Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support
Domain 3: Educator Support

Maurice J. 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 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 MAURICE J. MCDONOUGH HIGH SCHOOL

Maurice J. McDonough High School, located in Charles County, serves a total of 1,087 students in grades 9th – 12th. The enrolled population is made up of 53% African American, 26% White, 13% Hispanic, and 6% two or more races. The school's population includes approximately 33% of students who 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 Domains 2 and 3. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement in Observation and Feedback and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Opportunities and Access. A comprehensive list of measures, indicators, and ratings can be found in the full School Review Rubric in Appendix B.

Domain 2: Student Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support	86%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Opportunities and Access	78%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	88%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Professional Learning	81%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	82%	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.

- Establish a comprehensive support system encompassing academic, social-emotional, and behavioral aspects, focusing on thorough data collection on student performance and needs. Develop and implement tiered intervention strategies, ensure staff are adequately trained, allocate appropriate resources, and engage in continuous progress monitoring.

- Provide teachers with information beyond the benefits of achieving National Board Certification (NBCT) and acquiring advanced degrees.

Domain 2: Student Support

Student Support	Schools use data to identify students and implement a multi-tiered approach to support all student groups.

Findings and Recommendations

STRENGTHS

The school offers comprehensive College and Career Readiness (CCR) support pathways, enabling students to meet graduation requirements and develop specialized skills for success after graduation.

- During the student's focus group, students shared that the school incorporates the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program to support students' academic, emotional, and life skills to prepare for and succeed in college or university.

- Student and teacher focus groups shared that the school has a support system involving teachers, counselors, and advisors that support students in college and career planning.

- In a review of the school documents provided and focus group feedback there is evidence that the school offers dual college enrollment and technical school attendance, enabling students to gain credits and certifications as part of their high school coursework.

- During the student, teacher, and school leader focus group, it was shared that the school provides courses allowing students to choose specialized pathways such as "Project Lead the Way" for engineering and biomedical science and performing arts that support students in various ways to find success in high school and beyond.

The school provides various advanced and rigorous coursework, ensuring students have access to credit-bearing, advanced, and rigorous coursework.

- During the student and school leader focus, it was stated that the school offers a diverse selection of Advanced Placement courses for college credit and actively has a plan for students to graduate from high school and attend college.

- The teacher and school leader focus groups stated the school's diverse post-college pathways, including a Performing Arts Program and Dual Enrollment with the College of Southern Maryland, allow students to deeply specialize within the high school curriculum, supporting their future career ambitions.

- In the student focus group, it was stated that if the school does not offer certain desired courses, students can enroll in online courses instead.

- The school leader focus group shared that the school incorporates APEX, a virtual learning platform, during Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) times for credit recovery or acceleration.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

The school is in the process of developing a continuum of integrated academic, social, emotional, and behavioral systems of support tailored to the needs of its students at different levels, informed by data and structured for tier support.

- In the students' focus group and survey, while students stated that they feel safe in the school, some students stated that they are also concerned with the number of fights that occur at the school.

- During the student focus group, it was stated that despite having a "Peer Mediation Program", it is not being fully leveraged, suggesting room for improvement in utilization and student engagement.

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

Establish a comprehensive support system encompassing academic, social-emotional, and behavioral aspects, focusing on thorough data collection on student performance and needs. Develop and implement tiered intervention strategies, ensure staff are adequately trained, allocate appropriate resources, and engage in continuous progress monitoring.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Identify the specific academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs of students through a detailed data collection.

- Conduct regular focus group discussions with students in tiered groups to assess the varying levels of student needs to support the current monitoring system.

- Equip staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively implement the support system.

Resources:

1. What is MTSS?
2. Multi-Tiered System of Support
3. A Comprehensive Guide to MTSS

Domain 3: Educator Support

Educators Support	Educators at all levels are provided with support to improve results and shift instructional practice.

Findings and Recommendations

STRENGTHS

Teachers and administrators receive frequent, actionable feedback after observations, aimed at supporting their professional learning and enhancing student learning.

- The teacher and school leader focus groups stated that non-tenured teachers are observed twice a year, while tenured teachers receive evaluations every three years.

- In the teacher and school leader focus group, it was shared that the school has an established system for conducting professional walkthroughs and providing feedback either in person or via email.

- In the school leaders' focus group, it was shared that the school has established "Ghost Walkthroughs", allowing teachers to learn from one another's classroom setups to support the learning environment.

The school has developed a system for supporting educators to engage in a cycle of learning that is effective in meeting the diverse needs and interests of both teachers and school leaders.

- During the teacher and school leader focus group, it was shared that professional learning is personalized, reflecting individual teachers' interests and skill levels.

- In the school leaders focus group, school leaders stated that a specific emphasis on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is used to maintain the current focus for ongoing professional development to meet the specific learning needs of teachers at the school.

In the mentoring and coaching program for new teachers, the school has established a comprehensive and responsive system that responds to the individual needs of novice teachers, fostering a supportive start to their careers.

- During the school leaders and teacher focus groups it was stated that the school has established a New Teacher Orientation (NTO) program that is tailored to address the specific needs of novice teachers. Teachers and school leaders in their respective focus groups also shared that "in-building mentors" are available for both novice and newly assigned teachers.

- The school leaders and teacher focus group shared that a county-based mentor provides personalized professional development to each teacher.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

While teachers are currently aware of certain aspects of the career ladder there is a gap in the knowledge between the various career opportunities.

- During the teacher focus group, teachers shared that the "LEA offers support for National Board Certification" (NBCT) and that there are incentives for "obtaining a master's degree". However, teachers are unfamiliar with other career opportunities beyond NBCT.

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 teachers with information beyond the benefits of achieving National Board Certification (NBCT) and acquiring advanced degrees.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Initiate a thorough evaluation to ascertain the extent of teachers' knowledge regarding their career progression opportunities.

- Collaborate with educational experts to create comprehensive, accessible resources that clearly outline the career ladder, including but not limited to the steps beyond NBCT.

- Implement a system for regular feedback from teachers regarding the clarity and usefulness of the information provided about the career opportunities.

RESOURCES:

1. MSDE Blueprint Pillar 2: High Quality and Divers Teachers and Leaders

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 Buhrman, Director, Howard County Public Schools
4. James Berry, Administrator, Montgomery County Public Schools (Retired)
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
• Pre-CALC • BIO • US History • ADV Math • Chemistry • Adv ALG • AP Lang	• 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 J. 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 before 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.