

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support

Domain 3: Educator Support

North Dorchester High School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

March 20-21, 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 NORTH DORCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL

North Dorchester School, located in Dorchester County, serves 572 students in grades 9th – 12th. The enrolled population is made up of 58% White, 24% African American, 9% Hispanic, and 7% 2+ Races. The school's population includes approximately 95% of students who receive free or reduced meals and 6% 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 in Career Growth and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in 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	78%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	75%	Accomplishing
Professional Learning	78%	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.

- Establish a systematic and consistent approach to providing supplemental tutoring and structured interventions for students in need. It is essential to establish a clear and uniform system to ensure all students requiring additional support receive it consistently.
- 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 has a robust system in place with a clear plan and qualified staff dedicated to ensuring the mental well-being of students.

- In the teacher focus group, teachers shared the school social worker's contributions to student support and staff professional development.
- During the teacher focus group, teachers stated that implementing the "7 Mindsets" program with initial staff training and ongoing lesson delivery has directly supported students' mental well-being.
- Students and parents in their respective focus groups shared that they felt more supported this year due to the addition of a third school counselor.
- In the student focus group survey, four out of four students indicated that they have at least one trusted adult that they can approach if they have a non-academic problem at the school.

The school has a process to ensure an effective progress monitoring system that tracks and supports students' paths toward graduation.

- School leaders in the school leader focus group shared how grades are reviewed quarterly to gauge student progress. Further, school leaders shared how the school has partnered with the "VisionQuest" program to offer alternative learning options when a student falls behind.
- In the teacher focus group, teachers stated that the school implemented a 90-minute lesson block to allow additional time to reteach and provide additional support for those who are in need.
- Students in the student focus group shared that there is a system in place that allows teachers to support students who fall behind and teachers will also stay after school to provide students with additional support.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

While the school has implemented various strategies to support students academically, there is a noticeable lack of a systematic and consistent approach to providing supplemental tutoring and structured interventions for students in need.

- In the teacher focus groups, teachers mentioned using Lexia for below-level students, but it was unclear when they received that support and there was no structure evident.
- During the focus groups with teachers, students, and parents, it was mentioned that the availability of extra academic support for students largely depends on individual teachers. Some teachers are willing to stay after school to provide additional help, but this practice is not consistent among all teachers.

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 systematic and consistent approach to providing supplemental tutoring and structured interventions for students in need. It is essential to establish a clear and uniform system to ensure all students requiring additional support receive it consistently.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Create a detailed plan outlining the process for identifying students in need of supplemental support, specifying when and how interventions will be provided.
- Allocate specific times during the school day or after school for supplemental tutoring and structured interventions.
- Offer training for teachers on how to effectively implement intervention programs like Lexia and other support tools.
- Implement a system to regularly assess the effectiveness of the interventions and make necessary adjustments based on student progress data.
- Communicate the intervention plan to all stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents, and provide regular updates on its implementation and outcomes.

RESOURCES:

1. [Design an Effective Tutoring Program](#)

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 has developed a system for observation and feedback where teachers and leaders are regularly observed and receive actionable feedback from their supervisors designed to support professional growth and improve student outcomes.

- In the school leader focus group, school leaders mentioned that when district content supervisors visit classrooms, teachers receive feedback promptly.
- During the teacher and school leader focus group, it was stated that the school has an established system for ensuring that non-tenured teachers are observed four times annually for the first three years, and experienced teachers receive two formal observations during evaluation years (every three years after earning tenure).
- In the teacher focus group survey, nine out of nine teachers indicated that they are regularly observed and provided with actionable feedback aimed at improving their teaching practice.

There are established systems and protocols that ensure teachers and leaders engage in a continuous cycle of learning. This cycle is job-embedded, aligned with research-based practices, and grounded in data.

- School leaders during the school leader focus group, school leaders shared that weekly cross-curricular meetings are informed by student performance and walkthrough data, ensuring relevance and data-driven focus on improving teaching practices and student outcomes.
- In the teacher focus group, there was a consensus that recent professional learning opportunities on supporting students' social-emotional concerns were well-aligned with their teaching roles. Teachers stated that the ability to select from various professional development sessions allows for personalized learning experiences for the specific needs of students.

Novice teachers receive job-embedded induction and support, focusing on providing actionable feedback to enhance their teaching practices and improve student academic outcomes.

- Teachers in the teacher focus group shared that novice teachers are assigned in-building mentors for their first three years and that the support begins with weekly contacts the first year, followed by monthly contacts the second year, and more periodic/as-needed support in the third year.
- Teachers shared that during their first year in the classroom, the LEA also provides district-based coaching, including informal (outside of the evaluation process) observations with feedback.

- During the school leadership focus group, school leaders stated that the novice teacher program emphasizes routines, objectives, and classroom management. The district-based new teacher supervisor "visits and emails weekly" and actively encourages administrators to visit new teachers' classrooms to provide support and feedback based on direct observation.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

There is an overall lack of clarity on growth opportunities for teachers beyond that of National Board Certification.

- In the teacher and school leadership focus groups, it was shared that there is a lack of opportunities for teachers beyond the National Board Certification. Teachers shared their belief that the only way to progress in their careers is to transition to administrative or supervisory roles.

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.
- Organize a series of workshops aimed at disseminating this information among faculty. These sessions should encourage teachers to plan their professional growth, incorporating these opportunities.
- Implement a system for regular feedback from teachers regarding the clarity and usefulness of the information provided about the career ladder.

RESOURCES:

1. [MSDE Blueprint Pillar 2: High Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders](#)

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Shannon Beatty, Supervisor, Talbot County Public Schools
2. Julie Cares, Director, Anne Arundel County Public Schools
3. Dr. James Berry, Administrator, Montgomery County Public Schools (Retired)
4. Jeannie Necessary, Assistant Principal, Caroline County Public Schools
5. Troy Grant, Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools
6. Shawn Mitchell, Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

19 classrooms

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, March 20, 2024	Thursday, March 21, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENG 10 • Government 11 • Psychology • ALG I • GOVT • Consumer Finance • PRE-CALC • ENG 12 AP • AP Computer SCI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALG I • Intro to Stats • SPAN II • Contemporary Issues • Environmental Science • AVID • Physical Science • Foundations of Tech

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• German II• SPA I	
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Number of Interviews

- One principal interview

Number of Focus Groups

Five

- 4 students
- 3 school leaders
- 7 teachers
- 3 parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for North Dorchester 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.