Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

River Hill High School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

April 17-18, 2024

Table of Contents

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 RIVER HILL HIGH SCHOOL

River Hill High School, located in Howard County, serves a total of 1424 students in grades 9th – 12th. The enrolled population is made up 39% Asian, 39% White, 11% African American, 6% 2+ races, and 5% Hispanic. The school's population includes approximately 8% of students that receive free or reduced meals and 7% 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 rating on 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	94%	Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement
Classroom Instruction	75%	Accomplishing
Assessment and Timing	80%	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 teachers with professional development opportunities tailored toward student-centered instruction. Professional learning should prepare teachers to design and implement curriculum and lesson plans that not only prioritize the interests and needs of students but also facilitate peer collaboration and interactive learning for students.

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.

Evidence shows an effective and nurturing educational environment, characterized by positive teacher-student interactions, a calm atmosphere, positive teacher-student relationships, well-established classroom routines, and a culture of mutual respect and peer support.

- In fourteen out of fourteen classrooms reviewed, positive interactions between teachers and students, students and students, and students and teachers were evident.

- Teachers exhibited a clear understanding of their students' interpersonal dynamics and supported students with positive student redirections in a supportive tone.

- Respectful and positive student interactions were the norm, as students frequently assisted one another without prompting.

Explicit instruction was evident throughout the classroom reviews, as teachers centered their instruction on clear student objectives that supported students to be successful throughout the lesson cycle.

- In thirteen out of fourteen classrooms reviewed, teachers consistently emphasized the main points of their lessons across all courses.

- Objectives and goals were shared at the start of each lesson, with standards-based outcomes visibly posted.

- Classroom instruction offered students direct opportunities to apply their learning and further extend their knowledge.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Additional support for teachers to provide student-driven learning, where instruction is a shared experience between teachers and students, would support the learning environment by promoting greater engagement and deeper understanding among students.

- Students were provided with the opportunity to work independently in six out of fourteen classrooms reviewed.

- In seven out of fourteen classrooms reviewed, there was evidence of students communicating with one another about the course content.

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 professional development opportunities tailored toward student-centered instruction. Professional learning should prepare teachers to design and implement curriculum and lesson plans that not only prioritize the interests and needs of students but also facilitate peer collaboration and interactive learning for students.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Identify areas for improvement in student-driven instruction through classroom visits.

- Conduct professional learning focused on hands-on activities and model lessons showcasing effective student-driven learning techniques.

- Provide teachers opportunities to observe peers and provide/receive feedback on student-driven learning techniques.

- Implement regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to measure training impact.

- Provide ongoing support, follow-up sessions, and access to resources as needed.

RESOURCES:

1. Power School
2. Student Role
3. What is a learner Agency?
4. Co-Constructing Succes Criteria with Students

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Diana Sung, Coordinator, Frederick County Public Schools

2. Dr. Duane Arbogast, Consultant, Arbogast & Associates

3. Dr. John Seelke, Instructional Specialist, Montgomery County Public Schools

4. Jacob Goldberg, Data Coach, Prince George's County Public Schools

5. Maureen Liakos, Department Chair, Anne Arundel County Public Schools

6. Tammy Luttrell, Instructional Facilitator, Somerset County Public Schools

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, Apil 17, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

14

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, April 17, 2024	Thursday, April 18, 2024
• ELD 1 • Adv. Algebra • Music Tech • English 12 • English 11 Honors • Micro/Macro AP • Art History • Spanish IV	• Resource English • Strategic Reading • Biology • Physics AP • Biology GT

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Four

- 9 Students
- 8 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 River Hill 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.