Maryland
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Maryland School Review
Expert Review Team Mathematics Report

The Barclay School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

October 9th -10th, 2024

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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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 two or three-day site visit that includes classroom observations, focus groups, and a principal interview.

The Expert Review Team forms a consensus based on student data, documents, observations, focus groups, and a principal interview. The rubric consists of two domains:

- **Domain 1: Instruction and Student Support** - High-quality curriculum, instructional materials, teaching practices, and assessments are implemented to support student learning. Schools use multiple sources of data (qualitative, quantitative, and perceptual) to identify students and implement a multi-tiered approach to support all student groups. Progress monitoring systems are clearly defined and integrated into daily practice.

- **Domain 2: Professional Learning and Educator Support** - Educators at all levels are provided with support to improve results and shift instructional practice. Professional learning goals for educators are clearly aligned with school and LEA overarching student achievement goals.

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, is available online in the Maryland School Report Card.

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 and action steps to address the recommendation.

Appendix: The appendix expands 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.

Executive Summary

ABOUT THE BARCLAY SCHOOL

The Barclay School, located in Baltimore City, serves a total of 398 students in grades PreK-8. The student population is 74.4% African American, 20.1% Hispanic, 3.3% white, and 1.5% two or more races. The school's population includes 95% Title I, 79.3% of economically disadvantaged, and 12.3% students with disabilities. More detailed information, including enrollment, attendance, demographics, and student outcome data, can be found in the Maryland School Report Card.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following actions are recommended to support 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 subsequent sections.

- Increase instructional opportunities for students to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others through student discourse to create more learner-directed classrooms by equipping teachers with higher-order questioning strategies to support students with constructing logical arguments and drawing mathematical conclusions, critiquing the reasoning of their peers, and effectively responding to and using peer feedback.

- Empower students to take ownership of their learning, encourage peer leadership, and enhance critical thinking skills by increasing collaborative learning structures to foster deeper understanding of complex mathematical ideas, ensure cooperative learning environments for students to collaboratively problem solve and complete rigorous tasks, and to build on each other's knowledge.

- Enhance current planning structures by including vertical planning opportunities to provide all staff with on-going support and professional growth with using the grade level progression of math state standards and current student data to develop daily differentiated lessons to meet the needs of all learners while increasing opportunities for teacher collaboration and leadership.

- Increase the opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice and receive actionable feedback designed to support professional growth and improve student outcomes by implementing consistent observation and feedback systems and structures.

Domain 1: Instruction and Student Support

Instruction and Student Support	High-quality curriculum, instructional materials, teaching practices and assessments are implemented to support student learning. Schools use multiple sources of data (qualitative, quantitative, and perceptual) to identify students and implement a multi-tiered approach to support all student groups. Progress monitoring systems are clearly defined and integrated into daily practice.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

STRENGTHS

In all classes visited, there was evidence of instruction reflecting research-based practices that challenged and supported students.

- In all classes, teachers encouraged and supported students to demonstrate positive mindsets around mathematics. In one class, the teacher set the stage for learning by reviewing the standard and goal that was being taught.
- In four out of six classes, teachers maintained a welcoming and inclusive community that valued the diversity of students and students demonstrated joy for learning by quickly moving to the assigned groups and immediately starting the given tasks.
- In five out of six classes, teachers had positive and respectful interactions with their students including using positive reinforcement and praise to encourage positive academic outcomes.
- In all classes, teachers used concrete models and manipulatives for students to justify their thinking 100% of the time
- During focus groups, parents indicated a positive math culture and overall experience for them and their children. Specifically local university partnership to support the school's math initiative.
- During the interview, the principal shared, “I have the strongest teachers in the area of math. We are departmentalized because I wanted to ensure the teachers could really go deep with specific content. Instead of trying to teach multiple contents, satisfactory. I want them to really be highly effective in specific content and so being departmentalized was a priority.”

AREAS FOR GROWTH

There were minimal opportunities for student collaboration and learner directed instruction fostering balanced collaboration, peer feedback, or opportunities for student communication and mathematical reasoning.

- In two out of six classes students had opportunities to engage with mathematics to solve problems or represent quantities in multiple ways, had students select mathematical tools for specific tasks, or had students use patterns to simplify/solve problems

- In one out of six classes, students discussed and interpreted the meaning of quantities within a problem situation using Read-Write-Draw activities, recognized patterns and structures to solve math problems, engaged in a turn and talk to discuss their thought process with peers, and provided students the chance to use peer feedback and explain reasoning to refine their thinking.
- In two out of six classes teachers used real world scenarios that applied to mathematical models.
- During focus groups, eight out of ten students would like more group work opportunities or have requested they work with friends.
- During focus groups, two out of five school leaders reported teachers conduct small groups daily, an interventionist works with the highest need grades 4-6 students to assess skills and uses of curriculum related resources for intervention.
- During focus groups, two out of eight teachers reported Intervention groups consist of no more than eight students and are formed after exit ticket data is provided.

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.

Focus Area 1:

Increase instructional opportunities for students to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others through student discourse to create more learner-directed classrooms by equipping teachers with higher-order questioning strategies to support students with constructing logical arguments and drawing mathematical conclusions, critique the reasoning of their peers, and effectively respond to and use peer feedback.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Survey teachers and use informal observation data to identify teacher leaders who regularly use questions to deepen student learning and push their thinking using intentional questions to deepen learning.
- Provide ongoing professional development opportunities on higher-order questioning to ensure teachers plan and scaffold questions daily that will increase students' levels of thinking and use evidence to justify responses.
- During professional development and weekly planning model and share best practices on how to use the curriculum and instructional materials to increase the frequency of higher-order questions during daily instruction. Provide regular opportunities for teacher leaders

to share lessons that promote student discourse and critical thinking with higher order questions.
- Utilize collaborative planning for teachers to use the curricular and instructional materials to develop and plan varied questions that engage all students in the learning and require them to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Monitor and support consistent implementation through peer observations and informal observations. Following any observation ensure immediate and specific feedback to teachers and follow-up with coaching or resources to address challenges. Include opportunities to celebrate and share success.

Focus Area 2:

Empower students to take ownership of their learning, encourage peer leadership, and enhance critical thinking skills by increasing collaborative learning structures to foster deeper understanding of complex mathematical ideas, ensure cooperative learning environments for students to collaboratively solve problems, complete rigorous tasks, and build on each other's knowledge.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Survey teachers and use informal observation data to identify teacher leaders who regularly incorporate collaborative learning structures to engage students and support academic progress. Identified teacher leaders should support the school-wide implementation of collaborative learning.

- During academic planning, provide planning time for teachers to use the grade-level curriculum and instructional materials to design structured collaborative learning requiring students to discuss and explain their reasoning, engage with peers to make meaning of content or deepen understanding, solve complex mathematical problems, reinforce the use of academic vocabulary and language, and lead their learning.

- Establish schoolwide roles and expectations for student collaboration- to include clear roles and expectations- to ensure active participation and contribution. Provide explicit guidance to ensure respectful communication, shared responsibility, and mutual support.

- Establish schoolwide roles and expectations for all teachers and support staff to monitor group interactions, assess student progress, and provide real-time feedback to keep all students engaged in the learning.

Domain 2: Professional Learning and Educator Support

Professional Learning and Educator Support	Educators at all levels are provided with support to improve results and shift instructional practice. Professional learning goals for educators are clearly aligned to school and LEA overarching student achievement goals.

FINDING and RECOMMENDATIONS

STRENGTHS

There was evidence that teachers and leaders participate in ongoing, job-embedded professional learning anchored in the curriculum and instructional materials.

- All five school leaders stated they lead and/or participate in weekly collaborative planning with teachers.
- During focus groups, eight out of eight teachers stated they participate in weekly content collaborative planning and monthly grade level planning.
- During the interview, the principal shared how teachers participate in rich professional development around math, instruction, and curriculum offered throughout the school year, including district sponsor days and weekly collaborative planning. Our teachers are in professional learning communities with their colleagues and content coaches weekly. They are diving deep into curriculum, unpacking and aligning the standards and student assessment outcomes. Our teachers have one planning period every day and some teachers meet one-on-one with their coach or go to observe colleagues in practice at other schools
- The site visit documentation included comprehensive academic planning agendas for grades 2-8.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

It was evident that teachers participate in professional development; however, there are limited opportunities for educators to act as leaders by leading professional development and a need for increased opportunities for teachers to receive actionable feedback following an observation.

- During the focus groups, teachers shared inconsistencies with professional development opportunities. The elementary teachers shared they collaborate only with the math coach, middle school teachers shared they meet weekly as a team.
- None of the teachers referred to a cycle of learning. Teachers do have the opportunity to conduct peer visits, as recommended by the math coach.
- Five out of five school leaders stated they regularly lead collaborative planning with limited opportunities for teachers to lead.

- Eight out of eight teachers stated most professional development opportunities are offered throughout the school year by the school district and there are limited opportunities provided at the school level.

- Five out of five school leaders were unable to share supporting evidence or specific information about regular informal observations or receiving feedback. They made reference to peer observations that are organized by the math coach and occur twice a quarter.

- One out of five school leaders stated that teachers have the opportunity to facilitate systemic professional development sessions at the district level.

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.

Focus Area 1:

Enhance current planning structures by including vertical planning opportunities to provide all staff with on-going support and professional growth by using the grade level progression of math state standards and current student data to develop daily differentiated lessons to meet the needs of all learners while increasing opportunities for teacher collaboration and leadership.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Enhance current academic planning structure to include monthly opportunities for teachers to collaboratively analyze how math standards build from each grade and identify skills to reinforce learning gaps and plan for both remedial and advanced instruction.
- Provide professional development on math standards progression to ensure teachers understand the vertical alignment of math standards and how to use the information along with student data to plan instruction. Provide multiple opportunities for teachers to practice analyzing student data and connect standards progression with instructional planning. Encourage teachers to share strategies for differentiation, such as scaffolding techniques, enrichment activities, and intervention supports.
- Monitor and support consistent implementation. Conduct regular lesson plan reviews to ensure lessons reflect the progression of standards, effective use of student data, and differentiation. Provide feedback to teachers and celebrate successes. Use findings from observations to identify areas for further professional development and collaborative improvement.

Focus Area 2

Increase the opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice and receive actionable feedback designed to support professional growth and improve student outcomes by implementing consistent observation and feedback systems and structures.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Enhance current observation and feedback structures by developing and implementing an informal observation calendar for all instructional support staff including coaches, teacher leaders, and administrators.
- Designate time during instructional leadership meetings to identify the focus areas for informal observations (options to consider- reviewing the implementation of the adopted curriculum, effective use of the standards of mathematical practice, differentiation of instruction, small group instruction, etc.), establish common observation tools for collecting data during the observations, determine the timeline to complete the observations, establish systems of feedback, and provide time for the team to reflect and adjust the cycle based on the data collected and the needs of the teaching staff.
- Establish systems to share and celebrate staff for any improvement made through the implementation of consistent observation and feedback cycles.

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Shawn Mitchell, Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools
2. John Seelke, Teacher, Montgomery County Public Schools
3. Lachon Winston, Alt-Cert Manager, Prince George's County Public Schools
4. Eric Counts, SPED Compliance, SPED Advocate, Adjunct Professor, Charles County Public Schools
5. Laila Watkins, Teacher Specialist, Frederick County Public Schools
6. Adrin Leak, Digital Literacy Specialist, Prince George's County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, October 10, 2024

Site Visit Day 3

None

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Six

Description of Classrooms Visited

October 9, 2024
• Kindergarten Math • 1st Grade Math • 2nd Grade Math • 3rd Grade Math • 4th Grade Math • 5th Grade Math

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 10 students
- 5 school leaders
- 8 teachers
- 4 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school.