Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support
Domain 3: Educator Support

National Academy Foundation

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

January 24, 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 NATIONAL ACADEMY FOUNDATION SCHOOL

National Academy Foundation School, located in Baltimore City, serves a total of 810 students in grades 6th-12th. The enrolled population is made up of 55% African American, 43% Hispanic, and 2% White. The school's population includes approximately 53% of students that receive free or reduced meals and 24% 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.

Schools identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Low Performing and/or CSI Not Exiting in the 2022-2023 school year and selected for an ERT visit, received a differentiated visit to avoid duplication of data requests and integrate into the school improvement process in collaboration with the Office of School Improvement and Transformation at MSDE.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following table summarizes the school's ratings on Domains 2 and 3. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing in Professional Learning and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Opportunities and Access & Observation and Feedback. 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	76%	Accomplishing
Opportunities and Access	75%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	75%	Accomplishing
Professional Learning	81%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	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.

- Provide job-embedded professional learning opportunities for all instructional staff, specifically focused on Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocols (SIOP) instructional strategies for Multilingual Learner (ML) students leveraged through building school-wide collaborative learning practices.

- Provide students and families with culturally relevant extended learning activities afterschool and during out-of-school time.

- Expand teacher professional development (PD) to include all instructional support staff to ensure benefits from sequenced professional development in social-emotional support.

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

There is an overall appreciation for the systems and structures to support college and career opportunities in place at the school. Adult stakeholder focus group participants agreed that there are various structures for supporting students' academic and life choice options.

- Student focus group indicated they have access to AP English and math classes, dual Enrollment with Upward Bound (UB), and Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, in addition to physical education and music classes. However, during the student focus group, students mentioned they needed more options for advanced classes in the arts and world languages beyond the current French option.

- CollegeBound mentors are provided for students to discuss college and career options. Coaching is available before or after school from teachers to assist students who need additional support with understanding and applying content. Targeted mathematics tutoring is provided for students in middle and high school.

- A "wholeness specialist" was contracted by the school to provide targeted interventions and support to students who are referred by school staff. Counselors and psychologists are also provided at both middle and high school levels.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

While there is an appreciation for the numerous interventions that the school offers, there is a need for continuous improvement in the necessary academic support for students who are acquiring a new language and for students who need social-emotional support.

- The five teachers in the focus group agreed that the dedicated staff person who was instrumental in supporting student mental health left and the position had not been filled. This information was significant for the students who have been impacted by this loss.

- All seven students in the focus group expressed the need for a safe space in the school for mental health days when they are struggling.

- The school's changing demographic supports the need for schoolwide job-embedded professional learning opportunities specifically focused on instructional strategies for Multilingual Learner (ML) students.

- During classroom reviews, teachers used Google Translate to provide instructions in Spanish to accommodate learners, but these measures did not close the significant language gap.

- Three out of five participants in the parent focus group indicated that the high school level did not offer after-school activities and clubs for students based on interests.

- Similarly, in the student focus group four of the six students indicated that the high school offers several sports options but no after-school programs or expanded opportunities like clubs to engage in outside of the school day.

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 job-embedded professional learning opportunities for all instructional staff, specifically focused on sheltered instruction observation protocols (SIOP) instructional strategies for Multilingual Learner (ML) students leveraged through building collaborative learning practices school-wide.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Provide a series of professional learning opportunities for all instructional staff on sheltered instruction observation protocols (SIOP) to ensure students and student groups receive support to ensure access to all curricula.

- Provide students and families with culturally relevant extended learning activities after school and during out-of-school time.

- Partner with Baltimore Central Office staff to ensure families have access to support for Multilingual Learners.

RESOURCES:

1. 10 Evidence-based Practices for Teaching Multilingual Learners
2. Strategies to Empower Parents/Caregivers of Multilingual Learners

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

The school stakeholders highlighted intervention structures and staff positions designed to support Tiers 1, 2, & 3 which provide space for a continuum of integrated academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs that create an environment that is primed for optimal learning.

- Adult focus group participants provided discussions about the Student Services Team (SST) members who review referrals are collaborative and designate a specified staff member who reviews the data to assist with the referral process.

- The support was further explained that the Attendance Team, who meet weekly to discuss data and interventions to reduce chronic absenteeism, was an essential part of the school's structure.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

While the focus group participants and the interview with the principal highlighted some of the intervention structures available to support students, there is a need to provide a laser focus on specific interventions for some students and student groups to thrive.

- Focus group discussions addressed a significant disruption due to a missing component for student well-being. A specific staff member who supported students' social-emotional learning (contracted by an outside agency), left the position, and the position has not been filled yet.

- During the teacher focus group, one out of six participants stated that losing this staff member impacted the students greatly.

- Additionally, during the student focus group two of the six participants mentioned that this loss has been impactful to students as this person was highly beneficial toward supporting student mental health and well-being.

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

Expand teacher professional development (PD) to include all instructional support staff to ensure benefits from sequenced professional development in social-emotional support, that is leveraged through building collaborative learning practices school-wide.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Consider partnering internal staff options alongside external student support structures to ensure continuity of services. Utilizing an existing staff member who is qualified may be able to fill this role in the missing student service provider.

RESOURCES:

1. School Community Partnerships
2. Partnerships in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Angela Stepancic, Professor, George Washington University

2. Natalie Rebetsky, English Teacher, Retired, Frederick County Public Schools

3. Dr. Andrea Thompson, Education Associate for School Leadership, Delaware Office of Education

4. Justin W. Leonard, Classroom Teacher - PLTW & Science, Prince George's County Public Schools

5. Tara O'Barsky, Supervisor of Family, Community & School Programs, Wicomico County Public Schools

6. LaShawn Terrell, Assistant Principal, Prince George's County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

N/A

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Four

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, January 24, 2024
• English Language Arts (ELA) • Mathematics • Algebra 1 • Biology

Number of Interviews

One

• Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 7 students

- 7 school leaders

- 8 teachers

- 5 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for National Academy Foundation 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.