



Maryland School Review Expert Review Team ELA Report

Riverview 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 RIVERVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Riverview Elementary School, located in Baltimore County, serves a total of 553 students in grades PreK-5. The student population is 2.4% Asian, 31.5% African American 45.9% Hispanic, 6.9% two or more races, and 13% white. The school's population includes 58.2% economically disadvantaged, 39.6% multilingual learners, 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.

- Develop professional focused on learning building the capacity of teachers by teacher leaders/specialists to plan, deliver, and assess instruction through the professional learning community (PLC) process. This learning should be dedicated to student engagement strategies that will increase student discourse opportunities during instruction and building student agency.
- Provide support and educational opportunities to empower families to monitor the progress of their child's learning, including how to interpret student data sheets that are distributed to families. Educate families on how to better monitor student performance in their classes using the Schoology grade book.
- Galvanize the multiple arms of professional learning to include coaching and modeling to develop a framework for a teaching/learning cycle to plan, implement, reflect and adjust daily instruction.

Domain 1: Instruction and Student Support

<p>Instruction and Student Support</p>	<p>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.</p>
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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

STRENGTHS

The school’s learning environment produced a consistent core instructional program and provided evidence of consistent implementation of the approved curricula resources and a schoolwide structured monitoring system. All professional staff were aware of both and made references to how the instructional program benefits.

- During the classroom visits, four of the five classes provided evidence of students engaged in auditory practice of some of the tenants of Science of Reading (SoR) like phonological and phonemic awareness activities as modeled by the teacher, and articulation of speech sounds with students. Additionally, three of those classes incorporated instructional routines including sand trays, whiteboard sheets/markers, and sound cards.
- Half of the eight classrooms visited provided evidence of students engaged in explicitly taught vocabulary lessons through spoken verbally and in writing lessons that included definitions, pronunciations, and photos.
- In five of the eight classrooms, students were engaged in before, during, or after reading strategies including setting the purpose for learning, activating prior knowledge, and small group reading and discussions lessons.
- Three of the classrooms visited offered a glimpse of students in the whole group, engaging in writing through explicit instruction, modeling and guided practice. These structures included sentence formation and organizing ideas on common text.
- In six of the ten classrooms, there was evidence of multiple forms of assessment throughout the lesson, as well as students who received and applied feedback on the assignment or task.
- Participants in the school leaders focus group shared approximately twenty teachers in the building have completed LETRS training. Additionally, four of the ten teachers in the focus group shared they were trained.
- During the teachers focus group, discussions included Riverview piloted Structured Literacy in grades K-2 and that the LEA offered cohorts in Orton-Gillingham (OG) training to support teachers feel comfortable with the Science of Reading. One teacher said Structured Literacy perfectly aligns to SOR.

- The principal interview highlighted a monitoring system designed with regular routine for classroom visits that includes monitoring the “WIN (What I need) Block” that is designed for structured interventions to support students.
- The principal interview also highlighted that by using appropriate funding, twice a month she has secured curriculum representatives to provide an additional layer of structured for side-by-side coaching model along with a tailored professional learning for individual teachers.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

In all classrooms visited, students demonstrated the use of physical manipulatives, as well as semi-concrete and abstract models for the mathematics in which they were engaged. In the use of all these models, they were mainly teacher-driven, rather than student-selected.

- Out of the ten classrooms visited, there was evidence of classroom instruction that integrated regular opportunities for students to engage in discourse with each other was evident in one classroom.
- Teachers shared that the curriculum assessment report is available in both English and Spanish, however, any written response provided by students in languages other than English, receive a score of “0” and teachers feel students are meeting the standard in their native language.
- During the principal interview, she expressed there is strong focus on inclusive literacy for individual students who need to reach grade-level proficiency using the WIN Block; however, there was no mention of efforts directed toward acceleration.

While there is evidence of using data to inform instruction, the two non-professional groups indicated there is a need for helping students and parents understand the data reports that are provided and how those groups can understand the direction of learning each student needs.

- During the student focus group discussion, students expressed that they were not aware of their strengths or areas of growth in writing/reading. Some students shared statements of an internalized perception of being “smart” and not being in the “smart group”.
- Parent focus group discussions provided statements from four of the five parents sharing they were not aware of the standards students needed to meet and were not aware of interventions provided to students or the eligibility criteria to receive intervention.

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

Develop professional focused on learning building the capacity of teachers by teacher leaders/specialists to plan, deliver, and assess instruction through the PLC process. This learning should be dedicated to student engagement strategies that will increase student discourse opportunities during instruction and building student agency.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Leverage the current structure for informal learning to incorporate visits to classrooms that are currently implementing the targeted learning goals successfully to support a visible learning model for teacher efficacy and development of new instructional models, strategies, and techniques.
- Develop a peer-to-peer monitoring system that provides teachers with opportunities to share and improve practices without an evaluative lens from administrators.
- Create and collect feedback from a school climate survey (student, teacher, and parent survey) to develop student agency.

Focus Area 2

Provide support and educational opportunities to empower families to monitor the progress of their child's learning, including how to interpret student data sheets that are distributed to families. Educate families on how to better monitor student performance in their classes using the Schoology grade book.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Develop data conversations for students that incorporates helping them set target goals for beginning, middle, and end of year to ensure students know where they are progressing throughout the course of each year.
- Partner with the LEA to host and provide data literacy learning for parents and community partners to continue the conversations with students.

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 professional learning provided to teachers for the use of High-Quality Instructional Materials. There are multiple entities providing professional development implementing the curriculum and providing instructional strategies to support all learners.

- Five teachers praised the content of LETRS training and how much better they now understand the Science of Reading that was provided by the LEA.
- One teacher in the focus group mentioned that teachers bring student work samples to PLCs and are taught how to evaluate the work for strengths and areas of growth.
- During the school leaders focus group discussion, shared that collaborative planning meetings bring together ELA teachers with special education and English language development teachers and teacher specialists. One of the five participants explained that administrators engage in regular four-week coaching cycles with informal observations of teacher classrooms.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

While there was consistent messaging regarding the numerous types of support from each professional stakeholder group, there was no mention of how each entity is building coherence in messaging or sharing data points. There is a need for coherent job-embedded structures to deliver instruction supportive to teachers and instructional support growth.

- All nine of the participants in the school leaders focus group discussed the school goal focused on building the capacity of teachers by teacher leaders/specialists to plan, deliver, and assess instruction through the PLC process.
- Five of the six teachers expressed that the grade 3-5 reading assessment resources do not align with Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) expectations.
- Out of five teachers in the focus group, one teacher explained how she empowered students to take ownership of their own learning data, showing them how to interpret it.

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

Galvanize the multiple arms of professional learning to include coaching and modeling to develop a framework for a teaching/learning cycle to plan, implement, reflect and adjust daily instruction.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Utilize the current professional development for building assessment literacy to build teacher and instructional support capacity on the alignment of all assessments used to monitor and improve student outcomes. Include teachers who currently implement these practices as co-leaders in the learning.
- Survey teachers and instructional support regarding comfort of implementation from each of the groups providing coach support and the messaging between school-based personnel, curriculum representatives and district professional development to ensure coherence and consistency.
- Leverage the leadership team for all members leading professional development to create a simplified model to be implemented school-wide to ensure there is a coherent structure for teachers to follow.
- Create a survey to collect feedback from all stakeholders (student, teacher, and parent survey) to measure success of implementation and adjust for improvement needs.

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Susan Huff, Gifted and Talented Teacher, Cecil County Public Schools
2. Ann Hefflin, Elementary Principal, Montgomery County Public Schools
3. Frank Vetter, Ed.D., Director of Assessment, Data Reporting, & Strategic Improvement, Frederick County Public Schools
4. Toi Davis, Ed.D., Principal, Prince George's County Public Schools
5. Georgina Whalen, Instructional Lead Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools
6. Miguel Cervantes del Toro, Principal, Baltimore City Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, October 24, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Ten

Description of Classrooms Visited

Wednesday, October 23, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd grade reading intervention • 3rd grade ELA • 5th grade ELA • 1st grade ELA • Kindergarten ELA • 1st grade ELA • 4th grade ELA • Kindergarten ELA • 1st grade ELA • 5th grade ELA

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 8 students
- 5 school leaders
- 6 teachers
- 7 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school.