Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support
Domain 3: Educator Support

Dorothy I. Height Elementary School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

April 10, 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 DOROTHY I. HEIGHT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dorothy I. Height Elementary School, located in Baltimore City, serves a total of 303 students in grades Pre-K – 8th. The enrolled population is made up of more than 95% African Americans. The school's population includes approximately 77% of students who receive free or reduced meals and 15% 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 ratings on Domain 2 and 3. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing in Observation and Feedback and its lowest rating of Developing in Career Growth. 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	62%	Accomplishing
Opportunities and Access	71%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	75%	Accomplishing
Professional Learning	67%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	57%	Developing

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.

- Develop and clearly communicate a mental health support plan to all stakeholders (MTSS- social-emotional). The plan should include but is not limited to, the process for referring students, the data needed to determine eligibility, the referral timeline, an implementation plan, and other resources available to assist with mental health concerns.

- Leverage the current structures in place to create continuous job-embedded school-based learning opportunities to customize LEA PD follow-up to fit the needs of the school staff. Utilize the existing expertise within the school to serve as model classes for staff to see best practices of identified PD implementation in a rotation cycle that will also build future teacher leaders.

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 stakeholders spoke with high regard for the mental health well-being program and wraparound services for the students.

- One of the ten participants in the student focus group explained that students go to Brown Memorial Church for extra help for an hour at a time during the school day.

- Two of the six parents, and three of the eight teachers shared that "Coach Class" which occurs after school is supportive and assists students with academics.

- All three of the school leaders mentioned wraparound services such as GEMS (Girls Expecting More Success), "Girls on the Run", and "I Am MenTality" as being a supportive program for the students.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

While all stakeholders mentioned the types of support programs and services available to students, these stakeholders were unclear about the pathways for identifying students for these services.

- None of the three participants in the school leaders' group were able to communicate a clear plan on how to identify and service students with academic needs.

- Additionally, out of the eight teachers in the focus group, none were able to identify or communicate a clear plan on how to identify and service students with academic needs.

- While six of six parents mentioned feeling welcomed and appreciating the relationships their students build with staff at the school, neither of those parents could name any specific mental health resource.

- One of the eight teachers reported there were no mental health resources.

- Three of those eight teachers mentioned a counselor contracted through UMD that students can be referred to, however, they were unclear about the process.

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

Develop and clearly communicate a mental health support plan to all stakeholders (MTSS- social-emotional). The plan should include but is not limited to, the process for referring students, the data needed to determine eligibility, the referral timeline, once approved, the implementation plan, and if not approved, other resources available to assist with mental health concerns.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Develop a plan that clearly outlines the process for referring students for academic remediation/ intervention services. Outline a plan for students who are approved for additional academic services and a list of resources available to students who do not qualify.

- Communicate the plan with all stakeholders including but not limited to sharing the plan electronically, holding information sessions to assist with understanding the plan, and providing constant information on resources available for all students.

- Develop a monitoring system that includes representatives from all instructional groups to provide ongoing support and to track the implementation of the feedback recommendations. Provide professional development that emphasizes the updates to this feedback process.

RESOURCES:

1. [10 advantages of developing a multi-tiered system of supports (with a free template)](#)
2. [Using the MTSS Triangle to Overcome Learning Loss](#)
3. [How MTSS Supports Gifted Students](#)
4. [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 statements for support for teacher growth that were consistent between school leadership and teachers, were appreciated by the professional staff.

- The LEA leadership partnership with Towson University to help teachers get a master's degree is a welcomed and helpful program for advancement.

- The structures for the Judy Center provide support which means, "I get observed twice a year by an LEA level observer.

- Literacy Coach- observes but also helps me grow and learn- Every other Friday leadership development

- The in-house structures for teacher growth from leadership means they are in the classroom often and most of the teachers in the focus group agreed that feedback following observations is consistent and immediate.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Evidence shows that the LEA has solid structures and systems to support processes for supporting educator growth. However, evidence provided by all professional focus group participants suggests the school should be more intentional in ensuring that school-based job-embedded professional development (PD) is intentionally followed up to support continuous professional educator growth.

- During the teacher focus group, when asked about the career ladder, one of the eight teachers expressed that at the LEA level, the "Pathway" is going away and the Achievement Units (AU) that can be earned are not fairly distributed toward staff who take real accredited classes.

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

Leverage the current structures in place to create continuous job-embedded school-based learning opportunities to customize LEA PD follow-up to fit the needs of the school staff. Utilize the existing expertise within the school to serve as model classes for staff to see best practices of identified PD implementation in a rotation cycle that will also build future teacher leaders. Develop a monitoring system that includes representatives from all instructional groups to provide ongoing support and to track the implementation of the feedback recommendations. Provide professional development that emphasizes the updates to this feedback process.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Leverage one PD session to communicate building-wide improvement goals to ensure each professional can connect their work to the goals.

- Utilize the expertise that exists within the building to customize professional learning opportunities for all instructional staff.

- Leverage the action steps for utilizing the learning walk structure to gather qualitative data on the PD implementation, feedback, and monitoring to provide ongoing job-embedded PD for all teachers.

RESOURCES:

1. Teaching Teachers: PD To Improve Student Achievement
2. Embedding Voice and Choice in Professional Learning
3. The Power of Learning with Your Peers: #LearningWalks

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Tara Dedeaux, Principal, Harford County Public Schools

2. Katherine Landen, Assistant Principal, Garrett County Public Schools

3. Holly Hatton, Supervisor of Special Education, Wicomico County Public Schools

4. Megan Stein, Principal, Frederick County Public Schools

5. Stephen Isler, School Testing Coordinator & Instructional Lead Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools

6. Georgina Whalen, Instructional Lead Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

N/A

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Five

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, April 10, 2024
• Pre-K
• Kindergarten
• 4th grade Math
• Self-Contained Special Education Classroom
• Special Education Resource Classroom

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 9 students

- 3 school leaders

- 8 teachers

- 6 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Dorothy I. Height 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.