

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

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 ERT 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 High School, located in Dorchester County, serves a total of 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 each Domain 1. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement in Curriculum and Instructional Materials and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Classroom Instruction. 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	88%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Classroom Instruction	75%	Accomplishing
Assessment and Timing	85%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement

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 teachers with comprehensive professional learning opportunities on differentiating instruction according to student proficiency levels. This program should be designed to assist teachers in fine-tuning their instruction to align with each student's unique learning abilities and proficiency levels.
- Create professional learning opportunities for teachers that equip them with the tools to provide timely, specific, and structured feedback that supports and enhances student learning.

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 is aligned with the LEA documents provided to MSDE.

The LEA supplied curriculum and instructional materials rated "Strong" under ESSA, fully aligned with Maryland College and Career Standards. Input from a broad range of stakeholders is actively sought, ensuring the curriculum is continually reflective of the community's needs.

- All curriculum is completely aligned with the Maryland College and Career Standards, ensuring that instructional content is relevant and comprehensive.
- Materials are rated as "Meets Expectations" by EdReports, affirming their effectiveness in meeting educational standards.
- The curriculum consistently represents diverse perspectives and acknowledges the varied cultures, values, and identities of students, contributing to an inclusive learning environment.

In fifteen of the nineteen classrooms reviewed, explicit instruction practices were evident and was the primary mode of instructional delivery. Fourteen out of nineteen classrooms reviewed displayed strong alignment between lesson objectives and instructional delivery, with objectives communicated in student-friendly language. There was a notable effort to connect previous learning to current learning.

- In sixteen out of nineteen classrooms, lesson objectives were posted in student-friendly language, facilitating students' understanding of learning targets.
- In twelve out of nineteen classrooms reviewed, teachers effectively linked past learning with current lessons, supporting cognitive connections for students.
- During the nineteen classrooms reviewed, teachers regularly provided individual verbal feedback throughout the lesson cycle.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Classroom reviews showed efforts to implement various instructional strategies designed for individual student needs, but the level of consistency in these efforts varied from classroom to classroom.

- In five out of nineteen classrooms reviewed, there was evidence of teachers differentiating their instruction to engage students.
- During the classroom reviews, there was limited evidence for students to choose how they show their learning, with only one class offering pacing options, three classes providing sharing opportunities, and none allowing for extension activities.

There was an overall lack of evidence of teachers providing timely and specific feedback through both direct interaction and instructional technology.

- In two out of nineteen classrooms, there was evidence of teachers offering students timely, specific, and structured feedback to enhance their learning.
- In thirteen out of nineteen classrooms, teachers provided verbal feedback to students, which was the sole type of feedback observed during classroom visits. However, there was a notable absence of other feedback types, such as assessing understanding, adapting instruction based on student responses, or students incorporating teacher feedback into assignments.

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 comprehensive professional learning opportunities on differentiating instruction according to student proficiency levels. This program should be designed to assist teachers in fine-tuning their instruction to align with each student's unique learning abilities and proficiency levels.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Survey teachers to determine their current understanding and use of differentiation strategies.
- Offer workshops that progress from differentiation fundamentals to advanced applications, including hands-on practice.
- Assemble and distribute a range of differentiation resources and establish a system for easy access.
- Schedule regular opportunities for teachers to observe each other's classrooms and collaborate on differentiation techniques.
- Implement classroom observations with subsequent feedback sessions and use student data to guide and adjust instructional strategies.
- Regularly review the impact of differentiation on student outcomes and refine approaches based on teacher input and student performance.

RESOURCES:

1. [Differentiating up. Strategies to Enhance, Extend and Enrich Learning](#)
2. [Divergent Questioning](#)

FOCUS AREA 2

Create professional learning opportunities for teachers that equip them with the tools to provide timely, specific, and structured feedback that supports and enhances student learning.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Create and administer a survey to assess teachers' current understanding of how to provide students with feedback that is timely, specific, and structured to student's needs.
- Determine which teachers on campus can provide their students with feedback through survey results, classroom observations, and peer nominations.
- Offer professional learning opportunities on effective feedback principles.
- Develop a toolkit containing checklists, examples, and practical resources to aid teachers in applying effective feedback strategies.
- Establish a program where teacher leaders mentor their peers, emphasizing the sharing and implementation of effective feedback techniques.
- Support teachers in reflecting on their current feedback practices and assist them in creating personalized feedback improvement plans.
- Teachers have opportunities to apply new feedback strategies in their classrooms.
- Establish a system for regular classroom observations and feedback sessions, not only to assess the effectiveness of the new feedback strategies but also to provide ongoing support for teachers.

RESOURCES:

1. [How to Give Feedback to Your Students](#)
2. [Providing Effective Feedback](#)
3. [Getting Great Feedback](#)
4. [Teacher Feedback](#)

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

Nineteen

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 • German II • SPA I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALG I • Intro to Stats • SPAN II • Contemporary Issues • Environmental Science • AVID • Physical Science • Foundations of Tech

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Five

- 4 students
- 3 school leaders
- 7 teachers (2 groups)
- 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 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.