

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support

Domain 3: Educator Support

Dufief Elementary School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

February 21-22, 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 three 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 DUFIEF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Dufief Elementary School, located in Montgomery County, serves a total of 245 students in grades K-5th. The enrolled population is made up of 32% Asian, 28% White, 18% African American, 12% Hispanic, and 10% 2+ Races. The school's population includes approximately 20% of students that receive free or reduced meals and 34% 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 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	79%	Accomplishing
Opportunities and Access	83%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	87%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Professional Learning	78%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	71%	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.

- Streamline parental engagement by consolidating digital platforms into a single system with unified login credentials, which would simplify the process for parents to access student data and support their children's education. Improve the clarity and consistency of communications regarding academic expectations and school events to ensure parents are better informed and can engage more effectively.
- Provide teachers with information beyond the benefits of achieving National Board Certification (NBC) 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 developed a continuum of integrated academic, social, emotional, and behavioral supports that are implemented based on disaggregated student data.

- School leaders and teachers stated that the school has developed a Staff Professional Development (PD) focused on mental well-being, with a Professional Learning Community (PLC) dedicated to Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) informed by student and teacher data.
- During the various focus groups, it was noted that the school counselor led Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) sessions across various group sizes (tier 1-3 support), including individual support, and that the school psychologists provide one-on-one SEL lessons for Tier 3 support.
- In focus groups with teachers and students, teachers and students shared that the school has implemented the "Leader in Me" curriculum and is in place to foster SEL across the school.
- Various focus groups stated that SEL is integrated into classroom lessons, with additional support in "Learning Center" classrooms.

The school has implemented an evidence-based effective strategy to support students toward academic success.

- In the teacher focus group, teachers stated that the school has a Focused Interventions Reteaching Enrichment (FIRE) that has been established to offer dedicated time for academic interventions and enrichment activities.
 - School leaders and teachers in focus groups stated that "Collaborative Child Conversations" and a structured data collection process inform the adjustment of academic support tiers.
 - During the teacher focus group, teachers shared that "Leader in Me", Collaborative Child Conversations, and mentorship programs like "Dragon Buddies" provide positive academic and behavioral support.
1. During the student focus group, students indicated that the school provides various support options for students facing mental health challenges. These include access to school counselors, psychologists, and other trusted adults whom students can approach for assistance.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The school has many well-developed systems that monitor student academic, social, emotional, and behavioral support; however, the various systems could be further optimized to ensure more cohesive and efficient parental involvement.

2. During the parent focus group, parents expressed that simplifying and consolidating digital platforms into a single system with one set of login credentials would make it easier for them to support their children's education.
3. In the parent focus group, parents shared that they are unclear on the expectations for their children (homework, etc.) in how to support their children as the school has multiple systems and log-in applications to track student progress.
4. Parents have expressed concerns about the clarity of communication regarding upcoming events at the school. They reported difficulties in staying informed about events their children are involved in, suggesting that the current communication methods are not effectively reaching them.

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

Streamline parental engagement by consolidating digital platforms into a single system with unified login credentials, which would simplify the process for parents to access student data and support their children’s education. Improve the clarity and consistency of communications regarding academic expectations and school events to ensure parents are better informed and can engage more effectively.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Audit all current digital systems used for tracking academic, social, emotional, and behavioral support to identify overlap and potential for consolidation.
- Develop a standardized template or set of guidelines for communicating homework and other academic expectations to parents.
- Implement a centralized calendar system that integrates with the newly consolidated digital platform.
- Establish regular focus groups and surveys to gather feedback from parents on the usability of the digital platform and clarity of communications.

RESOURCES:

1. [Effective Strategies to Improve School Communication](#)

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 established an observation and feedback cycle that enables teachers and school leaders to engage in a process of actionable feedback. This process is designed to support professional growth and enhance student outcomes.

5. In the school leader focus group, school leaders stated that the school has developed an observation cycle that focuses on providing teachers with regular and actionable feedback to support teachers' continuous improvement.
6. In the focus group with school leaders and teachers, it was reported that novice teachers are assigned a mentor from the Local Education Agency (LEA). This mentor collaborates with both the teacher and the school administration to provide regular, actionable feedback to the novice teacher.

The school developed a professional learning program aimed at supporting teachers and leaders to engage in a cycle of learning that is job-embedded. Aligned with research-based practices, and grounded in data.

- During the teacher focus group, it was shared that the summer curriculum training is provided, focusing on reading and math, and adaptable to changes in the curriculum.
- Teachers shared that staff can choose their professional learning topics, such as data analysis and instructional differentiation, fostering expertise, and sharing of best practices among teachers.
- In the school leaders' focus group, school leaders shared that professional development topics are immediately applicable, allowing for direct classroom implementation.
- Leadership experience is integrated into professional learning, contributing to staff development.

The school has an established professional learning program focusing on data use for enhancing student outcomes.

- Teachers stated that they have the autonomy to choose professional learning topics that are of interest to them and can sign up in person or through an online platform.
- In the teacher focus group, it was reported that the LEA offers professional learning in two formats: centrally and onsite at schools. Additionally, the variety of professional learning topics available to teachers was discussed.

- During the teacher focus group survey, twelve out of twelve teachers responded that the professional learning that they are provided improves their teaching practices.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Staff at the school are unclear about the process of the LEA's plan to develop career growth that supports teachers in advancing through the teacher leader and school administration pathways.

- During the teacher focus group, teachers expressed concerns about insufficient communication concerning the career opportunities beyond the "National Board Certification" (NBC) and earning a master's degree.
- Teachers indicated that they would like to be provided with information on the various ways to improve/advance that does not solely involve moving into school administration.

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 teachers with information beyond the benefits of achieving National Board Certification (NBC) and acquiring advanced degrees.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Initiate a thorough evaluation to ascertain the extent of teachers' knowledge regarding their career progression opportunities.
- Collaborate with educational experts to create comprehensive, accessible resources that clearly outline career growth, including but not limited to the steps beyond NBCT.
- Organize a series of workshops aimed at disseminating this information among faculty. These sessions should encourage teachers to plan their professional growth, incorporating these opportunities.
- Implement a system for regular feedback from teachers regarding the clarity and usefulness of the information provided for career growth.
- Include familiarity with and active engagement in career progression opportunities as a criterion in the teacher evaluation process.

RESOURCES:

1. [MSDE Blueprint Pillar 2: High Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders](#)

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Judy Geisler, Teacher, Frederick County
2. Katherine Landen, Assistant Principal Garrett
3. Paul Fer, Principal, Frederick County
4. Howard Franklin, People Personnel Worker, Baltimore County
5. Tara Dedeaux, Principal, Harford County
6. Katherine Aiery, Teacher, Harford County

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, February 22, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Thirteen (13)

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, February 21, 2024	Thursday, February 22, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math 1st • Gym 2nd • ELA 2nd • FIRE 3rd • Math 4th • ELA K • ELA 3rd • Reading INT • Reading 5th 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math 5th • Math 5th • Math 2nd • Literacy

Number of Interviews

One (1)

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Seven (7)

- 15 students
- 4 school leaders
- 11 teachers
- 15 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Dufief Elementary

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.