Maryland School Review
Expert Review Team ELA Report

Friendsville Elementary School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

October 23-24, 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 FRIENDSVILLE ELEMENTARY
Friendsville Elementary, located in Garrett County, serves a total of 129 students in grades PreK-5. The student population 4.7% Hispanic, 1.6% two or more races, and is 93.8% white. The school's population includes 47% of economically disadvantaged, and 11% 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.

- Provide professional learning focused on including formative assessments during instruction and using the data from those assessments to drive differentiated instruction as a regular component of every lesson and increase student discourse. Consider integrating technology into instruction to support individualization and differentiate instruction. These actions will support building student agency.

- Create a job-embedded professional development series that focuses on collecting real-time instructional data during the lesson to differentiate and adjust instruction to meet the needs of each student. Include a focus on data triangulation with the LEA data sources to build decision-making with multiple sources of data.

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

The school provided evidence of consistent implementation of the tenants of the Science of Reading for phonics and word study, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. There is consistent evidence of a school-wide focus on student writing.

- Four of the eight classrooms visited were early childhood classes. All four classes provided consistent evidence of students engaging in foundational components of the Science of Reading. For example, students engaged in practice of rhyming and onset rhyme, clapping out syllables, and routines of blending/segmenting and used color tiles to represent sounds in words.

- All eight classrooms provided evidence of expectations for students to accurately use newly learned words in their writing and speaking. For example, students were learning parts of a story (i.e., rising action climax, etc.) and then had to use the parts to describe what happened.

- There was consistent evidence of structured writing in all three of the intermediate classrooms. For example, in one of the intermediate classes, students were engaged in the brainstorming portion of the writing process and students used success criteria as a guide.

- In another classroom, students were completing a plot map organizer to summarize elements of a story and then individually wrote drafts of their own personal narratives using that same plot map as the guide.

- During the student focus group, participants shared that they write personal narratives every year starting in grade 3, which includes peer editing and reviewing.

- During the principal interview, he shared that there is an intentional focus on student writing through authentic life experience like raising trout, planting in the greenhouse, conducting a "pumpkin drop," and having students write about their experience.

- The school's documentation provided evidence of regular weekly planned PLCs with structured instructional focus that includes data analysis of various data points.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

In all classrooms visited the consistent focus on implementation of the science of reading (SOR) tenants was evident. However, differentiating instruction for all learners and building student agency is an area that should have ongoing support.

- Of the eight classrooms visited, there were two classes where students had a choice regarding the type of tasks to complete and the product to be created. In the other six classes those decisions were made by the teacher.

- During the student focus group discussion a few students offered that they had some opportunities for choice, such as choosing a project, and the other students agreed that was the only time they can make the decision.

- One classroom provided evidence of small group instruction where students worked with the teacher as they were timed on reading a list of words, and the other students rotated through three stations.

- All teachers noted many assessments provided throughout the year and many are conducted at the beginning of the year. However, there was no explanation about how these data are used or what data is used between each assessment 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.

Focus Area 1:

Provide professional learning focused on including formative assessments during instruction and using the data from those assessments to drive differentiated instruction as a regular component of every lesson and increase student discourse. Consider integrating technology into instruction to support individualization and differentiate instruction. These actions will support building student agency.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Leverage the current expertise within the building on implementing student discourse during instruction.
- Include a peer-to-peer learning model with the current PLC structures to encourage collegial learning through class visit of other grades to build shared practices for differentiation and integration of technology.
- Monitor through the same learning walk structure to create opportunities for teachers to provide non-evaluative feedback of "glows and grows" to colleagues.

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 with school and LEA overarching student achievement goals.

FINDING and RECOMMENDATIONS

STRENGTHS

There was significant evidence of teacher use of standards-aligned instructional materials, from classroom visits and in focus group discussions. Teachers and school leaders provided insight into the regularly scheduled professional learning communities (PLCs).

- All teachers and school leaders agree that there are regular walkthroughs for classroom visits during daily instruction.

- During the teacher focus group discussion, all six participants agreed that the weekly PLC is used to help teachers look at student data to determine needs.

- During the teacher focus group, the early learning teachers discussed the benefits of collaborative time with teachers from other schools to work on curriculum and assessments. An example was during a recent professional development workshop the work focused on purposeful centers for students.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The school follows a rigorous schedule of assessments for students. However, the discussions regarding data collection did not include the collection and use of daily instructional data.

- During the teacher focus group, all teachers expressed their frustration with screening assessments and the time involved in conducting screeners. Teachers cited the numerous assessments required at the county level.

- One of the six teachers expressed that collaborative planning time is spent creating new materials instead of understanding and implementing the materials 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:

Create a job embedded professional development series that focuses on collecting real time instructional data during the lesson to differentiate and adjust instruction to meet the needs of each student. Include a focus on data triangulation with the LEA data sources to build decision making with multiple sources of data.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Provide professional development on how to collect and use daily instructional data during instruction.
- Include a session on triangulating data sources to build decision-making on instructional approaches with multiple data sources.
- Expand on the current administrative walkthrough process to incorporate teachers who are working to implement specified learning topics from the professional learning series.
- Develop a schoolwide walkthrough tool to ensure key components of core curriculum and differentiation models are evident

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Dana Peake, District 504 Coordinator, Washington County Public Schools
2. Dr. David Stone, Assistant Vice President, School Programs, Kennedy Kreiger
3. Scott Buhrman, Content Specialist, Humanities Washington County Public Schools
4. Roman Ganoe, Teacher, Social Studies, Washington County Public Schools
5. Dr. James Berry, Retired Administrator, Montgomery County Public Schools
6. Andrew Zanghi, Principal, Elementary, Prince George's County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, October 24, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Eight

Description of Classrooms Visited

Tuesday, March 20, 2024
• 1st Grade ELA
• Kindergarten Intervention small group
• 2nd Grade ELA
• Gifted & Talented (pull-out)
• 3rd Grade ELA
• 4th Grade ELA
• 5th Grade, ELA
• Special Education (self-contained)
• Kindergarten

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 9 students

- 5 school leaders

- 6 teachers

- 7 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school.