

# Maryland School Review

## Expert Review Team Report

Domain 2: Student Support

Domain 3: Educator Support

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 WESTBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Westbrook Elementary School, located in Montgomery County, serves a total of 496 students in grades K - 5<sup>th</sup>. The enrolled population is made up of 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 ratings on Domains 2 and 3. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing in Multi-Tiered System of Support 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	83%	Accomplishing
Opportunities and Access	75%	Accomplishing

Domain 3: Educator Support		
Indicator	Percentage	Rating
Observation and Feedback	63%	Accomplishing
Professional Learning	82%	Accomplishing
Career Growth	71%	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.

- Develop a plan to address the availability, diversity, and rigor of advanced coursework throughout all classes at the school. To enhance academic outcomes and meet the growing demand for a robust educational experience, the following plan outlines strategic steps to expand and enrich our advanced course offerings.
- Provide teachers with information beyond the benefits of achieving National Board Certification (NBC) 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 implemented a comprehensive System of Supports that integrates academic, social, emotional, and behavioral elements. This system is designed to cater to the diverse needs of students at different levels and is tailored based on detailed student data.

- Teachers in the teacher focus group shared that the “Stay Safe, Own your Actions, Act Responsible, Respect Everyone” (SOAR) expectations are the foundation for Tier 1 support.
- Teachers shared that the school has established “calm corners” in each classroom demonstrating a commitment to providing space for emotional regulation and supporting Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions.
- The school has established Anti-Bias Anti-Racist (ABAR) strategies and the Orton Gillingham Reading Intervention Program to directly address Tier 2 and Tier 3 support, targeting literacy and inclusivity.

The school has established a structured and evidence-based process that is integrated into the daily schedule. This process effectively identifies students who require mental health support and facilitates their referral to appropriate services.

- School leaders during the school leader focus group, stated that the school and LEA have provided trauma-informed teaching, and training on Adverse Childhood Experiences for teachers, as well as having a system to gather input from parents to determine future mental health training.
- In the teacher focus group, teachers shared that a Collaborative Problem-Solving process is actively utilized by teachers to identify and support students needing academic or mental health assistance.
- Teachers reported that the inclusion of the Pupil Personnel Worker in problem-solving meetings helps both students and teachers address academic and mental health needs effectively.
- Data from documents provided by the school and focus group feedback shows that the formation of a student well-being team reflects a structured system to address the social-emotional needs of students.



## AREAS FOR GROWTH

Feedback from the focus group highlights a need for earlier access to gifted and talented (GT) classes, concerns about high student-to-teacher ratios in math classes, a call for expanding GT beyond math and English language arts to meet broader educational demands, as well as a need to increase the rigor in the classes offered at the school.

- During the parent focus group, parents expressed that Gifted and Talented (GT) classes are not available until 4th grade, and they would like their children to have access to these advanced classes earlier.
- Parents also indicated concerns about the high student-to-teacher ratio in the compacted 4th-grade math class due to only one section being offered.
- Parents expressed that there is a significant need for advanced coursework in subjects beyond just math and English Language Arts (ELA). They highlighted that their frequent inquiries indicate a strong demand for a more diverse curriculum to better meet the varied interests and academic needs of students.
- In the student focus group survey, five out of thirteen students indicated that they do not feel challenged by their classes.

## 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

Develop a plan to address the availability, diversity, and rigor of advanced coursework throughout all classes at the school. To enhance academic outcomes and meet the growing demand for a robust educational experience, the following plan outlines strategic steps to expand and enrich our advanced course offerings.

#### ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Conduct a curriculum audit to identify current offerings and gaps in advanced coursework for grades K-3.
- Provide professional development for teachers to enhance instructional strategies that increase cognitive demand and student engagement.
- Pilot the introduction of advanced lessons/courses in one grade level to evaluate student engagement and learning outcomes.
- Gather input from teachers, parents, and students on desired subjects and areas for advanced coursework expansion.

#### RESOURCES:

1. [Gifted and Talented Education](#)

## 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 developed professional learning initiatives that enable teachers and school leaders to engage in a cycle of learning that is job-embedded, aligned to research-based practices, and grounded in data.

- School leaders in the school leaders focus group state that they participate in summer professional learning aligning with district initiatives.
- In the teacher's focus group, teachers stated that they engage in bi-monthly staff meetings focused on professional development across various educational topics.
- Teachers stated that they participate in weekly data meetings, with teachers also utilizing data from these meetings to tailor small-group instruction.
- During the school leader and teacher focus group it was shared that the school counselor actively contributes to the professional learning environment by providing opportunities in specialized areas such as trauma-informed teaching and mental health support.

The school schedule has been structured to include dedicated time for teachers to engage in peer collaboration. This allows educators to work in subject or grade-level teams, analyze student data, and devise strategies to enhance instructional practices continuously.

- Teachers in the teacher focus group shared that structured collaboration time is integrated into the school schedule, facilitating teamwork during Curriculum Studies and Collaborative problem-solving sessions.
- Teachers stated that weekly data chats provide a platform for teachers to work closely with reading specialists or staff developers.
- Twenty-six out of thirty-one teachers during the teacher focus group survey indicated that they regularly participate in dedicated collaborative planning time to have data discussions.
- Documents provided by the school show evidence that the school provides teachers with regularly scheduled time embedded throughout the day to work in teams.

## AREAS FOR GROWTH

The school is in the process of developing a plan that ensures teachers and leaders are regularly observed and receive actionable feedback from their supervisors designed to support professional growth and improve student outcomes.

- During the teacher and school leader focus group, it was reported that teachers and administrators are not receiving written feedback on their practice due to their tenure status.
- In the teacher focus group, ten out of twenty-six stated that they receive actionable feedback.
- In the teacher focus group, teachers were not clear on the feedback and follow-up protocols received during informal walkthroughs.
- In the teacher focus group, four out of twenty-six teachers reported that they can seek feedback and direction for professional development; however, such opportunities are not formally prescribed unless initiated by the school.

Assessment of the school's career ladder's implementation in supporting the growth and advancement of teachers and leaders reveals the following insights:

- During the teacher focus group, teachers were not knowledgeable of the support for educators in advancing to the teacher leader and school administration pathways.
- Teachers also mentioned that information about the career ladder was hard to find and that those interested in administrative roles had difficulty navigating the process.

## 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

Implement a system of regular observations and actionable feedback for both teachers and leaders, regardless of tenure status. This system should aim to enhance professional growth and directly improve student outcomes by ensuring clarity, consistency, and follow-through in the feedback process.

#### ACTION STEPS:

As a result of this school review:

- Develop a standardized observation template that all supervisors use when conducting formal and informal walkthroughs.
- Organize training sessions for all supervisors on how to provide constructive, specific, and actionable feedback.
- Establish clear protocols for delivering and documenting feedback. Feedback should be provided in writing and discussed in a one-on-one follow-up meeting.
- Clarify and communicate the purpose and expected outcomes of informal walkthroughs to all teachers and leaders.
- Implement a quick-feedback system where supervisors can leave brief, immediate written notes post-observation, which can be elaborated upon during scheduled feedback sessions.

#### RESOURCES:

1. [Danielson Materials](#)

**FOCUS AREA 2**

Provide teachers with information beyond the benefits of achieving National Board Certification (NBC) 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 not only present the career ladder but also 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.
- Include familiarity with and active engagement in career progression opportunities as a criterion in the teacher evaluation process.

**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. 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>• ELA 5<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• EML 3<sup>rd</sup></li> <li>• ELA 3<sup>rd</sup></li> <li>• Math 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• EML 2<sup>nd</sup></li> <li>• ELA 2<sup>nd</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>• ELA K</li> <li>• ELC 4<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• ELA K</li> <li>• ELA 3<sup>rd</sup></li> </ul>

### Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

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### 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.