, and assessment are implemented to support student learning.

Findings and Recommendations

STRENGTHS

The Local Education Agency (LEA) provided documentation supporting the high-quality curricula aligned with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards (MCCRS). The school documentation is aligned with the LEA documents provided to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

The school climate cultivates a culture that has positive classroom environments with interactions between students and teachers, and between the students themselves, that is caring and respectful.

The classrooms reviewed were examples of a learning community supportive of explicit instruction to help students thrive.

- In three of the four classrooms reviewed, the teacher explicitly addressed academic language and offered a range of examples that were focused on skills, vocabulary, and content. For example, in one classroom the teacher reviewed the many ways to spell “long ā” that had been learned previously. Another example was in one of the 4 classrooms, the teacher used the content area vocabulary and there was an expectation for students to use terms such as “radius, pie, volume, etc”.
- All focus group participants provided statements that confirmed the use of explicit instruction with high expectations throughout the classrooms. All students mentioned that their teachers pull them aside to provide extra support by helping them preview learning materials and/or redo work. Parents with students with disabilities (SWD) stated that teachers provided support for students with an IEP. Teachers in the focus group stated how they provide support through the use of small groups based on data analysis.
- During the principal interview it was stated that the school’s master schedule supports daily 45-minute collaborative planning periods for teachers to prepare for students and professional development on half-days as outlined by the LEA.
- All twenty-four focus group participants agreed that they felt welcomed, heard, and valued when asked about the climate and culture of the building.
- In two of the four classrooms reviewed, the teachers intentionally guided student practice. For example, the teacher explicitly taught the process for finding the volume of an object while giving extra support to those struggling to correctly solve the problem.
- In 100% of the classrooms reviewed, teacher interactions with students were positive and respectful. For example, one teacher used positive affirmations such as “Kiss your brain”, and “Snap it up, give me a Rick Flair, Woo!”

- Reviewers noted in two of the four classes, soothing music was playing in the background as students worked on assignments.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The school has the foundation to further empower students to have agency in their learning.

- One of the four classrooms provided evidence of collaborative learning, as students worked in groups for two minutes on a math fact fluency activity.
- In one of four classrooms a student was encouraged to ask a peer for assistance.
- Four of the four classrooms reviewed, provided evidence of teacher-led learning throughout the lesson.

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 a series of professional learning on leveraging collaborative learning sessions with student-driven learning to empower student agency. Amplify the use of higher-order questioning techniques such as probing, inquiring, evaluating, analyzing, and/or hypothesizing, along with strategies to encourage students to justify their answers.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Survey all instructional staff on the knowledge of effective critical thinking strategies and use that data to design professional development for staff.
- Provide professional learning on the use of higher-order questioning techniques such as probing, inquiring, evaluating, analyzing, and/or hypothesizing; and strategies to encourage students to justify their answers.
- Utilize space within the collaborative planning time to ensure teachers & coaches are sharing successes and challenges on the implemented strategies.
- Institute peer-to-peer learning walks to provide space for teachers to share authentic implementation sessions for continuous job-embedded professional development.

RESOURCES:

1. [10 Strategies to Build on Student Collaboration in the Classroom](#)
2. [Student-Led Discussions](#)
3. [Teacher Moves That Cultivate Learner Agency](#)
4. [7 ways to measure instructional coaching for impact, not activity](#)
5. [Learning From Instructional Rounds](#)

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Dr. Linda C. Brown, Consultant, Maryland
2. Rhonda Asplen, Instructional Coordinator for Secondary ELA, Cecil County Public Schools
3. Michele Murphy, Education Consultant LLC, Coordinator of Graduate Studies in Reading (Goucher), Murphy Education Consultant LLC
4. Staci Valbrun, Virtual Classroom Teacher, Baltimore County Public Schools
5. Robert Murphy, President, Comprehensive Solutions
6. Rosalyn Rice-Harris, Director, Council of Chief State School Officer

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

N/A

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Five

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, April 17, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd grade ELA • 5th grade ELA • 7th grade mathematics intervention • 8th grade mathematics intervention

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Six

- 8 student groups
- 3 school leader groups
- 6 teacher group
- 7 parent group

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Collington Square Elementary/ Middle 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.