

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

Maurice McDonough High School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

January 24-25, 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 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 three 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 MAURICE MCDONOUGH HIGH SCHOOL

Maurice McDonough High School, located in Charles County, serves a total of 1,087 students in grades 9th – 12th. The enrolled population is made up 53% African American, 26% White, 13% Hispanic, and 6% two or more races. The school's population includes approximately 33% of students that receive free or reduced meals and 11% 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 ratings on each Domain 1. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement in Classroom Instruction and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Assessment and Timing. 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	84%	Accomplishing
Classroom Instruction	88%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Assessment and Timing	80%	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.

- Implement opportunities for student-driven learning in classroom instruction. Provide teachers with training and tools for student-driven learning, emphasizing project-based and inquiry-based methods, along with technology to foster student autonomy.

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 demonstrates commitment and execution in aligning curriculum and instructional materials to standards, integrating culturally responsive strategies, and utilizing research-based approaches to support student learning.

There is clear evidence that most teachers are successfully implementing questioning techniques that promote higher-order thinking skills in classrooms.

- In thirteen out of the fifteen classrooms reviewed, questioning was effectively employed not just as a pedagogical tool but as a means for students to delve into deeper comprehension and for teachers to gauge the student's understanding of the lessons.
- Specific instances in the classroom showed a dynamic environment where both students and teachers posed questions that necessitated analytical thinking and direct application to the fundamental questions of the curriculum.
- Furthermore, the students actively referenced their texts and notes to answer and formulate questions, underscoring their ability to utilize resources to substantiate their reasoning.

Teachers across all classrooms reviewed implement clear and effective feedback mechanisms, consistently offering personalized and relevant guidance to students.

- In fifteen out of fifteen classrooms reviewed, teachers deliver prompt, high-quality feedback aligned with each student's performance and essential lesson questions.
- Specifically, in math classes, teachers promptly adjust instruction based on real-time monitoring and utilize the Synergy platform to provide individualized feedback on assignments.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

During classroom reviews, it was evident that there is a need for a shift toward student-driven learning.

- During classroom reviews, student-driven learning was "evident" in two of fifteen classes visited.
- In four out of fifteen classrooms, peer-to-peer assistance was observed, with students providing helpful responses to each other on assignments. Increasing the frequency of such interactions would enhance the learning environment significantly.

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

Implement opportunities for student-driven learning in classroom instruction. Provide teachers with training and tools for student-driven learning, emphasizing project-based and inquiry-based methods, along with technology to foster student autonomy.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Identify areas for improvement in student-driven instruction through classroom visits.
- Develop professional learning opportunities covering student-driven Instruction: Adapting teaching methods to student proficiency levels.
- Conduct professional learning focused on hands-on activities and model lessons showcasing effective student-driven learning techniques.
- Provide teachers opportunities to observe peers and provide/receive feedback on student-driven learning techniques.
- Implement regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to measure training impact.
- Provide ongoing support, follow-up sessions, and access to resources as needed.

RESOURCES:

1. [Power School](#)
2. [Student Role](#)
3. [What is a learner Agency?](#)
4. [Co-Constructing Success Criteria with Students](#)

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Shannon Beatty, Curriculum Supervisor, Talbot County Public Schools
2. David Bell, Teacher, Baltimore City Public Schools
3. Bryan Buhman, Director, Howard County Public Schools
4. James Berry, Retired administrator, Montgomery Public Schools
5. Shawnda Spivey, Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools
6. Brooke Fallon, Teacher, St. Mary's County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, January 25, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Fifteen

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, January 24, 2024	Thursday, January 25, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-CALC • BIO • US History • ADV Math • Chemistry • Adv ALG • AP Lang 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENG I • ENG IV • ALG • SPAN I • World History • BIO Med • Math • ESOL

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 8 Students
- 3 School Leaders
- 8 Teachers
- 8 Parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Maurice McDonough High 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.