Maryland School Review
Expert Review Team ELA Report

Rodgers Forge

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

October 9-10, 2024

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

Tenette Y. Smith, Ed.D.
Deputy State Superintendent
Office of Teaching and Learning

Wes Moore
Governor

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Joshua L. Michael, Ph.D.
President, Maryland State Board of Education

Monica Goldson, Ed.D. (Vice President)

Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang, MSN, PNP, RN-BC

Kenny Clash

Clarence C. Crawford (President Emeritus)

Abhiram Gaddam (Student Member)

Susan J. Getty, Ed.D.

Nick Greer

Dr. Irma E. Johnson

Dr. Kim Lewis

Dr. Joan Mele-McCarthy, D.A., CCC-SLP

Rachel L. McCusker

Xiomara V. Medina, M.Ed.

Samir Paul, Esq

Table of Contents

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 RODGERS FORGE ELEMENTARY

Rodgers Forge Elementary, located in Baltimore County, serves a total of 382 students in grades K-5. The student population is 7.9% Asian, 3.4% African American, 6.0% Hispanic, 9.4% two or more races, and 73.0% white. The school's population includes 4.5% of economically disadvantaged, 3.7% multilingual learners, and 10.6% 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 a protocol for meaningful feedback to students, using real-time data to make recommendations and support students as needed. Look for opportunities for differentiation in lessons, acceleration, and remediation to strengthen skills for students. Focus on targeted support in classes utilizing purposeful grouping and station work with adult instructional support.

- Create a professional learning series that leverages promising practices for collegial study and growth. Look for opportunities to introduce more inclusive literacy practices and opportunities for students to expand their thinking while making connections between text to self.

- Utilize the daily data generated during instructional learning to guide literacy practices on how to adjust the time and intensity of instruction for each component based on data and student needs while maintaining high expectations.

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 consistent evidence of implementation of the curriculum with fidelity and students' knowledge of practiced routines provided firm grounding for planned lessons and students to engage independently. These actions supported a positive classroom culture and positive teacher to student interactions.

- In five of the six classrooms that had phonics as part of the instructional block teachers are providing immediate corrective feedback as students worked independently. Teachers are modelling precise and clear articulation as they practice phonemic awareness.

- All four of the primary grades, there was evidence of students reading in a literacy circle and engaged in teacher-to-student conversations about their selected text, and then student-to-student where they asked each other questions.

- In the four classrooms that were specifically engaged in the writing portion of the lesson, the writing instruction required student roles for collaboration with one student using a writing checklist and the other student served as a peer-review for the task. Students were engaged in the writing process at various stages, as some were in the editing and review process while others were working on publishing.

- School leaders in the focus group shared, "The "Authors Chair" has motivated kids to want to write." This is one of the strengths they shared, and it is visible when conducting informal visits to look for strategies in use.

- Teachers in the focus group shared that the curriculum has built-in support for multilingual learners (ML) including specific prompts and differentiated texts.

- School leaders and teachers shared that the text associated with the curriculum and vocabulary picture cards include diverse representations. The adoption of the new curriculum provided an increased number of diverse texts.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

As all classrooms visited provided evidence of structured learning routines, there is a need for bridged and scaffolded learning models throughout the lesson. Many of the classes were mainly teacher-driven rather than student-selected.

- Most of the fourteen classrooms visited underutilized the gradual release model as they moved from whole group instruction to independent work.

- While school leaders and teachers shared multiple opportunities are intentionally provided for assessment data review and analysis to determine student grouping during collaborative planning periods, there was little to no evidence of adjustments being made during instruction with small groups.

- During the teacher focus group, teachers described the curriculum as inflexible and shared that they are rarely given opportunities to adjust instruction as needed due to the rigid pace of the curriculum.

- During the parent focus group, some shared that they received progress reports for their students, while others said they have not seen them or that they do not include meaningful information.

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 a protocol for meaningful feedback to students, using real time data to make recommendations and support students as needed. Look for opportunities for differentiation in lessons, for acceleration and remediation to strengthen skills for students. Focus on targeted support in classes utilizing purposeful grouping and station work with adult instructional support.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Create professional development opportunities for teachers to share best practices, practice creating differentiated materials, and sharing resources to work with small groups.
- Develop a peer-to-peer learning and monitoring system that provides teachers with opportunities to share and improve practices without an evaluative lens from administrators.
- Have teachers discuss student misconceptions ahead of lessons and pre-plan for strategies and information for addressing these concerns.

Focus Area 2:

Develop and implement job embedded learning walks, including leadership and teachers, focused on collaborative learning strategies for preparing students to work collaboratively. Support staff/special educators should be included in grade level collaborative meetings to enhance student s access to grade level material.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Consider expanding the current informal learning walk structure for administrators to include content specialists and teachers to support modeling and providing feedback to all instructional staff during classroom instruction. This action will strengthen the use of "real-time" data usage and help remediate and accelerate student growth.

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 for teacher use of data from each professional stakeholder group. They firmly believe in their efficacy and ability to both engage students and improve mathematical outcomes.

- During the school leaders' focus group discussion, they shared that the curriculum provides a useful tool at the classroom level is labeled "Amira", which is a universal screener as part of the HMH curriculum. This tool will help teachers use real time data to analyze. We use that data to pull small groups.

- Additionally, school leaders shared that professional development is intentionally differentiated for teachers as appropriate.

- During the principal interview, information was shared that once a month the faculty have professional development to support the science of reading and every six weeks there is a day of grade level planning. Teachers are also given time twice a month to engage with data for instructional planning which incorporates the reading specialist, staff development teacher, math resource teacher, and administration.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The professional discussions offered numerous points of data regarding the school-based practices and structures that are in place to review and conduct data analysis. However, most teachers interviewed in the focus groups, along with the noticeable practices in the classroom, reflected limited practices for using daily "in-the-moment" data to adjust instruction.

- Out of the fourteen classes visited, there were missed opportunities to utilize the visible data to adjust the instruction for students.

- All of the focus group discussions regarding the use of data in the classrooms were provided by the six participants in the school leaders' group.

- The school documentation provided outlined the school weekly schedule that provides limited opportunity for content data analysis and some formative assessment data to inform planned instructional decisions, however, there was no discussion about using data collected during informal learning walks.

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 for all instructional personnel focused on using the daily data generated during instructional learning to guide literacy practices on how to adjust the time and intensity of instruction for each component based on data and student need while maintaining high expectations.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Create professional development opportunities for teachers to share best practices, practice creating differentiated materials, and sharing resources to work with small groups.
- Use existing professional learning structures designed to plan for differentiation, to offer opportunities for student-led discourse, topics, or collaboration. Introducing student choices may lead to more authentic conversations and real-world experiences.
- Leverage teachers who are demonstrating mastery of teaching strategies to participate in collaborative planning sessions with their peers.
- Utilize data to find opportunities to purposefully group students based on remediation or acceleration needs.

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Lashawn Terrell, Assistant Principal, Prince George's County Public Schools
2. Laurie Jenkins, Retired Administrator, Montgomery County Public Schools
3. Nicole Cole, Consultant, Independent Consultant
4. Stephanie Ware, Principal, Frederick County Public Schools
5. Tara Dedeaux, Principal, Harford County Public Schools
6. Amy Cohn, Retired, Baltimore County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Tuesday, October 9, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Wednesday, October 10, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Fourteen

Description of Classrooms Visited

Tuesday, October 9, 2024
• ELA Kindergarten (2 classes)
• ELA 1st (3 classes)
• ELA 2nd (3 classes)
• ELA 3rd (2 classes)
• ELA 4th (2 classes)
• ELA 5th (2 classes)

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 10 students

- 6 school leaders

- 8 teachers

- 10 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school.