

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support

Domain 3: Educator Support

Dundalk 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 2: Student Support	7
Domain 3: Educator Support	10
Appendix A	13
Appendix B	15

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 DUNDALK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Dundalk Middle School, located in Baltimore County, serves a total of 860 students in grades 6th – 8th. The enrolled population is made up of 46% Hispanic, 24% African American, 22% White, 7% 2+ races, and 1% Asian. The school's population includes approximately 65% of students who receive free or reduced meals and 13% 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 Domains 2 and 3. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing in Career Growth and its lowest rating of Developing 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	65%	Accomplishing
Implementation with Fidelity	80%	Accomplishing
Opportunities and Access	75%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	50%	Developing
Professional Learning	69%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	82%	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.

- Develop a comprehensive plan to improve student behavior management and provide targeted professional learning for teachers, focusing on strategies to handle classroom power struggles and other critical issues. Ensure that this plan includes regular assessments and feedback loops to continuously improve and adapt the strategies based on teacher and student needs.
- Implement a more effective cycle of observations and feedback for teachers and school leaders to foster professional growth and improve student outcomes. This process should include detailed, actionable, and timely feedback to ensure teachers feel acknowledged and supported.

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 implemented a multi-tiered system that provides universal, targeted, and intensive, evidence-based support for students.

- During the school leader focus group, school leaders stated that the school has implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and teachers are actively involved in the development and application of the PBIS system.
- In the school leader and teacher focus group, school leaders and teachers stated that the school is in the process of establishing procedures for the Student Support Team (SST) process that provides both instructional and social-emotional learning (SEL) support.
- In the teacher focus group, teachers stated that they are using Tier 1 best practices based on Individualized Education Programs (IEP) or 504 plans.

The school effectively uses supplemental tutoring strategies, with continuous improvement efforts, to support students' academic success.

- During the school leader focus group, school leaders stated that the school implements the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, providing supplemental instruction to improve college readiness, and that the school has a special state distinction for its AVID programming.
- School leaders and teachers in their respective focus groups shared that the school monitors performance, providing a clear breakdown of standards and identifying struggling students. Tutoring is then allocated accordingly, with each department having designated tutoring times.
- In the student focus group, it was stated that the school offers the "I Promise Program", which includes after-school tutoring, transportation for students, snacks, and socialization programs to help students bond. The program is designed for all students and aims to engage students outside of school.

The school effectively provides resources to address barriers affecting marginalized students and offers comprehensive wraparound services to students and families.

- During the school leader focus group, school leaders shared that the school has partnered with an outside organization that provides tutoring, homework help, and snacks.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The school is in the process of developing a well-structured plan and appointing qualified personnel to ensure the mental well-being of students.

- During the teacher's focus group, teachers stated that student behaviors are worsening and impacting learning. Teachers said they need more support and strategies to effectively manage these behaviors.
- In the teacher focus group, teachers stated that although professional learning sessions are conducted, there is a need for more focused time on important issues such as power struggles between students and teachers. Teachers stated they want more opportunities to engage in these professional learning activities.

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 a comprehensive plan to improve student behavior management and provide targeted professional learning for teachers, focusing on strategies to handle classroom power struggles and other critical issues. Ensure that this plan includes regular assessments and feedback loops to continuously improve and adapt the strategies based on teacher and student needs.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Conduct a thorough review of current student behavior incidents to identify common issues and trends.
- Schedule dedicated professional development sessions focusing specifically on managing student behavior and resolving power struggles.
- Develop grade-level/school-level non-negotiables for classroom and hallway behavior,
- Establish a peer support network where teachers can share experiences and strategies related to behavior management.

RESOURCES:

1. [Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports](#)

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 engages teachers and leaders in ongoing data analysis to enhance student outcomes through collaborative and data-driven outcomes.

- In the school leader focus group, it was shared that teachers engage in ongoing data analysis during collaborative planning meetings, utilizing data tools across grade levels and content areas.
- In the teacher focus group, it was stated that they perform data analytics with their department chair, using data charts to compare student performance on standards with state benchmarks and develop lessons to address academic gaps.

The school allocates time for teacher collaboration, particularly through its effective use of block scheduling and grade-level support meetings. This approach ensures that teachers have dedicated time for peer collaboration, allowing them to focus on improving student academic outcomes.

- In the teacher focus group, teachers responded favorably to the 90-minute block time, indicating satisfaction with the allotted collaboration period.
- Teachers stated that grade-level team leaders meet every month to provide support for student issues, fostering collaboration and problem-solving among peers.

The career ladder is equitably implemented to support the growth and advancement of teachers and leaders.

- The teacher focus group indicated that they consistently receive updated pay scale information and information on the career ladder.
- During the teacher focus group, teachers mentioned that a mini cohort is being initiated for National Board Certification (NBC), supported by effective coaching and professional development (PD). Additionally, all nine teachers indicated they are aware of the pay scale increases and the opportunities for NBC.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The school is developing a regular cycle of observations and feedback for teachers and school leaders to enhance their professional growth and improve student outcomes.

- In the teacher focus group, teachers expressed a need to receive actionable feedback. They stated that such feedback is essential for them to feel acknowledged and supported.
- During the teacher focus group, participants expressed that the current Google form used for feedback is inadequate. They mentioned that it lacks the necessary details and comprehensive information needed to offer teachers actionable feedback.
- Teachers further indicated that they are experiencing challenges with receiving timely and actionable feedback from observations, often having to seek out this feedback from principals directly. There is a consensus among teachers that while digital forms are used for feedback, more detailed, positive, and actionable feedback is needed to support their professional growth.

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

Implement a more effective cycle of observations and feedback for teachers and school leaders to foster professional growth and improve student outcomes. This process should include detailed, actionable, and timely feedback to ensure teachers feel acknowledged and supported.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Conduct training sessions for principals and other observers on how to provide constructive, detailed, and supportive feedback. Emphasize the importance of positive and conversational feedback.
- Establish a schedule for regular observation and feedback sessions, ensuring they occur frequently enough to be meaningful but not overwhelming.
- Develop a protocol to ensure feedback is provided within a specified timeframe after observations, ideally within 48 hours.
- Provide administration with training on how to provide teachers with actionable feedback.

RESOURCES:

1. [Providing Teachers with Feedback That Fosters Growth](#)

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Ann Heflin, Principal, Montgomery County Public Schools
2. Monica Talley, Career Education Manager, Worksource Montgomery
3. Eric Counts, SPED Compliance, Charles County Public Schools
4. ShoShauna McCoy, Assistant Principal, Prince Georges County Public Schools
5. Jazmine Rhone, Ed.D., Academic Content Liaison, Baltimore City Public Schools
6. Noraida Ankobia, Resident Principal, Baltimore City Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Six

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, April 17, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math 6 Self-Contained • Effective Learning Habits • Language Arts 7 • Math 7 • Algebra 1 • Language Arts 6 Inclusion

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 9 Students
- 6 School Leaders
- 9 Teachers
- 2 Parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Dundalk 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.