

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support

Domain 3: Educator Support

Pinewood Elementary School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

March 6-7, 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 PINWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Pinewood Elementary School, located in Baltimore County, serves a total of 552 students in grades PreK – 5th. The enrolled population is made up of 22% Asians, 7% African American, 5% Hispanic and 61% White. The school's population includes approximately 10% of students that receive free or reduced meals and 13% 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 Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Professional Learning. 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	73%	Accomplishing
Opportunities and Access	67%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	63%	Accomplishing
Professional Learning	59%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	64%	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.

- Restructure the current leadership team to ensure all teacher teams are represented and build a common understanding of the school improvement priorities. Then assess the professional development needs of the staff through a survey, leadership team meetings, observations, data analysis, and district/county-wide initiatives and create a series of professional development that delineates the topics, the schedule, and logistics for each session.
 - Establish and communicate clear goals that emphasize improvement priorities and develop or identify a look-for document that establishes the expectations for an observation. Leverage the current learning walk structure to collect qualitative data on newly implemented instructional practices to provide follow-up PD to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development sessions. Develop a monitoring cycle to provide ongoing support and to track the implementation of the feedback recommendations.
- Use formal and informal data to create student groups within the general education classroom that include gifted and talented, special education, English learners, etc. to monitor student progress aligned to the newly implemented instruction that meets the needs of all learners.
- Create a cycle for formal and informal observations. Communicate that cycle to all teachers. Develop or identify a look-for document that establishes the expectations for an observation. Create a feedback form highlighting the teacher's strengths, growth, and next steps. Develop a monitoring cycle to provide ongoing support and to track the implementation of the feedback recommendations. Provide professional development that emphasizes the updates to this feedback process.

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

All stakeholders in the school community have a unified appreciation for the intentional focus on supporting students with social-emotional learning (SEL).

- During focus group discussions, teachers and students referenced the school's implementation of "safe space corners" within the classroom that students could access when they needed to take a moment to calm down (Tier 1 intervention).
- During the interview, the principal indicated several interventions in place to support students in various methods. Some were, the before-school tutoring initiative, various content intervention groups that draw from the Orton-Gillingham approach, the use of small group instruction; and piloting the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) curricula resource. Additionally, there are HMH coaches to support the school and the reading specialist.
- All stakeholders in focus group discussions appreciated and acknowledged the social-emotional support provided by the counselors who maintain a flexible schedule throughout the day.
- Most of the nineteen parents in the focus groups were clear regarding the systems in place for the mental support needs of students.
- Parents expressed gratitude for the reading specialist who created a group for students excelling in reading to meet with the specialist to ensure skills advancement. However, all seven of the parents in the "Day 2" focus group, expressed that there was no support for academically struggling students.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

While all professionals in the focus groups agreed the school has a solid mental health system in place with identified professionals to support the system, professionals stated there is still a need for comprehensive intentional data utilization and content development aimed toward improving teacher practices for each student group.

- The ten school leaders of the focus group all agreed that trying to match the schedules of the specialists is a challenge and takes the collective effort between administration and teacher school leaders.
- School leaders in the focus group discussions stated, "There is not enough enrichment at the school level. Parents are finding resources to enrich students outside of school."

- Teacher and school leaders in the focus group stated, “Scheduling is challenging. Communication is sparse between professionals within the staff, the reading specialist is pulled in too many directions to service pull-out groups, and special education is down a teacher, therefore servicing students is a trying task.”
- Also, when teachers were asked how the school schedule meets the needs of the students, one teacher stated, “There is not enough time in the school day to address all the needs of students.”
- During the focus group discussion with teachers, one of the arts teachers expressed a lack of PD for those who do not teach core content, and the PD for teachers in this category comes from each other.
- Teachers in the focus group noted that the school has a well-rounded curriculum but expressed the need for an enriched curriculum that addresses the needs of students who are academically excelling (e.g., top percentiles).
- Teachers in the focus groups stated there are systemic quarterly math/ELA curriculum update meetings for the building teacher liaison to attend to bring back information to colleagues at the individual school building level. However, the teachers indicated there is a need for meaningful professional development in all content areas.

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

Restructure the current leadership team to ensure all teacher teams are represented and build a common understanding of the school improvement priorities. Then assess the professional development needs of the staff through a survey, leadership team meetings, observations, data analysis, and district/county-wide initiatives and create a series of professional development that delineates the topics, the schedule, and logistics for each session.

Establish and communicate clear goals that emphasize improvement priorities and develop or identify a look-for document that establishes the expectations for an observation. Leverage the current learning walk structure to collect qualitative data on newly implemented instructional practices to provide follow-up PD to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development sessions. Develop a monitoring cycle to provide ongoing support and to track the implementation of the feedback recommendations.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Recreate the instructional team leaders to ensure each department is represented on the team.
- Survey the staff for PD needs and triangulate with multiple data sources to determine priorities.
- Leverage one PD session to communicate building-wide improvement goals to ensure each professional can connect their work to the goals.
- Identify teachers using the target PD successfully as model classrooms to receive learning walks for that practice and provide meaningful feedback to teachers who are implementing newly learned PD. Consider developing long-term and short-term objectives when creating the professional development cycle. Plan and implement professional development opportunities that support the identified goals.
- Collaboratively develop a monitoring cycle to provide ongoing support and to track the implementation of the feedback recommendations to share successes and learning with the entire staff.

RESOURCES:

1. [What Teachers Really Want When IT Comes to Feedback](#)
2. [Building Effective Collaborative Teams](#)
3. [10 Effective Strategies for Improving School Communication for Success](#)
4. [Eight Steps to Becoming Data Wise](#)

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 2

Use formal and informal data to create student groups within the general education classroom that include gifted and talented, special education, English learners, etc. to monitor student progress aligned to the newly implemented instruction that meets the needs of all learners.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Identify student performance data sources that already exist and align with newly implemented PD to determine the effectiveness of teacher practices.

RESOURCES:

1. [6 Ways to Deliver Differentiated Instruction for Gifted Students](#)
2. [Helping Gifted Students Soar](#)

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 structured supports that are designed to complement the LEA structure for mentoring/coaching new teachers. Fostering a culture of consistent support for teachers new to the profession is essential for improving student outcomes.

- Teacher leaders and school administrators stated during the focus group discussion, “Our strength is our teachers.”
- During the interview the principal reported that the teacher retention rate is high at 99% retention.
- Teachers and school leaders agreed that a first-year teacher is assigned a PLC mentor. Mentors meet regularly with teachers (at least once a month). Mentors are not housed within the school.
- During the school leaders' focus group participants shared, when asked about the LEA mentor/coaching program, that the PAR program was for new teachers and administrators paired new teachers with a school-based mentor of similar content.
- Teachers receive at least 2 formal observations; informal observations occur all the time. The first-year teacher said observations are always.
- One teacher expressed that; a first-year teacher is assigned a PLC mentor. Meets regularly with teacher (at least once a month). LEA mentors are not housed within the school.
- All professional focus group participants were aware of the career ladder when asked about LEA support. A variety of statements were provided for evidence such as the basic ladder (e.g., master's Plus 30, etc.), word of mouth from colleagues about courses for advancement, no motivation to advance, pay raise is minimal, it is confusing on how you advance from one column to the next, and it is very expensive out of pocket and reimbursement takes too long.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Evidence shows that the school has a process where teachers and school leaders participate in ongoing, job-embedded virtual professional learning on providing SEL as directed by the LEA. However, as evidenced by the statements from focus group participants, the school should be more intentional in ensuring that professional development (PD) is designed to meet the needs of all teachers and not just those within a specific category.

- During the teacher focus group, teachers shared the following statement, “We are observed less than once a year or not at all. No feedback at the observational level, but feedback is given via admin/school leader colleagues on issues at hand.” Additionally, there was no mention of how the data is utilized to create an instructional grouping or improve instructional outcomes.
- The school documentation indicated that the career growth opportunities for educators are not consistently monitored and does not have a plan to encourage educators to pursue National Board Certification.

Individual teachers provided evidence for receiving feedback following an observation.

- Most of the teachers in the focus groups shared a common concern regarding observation feedback. One teacher in the focus group discussion experienced receiving feedback, but the feedback was not consistent and not authentic anymore. Another teacher stated, “I never get feedback.” And another stated, “I had to ask for feedback.”

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

Create a cycle for formal and informal observations. Communicate that cycle to all teachers. Develop or identify a look-for document that establishes the expectations for an observation. Create a feedback form highlighting the teacher's strengths, growth, and next steps. Develop a monitoring cycle to provide ongoing support and to track the implementation of the feedback recommendations. Provide professional development that emphasizes the updates to this feedback process.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Continue to align this recommendation to the action steps in Domain 2.
- Leverage the action steps for utilizing the learning walk structure to gather qualitative data on the PD implementation, feedback, and monitoring to provide ongoing job-embedded PD for all teachers.

RESOURCES:

1. [Eight Steps to Becoming Data Wise](#)
2. [Teaching Teachers: PD To Improve Student Achievement](#)

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Adrin Leak, Instructional Specialist, Prince George’s County Public Schools
2. Kenneth LeCompte, Science Teacher Specialist, Anne Arundel County Public Schools
3. Contina Quick-McQueen, Principal, St. Mary’s County Public Schools
4. Laura Aberg, K-12 RELA & AVID 6-12 Supervisor, Dorchester County Public Schools
5. Tammy Luttrell, Instructional Facilitator, Somerset County Public Schools
6. Stacey Kohnitsky, Retired, Montgomery County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, March 7, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Twelve

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, March 6, 2024	Thursday, March 7, 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 4 - AA Math • Grade 1 - ELA • Grade 3 - ELA • Kindergarten - ELA • PK - OGE (self-contained) • Grade 2 - Math • Grade 5 - ELA • Grade 3 - Content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K - Calendar Math & Phonics • Grade 2 - ELA • Grade 5 - ELA • Grade 1 - Math

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Six

- 21 students (2 groups)
- 10 school leaders
- 9 teachers
- 19 parents (2 groups)

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Pinewood Elementary

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.