

Maryland School Review

Expert Review Team Report

Domain 1: Curriculum and Instruction

Snow Hill 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 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 SNOW HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Snow Hill Elementary School, located in Worcester County, serves a total of 379 students in grades Pk- 3rd. The enrolled population is made up of 60% White, 23% African American, 8% Hispanic, and 8% 2+ races. The school's population includes approximately 58% of students who 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 rating on Domain 1. The school scored its highest rating of Accomplishing with Continuous Improvement in Assessment and Timing 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	81%	Accomplishing
Classroom Instruction	75%	Accomplishing
Assessment and Timing	88%	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.

- 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 provided is aligned with the LEA documents provided to MSDE.

The school aligns curriculum and instructional materials to standards, integrates culturally responsive strategies, and utilizes research-based approaches to support student learning.

- During the student focus group, students shared examples of how they apply their learning in the real world, including writing reports, understanding and discussing scientific and mathematical concepts, and emphasizing the curriculum's practical relevance.
- During the teacher focus group, teachers stated they are utilizing a variety of instructional tools such as "iReady, BRIDGES, Foundations, and Heggerty" to support diverse learning needs.
- Teachers shared that professional development opportunities are frequently provided at the LEA and school level, including a monthly calendar highlighting targeted learning opportunities for staff.
- The English and Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, designed with Understanding by Design (UBD), partners with The New Teacher Project to deepen staff understanding of the Science of Reading, ensuring the curriculum remains current and applicable.

The school has aligned assessments with curriculum objectives, creating regular data points that facilitate continuous collaboration and consistently improve instruction.

- During leadership focus groups, it was stated that teachers regularly conduct comprehension checks and monitor assessment data, adapting as needed, based on specific student academic needs.
- In the student and teacher focus groups, it was shared that students have access to iPads to engage with the curriculum and retrieve missed assignments, ensuring continuity in student's learning experience.
- During the teacher and student focus groups, it was stated that teachers provide personalized support and leverage available academic resources for assessment retakes, while students are given adaptive exams that tailor learning pathways to their performance.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Collaborative learning opportunities, where students work together in small groups to collaboratively solve problems, develop answers to questions, and complete assignments are present in some classrooms.

- During classroom visits, students were in groups or pairs to solve problems, work on an assignment, and/or answer questions in four out of twelve classrooms.
- During group work, students performed a specific role to complete group tasks in two out of twelve classrooms.
- Although accountable talk structures were posted in classrooms, active discussion among students was not evident, indicating a gap in the application.
- Arrangements for collaborative seating were noted in most classrooms, but actual student engagement in group discussions was absent, suggesting a need for structured integration of collaborative methods into daily routines.

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

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. Nicholas Gardiner, Teacher, Charles County Public Schools
2. Dana Peake, Coordinator, Washington County Public Schools
3. Christy Renzulli, Counselor, Harford County Public Schools
4. Jessica Zentz, Coordinator, Frederick County Public Schools
5. John Reidenour, Principal, Frederick County Public Schools
6. Kelly Cleland, Specialist, Calvert 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"> • ELA 1st • Math 3rd • Math 2nd • ELA K • ELA 1st • UBD 3rd • ELA 1st • Math 2nd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math K • Reading 2nd • Math PK • ELA 3rd

Number of Interviews

One

- Principal

Number of Focus Groups

Six

- 18 Students (2 groups)
- 9 School Leaders
- 12 Teachers (2 groups)
- 10 Parents

Documents Analyzed

- Site visit documentation submitted by the school and LEA.

Appendix B

MARYLAND SCHOOL REVIEW RUBRIC

Ratings for Snow Hill 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.