Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instructional Materials

Westbrook Elementary School

Maryland State Department of Education

Office of Teaching and Learning

February 21-22, 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 MARYLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Westbrook Elementary School, located in Montgomery County, serves a total of 496 students in grades K - 5th. The enrolled population is made up 58% White, 19% Hispanic, 9% Asian, 7% 2+ Races, and 6% African American. The school's population includes approximately 12% of students that receive free or reduced meals and 12% 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 in Curriculum and Instruction and its lowest rating of Accomplishing in Assessment and Timing. 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	81%	Accomplishing
Classroom Instruction	77%	Accomplishing
Assessment and Timing	75%	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 comprehensive professional learning opportunities on differentiation and student-centered instruction, including training on how to differentiate instruction based on student proficiency levels.

- Equip teachers with professional learning opportunities focusing on collaborative learning's best practices, rationale, benefits, tools, implementation strategies, and classroom management techniques. Facilitate peer observation, feedback, and coaching, enabling teachers to learn from experienced colleagues.

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.

In the review of the learning environment, twelve out of twelve classrooms demonstrated a positive and supportive atmosphere, achieving a significant level of success in fostering academic growth and social-emotional competencies.

- Student-teacher interactions and peer discussions were characterized by respect and engagement, contributing to a supportive classroom dynamic.

- Organizational strategies, such as daily schedule briefings and the visible display of learning objectives, provide structure and clarity to the learning environment.

- Instructional techniques, including flexible seating and teacher-led demonstrations, effectively reinforced student understanding and participation.

- Classroom support was enhanced through staff assistance and the strategic use of resources like textbooks for spelling support.

In the twelve classrooms reviewed, explicit instruction was evident targeting achieving distinct learning outcomes through a variety of educational practices.

- Positive and respectful interactions between students and teachers were evident in twelve out of twelve classrooms, fostering an environment conducive to learning.

- Student engagement was high, with active participation in peer discussions and questions, indicative of a collaborative learning culture.

- The organization of the classroom was evident with daily schedules communicated, and learning objectives displayed, promoting a structured learning experience.

- Support structures were in place with staff offering assistance and resources like textbooks for spelling readily available, ensuring students had the necessary tools for success.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Classroom instruction partially integrates differentiation and collaborative learning strategies, but there is a notable need for broader application and variety in instructional resources to better cater to individual student needs.

- In twelve out of twelve classrooms, instructional materials and resources were not modified to support individualized student learning.

- In ten out of twelve classrooms, students were not given choices in how to demonstrate their learning, control over the pace of their learning, or chances to deepen their understanding beyond the standard curriculum.

- In six out of twelve classrooms, students did not collaborate to solve problems, work on an assignment, or answer questions.

- In twelve out of twelve classrooms, students were not assigned to perform specific roles to complete a group task.

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 differentiation and student-centered instruction, including training on how to differentiate instruction based on student proficiency levels.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Identify areas for improvement in differentiation and student-centered instruction through surveys or classroom visits.

- Develop professional learning covering:

    - Differentiation Strategies: Variations in time, place, pace, or path.

    - Student-Centered Instruction: Adapting methods to student proficiency levels.

- Conduct professional learning focused on hands-on activities and model lessons showcasing effective differentiation and/or student-centered techniques.

- Provide teachers opportunities to observe peers and provide/receive feedback on differentiation and student-centered instruction.

- Implement regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to evaluate the impact of professional learning.

- Provide ongoing support, follow-up sessions, and access to resources for sustained professional development on differentiation and student-centered learning.

RESOURCES:

1. [Divergent Questions](#)
2. [Differentiating up](#)

FOCUS AREA 1

Equip teachers with professional learning opportunities focusing on collaborative learning's best practices, rationale, benefits, tools, implementation strategies, and classroom management techniques. Facilitate peer observation, feedback, and coaching, enabling teachers to learn from experienced colleagues.

ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Provide concrete strategies for implementing collaborative learning in the classroom.

- Arrange opportunities for teachers to observe experienced colleagues conducting collaborative learning sessions.

- Establish structured feedback protocols so teachers provide and receive feedback on their teaching practices.

- Provide coaching sessions to guide teachers through the implementation of collaborative learning strategies.

- Provide follow-up professional learning sessions based on evaluation feedback.

RESOURCES:

1. Using Collaborative Learning Effectively

2. Big List of Class Discussion Strategies

3. Peer Assessments

4. Making Cooperative Learning Better

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF EXPERT REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

Expert Review Team Members

1. Patrick Johnson, Math Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools

2. Jeannine Necessary, Assistant Principal, Caroline County Public Schools

3. Adrin Leak, Specialist, Prince George's County Public Schools

4. Dr. Jazmine Rhone, Academic Liaison, Baltimore County Public Schools

5. Megan Stein, Principal, Frederick County Public Schools

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

Site Visit Day 1

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Site Visit Day 2

Thursday, February 22, 2024

Number of Classroom Reviewed

Twelve

Description of Classroom Visited

Wednesday, February 21, 2024	Thursday, February 22, 2024
- ELA 1st - ELA 5th - EML 3rd - ELA 3rd - Math 4th / 5th - EML 2nd - ELA 2nd	- ELA 1st - ELA K - ELC 4th - ELA K - ELA 3rd

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Eight

- 13 Students (2 groups)
- 9 School Leaders (2 groups)
- 26 Teachers (2 groups)
- 20 Parents (2 groups)

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Westbrook Elementary 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.