Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

Gale-Bailey Elementary School

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 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 GALE-BAILEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Gale-Bailey Elementary School, located in Charles County, serves a total of 342 students in grades PreK-5th. The enrolled population is made up of 33% African American, 9% Hispanic, and 44% White. The school's population includes approximately 39% of students that receive free or reduced meals and 9% 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.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following table summarizes the school's rating on Domain 1. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement in Classroom Instruction and its lowest rating of Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement in Curriculum and Instructional Materials. A comprehensive list of measures, indicators, and ratings can be found in the full School Review Rubric in Appendix B.

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Curriculum and Instructional Materials	86%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Classroom Instruction	88%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Assessment and Timing	87%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement

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.

- Provide the "Science of Reading" training for all reading teachers. Include training for all support staff, such as paraeducators, on best practices and accountability in supporting reading learning. Develop a monitoring tool to ensure implementation with fidelity.

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum and Instruction	High-quality curriculum, instructional materials, teaching practices, and assessment are implemented to support student learning.

Findings and Recommendations

STRENGTHS

The Local Education Agency (LEA) provided documentation supporting the high-quality curricula aligned with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards (MCCRS). The school documentation provided is aligned with the LEA documents provided to MSDE.

The school is committed to providing equitable, student-centered, diversity promoting teamwork, and using all the tools and strategies needed to be 21st-century leaders, and this was evident in the classrooms reviewed.

- In 100% of the twelve classrooms reviewed, teachers interacted with students by responding with positive feedback. Some teachers used ClassDojo to call on students or pulled names from the Random Report. Students used affirming gestures of feedback using thumbs up and thumbs down to show if they agreed with their classmates. Additionally, teachers provided feedback to students after sharing responses and provided tickets to students who completed their classwork.

- During student focus group discussions, all students shared a favorable view/feelings of the school environment with comments like, "I love our school.", "I feel safe and protected and like I'm meant to be here." The students were able to identify many staff members whom they could talk to if they felt sad or upset.

- Similarly, all parents in the focus group agreed that Gale-Bailey Elementary is very welcoming to all families. They stated that the staff call parents by their names and are always warmly greeted.

The school's nurturing culture is conducive to the learning environment which includes explicit instruction with differentiated learning strategies to support each learner, higher-order questions to promote thinking, and feedback to students that is connected to instructional strategies that help students aim for success.

- In eleven of the twelve classrooms reviewed, success criteria were posted in classrooms and reinforced throughout the learning. Students were prompted to make interdisciplinary connections across content and/or to student prior knowledge. For example, in art, when students were asked to contextualize symmetry in art while analyzing self-portraits, students were able to make the connection to symmetry that was learned in mathematics.

- Also, in 92% of the classrooms, instruction was focused on critical foundational content such as skills and vocabulary. Comprehension reading strategies were a focus in reading classrooms (e.g., inference, predict, ask, and answer questions).

- Differentiation was evident in eleven of the twelve classes reviewed. Students worked in small group rotations using a chart with a variety of instructional materials. Teachers utilized decodable and leveled texts to support small-group instruction.

- Teachers consistently used scaffolding to support student learning. This was evidenced by the line of questioning that teachers utilized to support students in meeting the learning outcomes. It was especially noticed that teachers applied evidence-based practices like choral reading and whisper reading to support reading fluency during small group instruction. Although differentiation was observed in these classrooms, there was limited evidence of options provided to students on how they share their learning.

- A variety of questions were used to challenge students and promote higher-order thinking in 92% of the classrooms reviewed. Teachers asked higher-order questions such as, "Why is it important for portraits to be symmetrical?" And in science class, "How might this structure help the animal survive?"

- In the majority of the classes reviewed, teachers asked students questions that required justification, citation of evidence, and/or elaboration. In an early childhood class, the teacher promoted justification and further elaboration of thinking by asking, "How do you know?" In several reading classes, teachers prompted students to provide text evidence to support their responses.

- Teachers provided feedback for 100% of classrooms reviewed in a timely and positive manner. Teachers also provided verbal feedback to students in small groups and/or one-on-one about the content of the lesson. Teachers stated, "Make sure you are using the RACE Strategy… I love how you are reading with expressions…and I noticed how you are making connections from the text."

Strategies such as the use of small groups, vocabulary, and differentiated instruction were evident in most classrooms.

- In one classroom, students were introduced to new vocabulary and expected to use the vocabulary term in a familiar context. Before and during reading, students were prompted to identify and discuss new vocabulary. In addition, students reviewed prefixes and suffixes using a classroom-created anchor chart while applying them to new words. Students were prompted to read, echo, and write words with specific patterns (e.g., r-controlled). However, while the teacher demonstrated and tapped the sounds when saying the word, students did not engage in tapping or discussing the phonemes within each word.

- Additionally, the teacher met with multiple small groups providing differentiated reading instruction. The individualized text lexiles provided differentiation as well as an instructional focus. The first group focused on word recognition and fluency while the second group focused on fluency and comprehension with multisyllabic decoding.

- In 100% of the classes reviewed, vocabulary instruction was evident consistently and included teachers using physical gestures, vocabulary cards, connections to real life, and text connections. With a combination of iReady resources as well as differentiated in-hand texts, evidence of students reading independently was in all classrooms reviewed.

- Most of the classrooms reviewed provided evidence of student-facilitation to support learning as a shared experience among teachers and students. Students were seen presenting to their classmates and constructing questions for classroom discussions. Additionally, students completed math problems on the whiteboard and then shared their methods for solving the problem.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The "Science of Reading" training will benefit all reading teachers and instructional staff. Include training for all support staff, such as para-educators, on best practices and accountability in supporting reading learning. Develop a monitoring tool to ensure implementation with fidelity.

- While classroom teachers provided differentiated reading instruction in small group settings, little to no differentiated reading instruction was provided by co-teachers, para-educators, or additional adults.

- Students performing a specific role to complete a group task was not evident. Also, there was no evidence that students who were engaging in group work were able to represent their learning.

- Develop a plan of professional literacy learning for support staff and monitor implementation for professional learning.

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

Provide the "Science of Reading" training for all reading teachers. Include training for all support staff, such as para-educators, on best practices and accountability in supporting reading learning. Develop a monitoring tool to ensure implementation with fidelity.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Provide teachers and all instructional support staff regularly scheduled training in the "Science of Reading" to ensure implementation impacts all students.
- Identify teachers, within the building, whose expertise in implementing the science of reading strategies to serve as model classrooms to support techniques and training.
- Create a monitoring system that includes peer-to-peer learning tours to create a school-wide learning lab to ensure instructional saturation and sustainability of the initiative.

RESOURCES:

1. Science of Reading Walkthrough Tool: Literacy-Look-Fors-Walkthrough-Guide.pdf
2. Learning From Instructional Rounds
3. The Shift to Student-Led

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Sherry Eichinger-Wilson, Coordinator, Cecil County Public Schools
2. Jill Snell, Coordinator, Baltimore County Public Schools
3. Shawanda Spivey, Coordinator, Prince George's Public Schools
4. Tiffany Tresler, Principal, Howard County Public Schools
5. David Bell, Coordinator, Baltimore City Public Schools
6. Christy Renzulli, School Counselor, Harford County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, February 22, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Twelve

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, February 21, 2024	Thursday, February 22, 2024
• Gr 1 Inclusion Reading • Gr 2 Inclusion Reading • Gr 4 Inclusion Reading • Gr 3 Inclusion Reading • K-Inclusion Math • Gr 5 Writing	• Gr 4 Math Intervention • Science • Art • Gr 3 Inclusion Reading • Gr 4 Math • Music

Number of Interviews

One

• Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 13 students
- 8 school leaders
- 10 teachers
- 9 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Gale-Bailey Elementary 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.