Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

Matapeake Elementary School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

February 7-8, 2024

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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 MATAPEAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Matapeake Elementary School, located in Queen Anne's County, serves a total of 409 students in grades PreK-5th. The enrolled population is made up of less than 5% Asian or African American, 7% Hispanic, and 85% White. The school's population includes approximately 19% 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 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	75%	Accomplishing
Classroom Instruction	90%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Assessment and Timing	79%	Accomplishing

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.

- Emphasize or provide professional learning on the use of higher-order questioning techniques such as probing, inquiring, and/or hypothesizing; strategies to encourage students to justify their answers, cite evidence in the text, or elaborate to answer questions; and on the use of informal checks for understanding throughout the learning process.

- Provide professional development on teachers providing opportunities and strategies for students to take ownership of their learning and setting expectations for independent student learning strategies.

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.

This school review highlights the LEA emphasis on fostering a learning environment to educate and empower students academically, socially, and emotionally, to prepare them to graduate with the skills necessary to pursue their professional pathway and be empathetic contributors to society.

- In thirteen out of thirteen classrooms, the learning environment was supported with equity and interactions were positive and respectful among peers. The use of "desk pets" was in place to positively reinforce the expected behaviors, therefore, most classrooms lacked any type of disruptive behavior.

- All classrooms greeted students warmly and the use of the schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PIBS) incentive program "Lucky Ducks" was used to ensure students were equitably involved in the lesson.

- During focus group discussions, school leaders and teachers spoke about the effectiveness of the PBIS initiative, strengthening the learning environment.

The learning environment created conditions supportive to instructional practices designed to promote student engagement.

- In ten out of thirteen classrooms reviewed, at least two qualifying pieces of evidence were seen such as the use of scaffolding and partner pairs and some students working in small groups. Other types of differentiation of instruction included: students used multiple reading level materials, peer reading partners, flexible grouping, word ladders, graphic organizers and in some cases, teachers provided 1:1 support while circulating the room.

- The structure in all eight of the English Language Arts (ELA) classrooms supported examples of the science of reading being utilized as evidenced by the use of "word ladders, blending routines, and decodable texts. Explicit instruction was also evidenced by student responses connecting to prior knowledge and lessons and the posted objective for the day's lesson.

- When prompted by the teacher using the word "schema", students related the current lesson to a previous learning by providing an example and used academic vocabulary in the explanation.

The student engagement in building critical thinking was essential to the learning environment.

- In eleven out of thirteen classrooms, students were asked questions that required them to cite evidence from the text about specific graphic features they added to their graphic organizer.

- Students could be heard responding to open-ended questions and expected to explain and justify their answers to prompts such as, "What are your thoughts, explain? and "How did you know that?" Also, teachers asked probing questions that required students to hypothesize.

Teacher feedback was timely, specific, and structured.

- In twelve out of thirteen classrooms, teachers repeated that students could select multiple ways to demonstrate understanding for example, "hands on head when ready to answer; check out your background knowledge; and oh look-she is a text talker."

- Reading instruction in all four of the early grades provided further evidence of the science of reading being utilized with structure learning through word ladders, blending routines as students were building words, clapping sounds and syllables and identifying patterns in words and sounds.

- Three out of five ELA classrooms had evidence of students learning new vocabulary and applying the words to the text and real-world examples. Additionally, some students read independently at various points in the lesson, and others had opportunities to read aloud to the group if they chose.

In the three math classes visited, the learning environment was structured and supportive to scaffolding and differentiating instruction.

- Teachers had central ideas/goals/standards on the board, and the standard that was written on the lesson plan provided lesson content aligned with grade-level appropriate delivery. One hundred percent of the math classes used manipulative tools, in all classrooms, tens frames, picture of number bonds, and a DECA Tree, providing numerous options for students to select from to solve problems.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Provide opportunities and strategies for students to take ownership of their learning.

- In four of the thirteen classrooms, teachers were leading the classroom and some students struggled to stay on task while working. Therefore, the use of teachers setting expectations for independent student learning strategies was not evident.

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

Emphasize or provide professional learning on the use of higher-order questioning techniques such as probing, inquiring, and/or hypothesizing; strategies to encourage students to justify their answers, cite evidence in the text, or elaborate to answer questions; and on the use of informal checks for understanding throughout the learning process.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Provide professional development on higher-order questions to all instructional staff, utilizing and posting question stems in the classroom and building.
- Provide professional development to all instructional staff on practices that promote effective feedback. Ensure that all stakeholders understand the difference between praise v. feedback.

RESOURCES:

1. Bloom's Taxonomy Questions for Students - TeacherVision
2. Webbs Depth of Knowledge Digging Deeper in Math
3. Importance of Providing Meaningful Feedback
4. Teacher Feedback: The Difference between Praise and Appreciation

FOCUS AREA 2

Provide professional development on teachers providing opportunities and strategies for students to take ownership of their learning and setting expectations for independent student learning strategies.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Provide professional development on strategies and structures toward empowering students to drive their own learning.

RESOURCES:

1. What is Learner Agency?

2. Build it Together: Co-Constructing Success Criteria with Students

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Dana Peake, Principal, Washington County Public Schools

2. Keely Cooke, Principal, Montgomery County Public Schools

3. Maire Wells-Suznavick, Teacher, Worcester County Public Schools

4. Daniel Russell, Instructor, Baltimore City Community College

5. Mickelli Dunn, Principal, Prince George's County Public Schools

6. Patti Adkins Harris, Supervisor of Special Education, Wicomico County Public Schools ORGANIZATION

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, February 8, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Fourteen

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, February 7, 2024	Thursday, February 8, 2024
4th Grade ELA 4th Grade ELA co-taught 1st Grade Reading Intervention 4th Grade DI & ELA 5th Grade ELA 1st Grade ELA 1st Grade Special Education 3rd Grade ELA 5th Grade Math 2nd Grade ELA 3rd Grade ELA Flex	- Pre-K Journaling & Greeting 3rd Grade Math - Kindergarten RELA

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 5 students
- 5 school leaders
- 9 teachers
- 9 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Matapeake ES

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.