Office of Achievement and Accountability
Division of Research Services

School Effectiveness Review

2017 - 2018

Belmont Elementary School

February 5-7, 2018
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Part I: Introduction and School Background

Introduction to the School Effectiveness Review
Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) developed the School Effectiveness Framework and the School Effectiveness Review process in 2009. The School Effectiveness Review (SER) uses trained school reviewers to measure a school’s effectiveness against City Schools’ School Effectiveness Standards. The School Effectiveness Standards are aligned with City Schools’ effectiveness frameworks for teachers and school leaders.

The SER provides an objective and evidence-based analysis of how well a school is working to educate its students. It generates a rich layer of qualitative data that may not be revealed when evaluating a school solely on student performance outcomes. It also provides district and school-level staff with objective and useful information when making strategic decisions that impact student achievement.

The SER team, comprised of representatives from City Schools who have extensive knowledge about schools and instruction, gathered information from teachers, students, parents, and leadership during a two-day site visit. During the visit, the SER team observed classrooms, reviewed selected school documents, and conducted focus groups with school leadership, teachers, students, and parents. The SER team analyzed evidence collected over the course of the SER to determine the extent to which key actions have been adopted and implemented at the school. This report summarizes the ratings in the four domains and related key actions, provides evidence to support the ratings, and – based on a rubric – allocates a performance level for each key action. More information about the SER process is detailed in the School Effectiveness Review protocol, located on the City Schools website and available upon request from the Office of Achievement and Accountability in City Schools.

School Background
Belmont Elementary School serves approximately 270 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through eighth. The school is located on North Ellamont Street in the Rosemont neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland. The principal, Ms. Tiffany Etheridge, has been at the school for four years. For more information about the school’s student demographics and student achievement data, please see the School Profile, located on the City Schools website.
## Part II: Summary of Performance Levels

Based on trends found in the collected evidence, the SER team assigns a performance level to each key action.

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### Domain 1: Highly Effective Instruction

1.1 Teachers plan highly effective instruction. **Effective**
1.2 Teachers deliver highly effective instruction. **Developing**
1.3 Teachers use multiple data sources to adjust practice. **Effective**
1.4 School leadership supports highly effective instruction. **Effective**
1.5 Teachers establish a classroom environment in which teaching and learning can occur. **Highly Effective**

### Domain 2: Talented People

2.1 The school implements systems to select, develop, and retain effective teachers and staff whose skills and beliefs represent the diverse needs of all students. **Effective**
2.2 The school has created and implemented systems to evaluate teachers and staff against individual and school-wide goals, provide interventions to those who are not meeting expectations, and remove those who do not make reasonable improvement. **Effective**

### Domain 3: Vision and Engagement

3.1 The school provides a safe and supportive learning environment for students, families, teachers, and staff. **Effective**
3.2 The school cultivates and sustains open communication and decision-making opportunities with families about school events, policies, and the academic and social development of their children. **Effective**
3.3 The culture of the school reflects and embraces student, staff, and community diversity. **Effective**

### Domain 4: Strategic Leadership

4.1 The school establishes growth goals that guide strategic planning, teaching, and adjusting of practice to meet student needs. **Developing**
4.2 The school allocates and deploys the resources of time, staff talent, and funding to address the priorities of growth goals for student achievement. **Effective**
Domain 1: Highly Effective Instruction

Key action 1.1: Teachers plan highly effective instruction.  

- Teachers implement standards-based daily lessons, units, and long-term plans using appropriate curriculum planning documents. According to school leadership and teachers, teachers use the Baltimore City Public School System’s (BCPSS) Common Core aligned curriculum to plan daily lessons, including Eureka for math and Fundations for literacy. School leadership added that special educators use interventions such as Do the Math and SPIRE (literacy). Further, school leadership and teachers stated that teachers are provided with a lesson planning template which follows the district’s instructional models. Review of a lesson plan confirmed that Common Core State Standards are included in plans, such as one plan which included RL.5.2 (Determine the theme of a poem from details in a text) with the associated objective: “Students will be responsible for learning how to identify major details in a poem by listening to the poem and citing evidence which would enable them to identify the theme of the poem.”

- Most teachers design daily lessons that meet learners’ unique needs. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers stated that teachers differentiate lessons through the creation of small groups based on student data in literacy and math. Teachers added that a matrix may be attached to lesson plans for students with Individual Educational Programs (IEPs) that includes accommodations and modifications. Further, school leadership noted that teachers identify indicators of the Instructional Framework, and teachers have been provided with training on unpacking the standards and aligning tasks and objectives to standards. Review of lesson plans confirmed that they included small groups, such as a plan with the four small groups and differentiated objectives for literacy, which are as follows: students will be able to ask and answer comprehension questions; students will read the story and complete a graphic organizer; students will identify basic sight words; and a group for students with speech needs.

- Teachers set and track goals based on students’ performance levels. According to school leadership and teachers, teachers created and submitted Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) for the current academic year, based on data points including iReady and Amplify by grade level. School leadership added that an example of a goal would be increasing the Text Reading Comprehension (TRC) by two levels, or one year of growth. A review of SLOs confirmed that they included growth goals, such as one SLO with the following goal: “Students will demonstrate a growth measure of .75 by our MOY (middle of the year) assessment on the I-Ready asessment for Reading. A second group will be targeted for a higher yield on their I-Ready test of 1.0.” Further, school leadership and teachers stated that teachers use data trackers to track students’ progress on various assessments, including iReady, Fundations, Amplify.
progress monitoring, A Net and module tests. A review of data trackers revealed that they included SMART goals. Lastly, school leadership, teachers and students noted that students are aware of their goals, and school leadership indicated that teachers hold conferences with students regarding progress made towards goals.

Key action 1.2: Teachers deliver highly effective instruction.¹

- Most teachers use and communicate standards-based lesson objectives and align learning activities to the stated lesson objectives. In only 38% of classrooms visited (n=8), did teachers communicate lesson objectives to students by explaining and/or referencing them during lessons. In most classes, the lesson objective was simply posted, such as one class, where the posted objective read “Students will be able to identify fractions on a number line by using math strategies.” Additionally, in 75% of classes, lesson activities and resources had a clear and intentional purpose and were aligned with lesson objectives.

- Most teachers present content in various ways and emphasize key points to make content clear. In 88% of classrooms visited (n=8), teachers presented students with accurate, grade level content aligned to appropriate content standards. Additionally, in 75% of classes, teachers presented content in various ways (two or more) to make content clear. For example, in one class, a teacher posted a poem that was read aloud to students and included illustrations. Further, in 75% of classes, teachers emphasized key points to focus the learning of content. In the same class, the teacher repeated terms such as “details” and “illustrate.”

- Some teachers use multiple strategies and tasks to engage all students in rigorous work. In 50% of classrooms visited (n=8), teachers scaffolded and/or differentiated tasks by providing rigorous grade-level instruction for all students. Additionally, in 62% of classes, students had opportunities and time to grapple with complex texts and/or rigorous tasks. For example, in one class, a teacher worked with a small group of students while the rest of the class worked independently and grappled with a math task.

- Some teachers use evidence-dependent questioning. In only 38% of classrooms observed (n=8), did teachers ask questions that required students to cite evidence and clearly explain their thought processes. Additionally, in only 38% of classes, did teachers ask questions that were clear and scaffolded. In most classes, teachers asked questions that were basic recall, such as one class in which the teacher asked the following questions: “What is the first thing I need to do? What do I need to circle? What shape is the truck? Do I have more than one?”

¹ Key action 1.2 evidence comes directly from classroom observations that were conducted as part of the SER. All classroom observations are twenty minute in which the observers are looking for teachers to demonstrate components of the Instructional Framework. The completed classroom visit tool can be found in appendix A.
Most teachers check for student understanding and provide specific academic feedback. In 62% of classrooms visited (n=8), teachers conducted one or more checks for understanding that yielded useful information at key points throughout the lesson. For example, in many classes, teachers circulated around the classroom to determine students’ progress as they worked, and in one class, a teacher had students give a thumbs up or down to determine their understanding of the content. Additionally, in 75% of classes, teachers gave specific academic feedback to communicate current progress and next steps to move forward. For example, in one class, a teacher asked “What’s another word? Underline those...Which word is blue? Second word...”

Some teachers facilitate student-to-student interaction and academic talk. In only 38% of classrooms visited (n=8), did teachers provide multiple or extended opportunities for student-to-student interaction. For example, in a few classes, students participated in turn and talks. Additionally, in only 25% of classes, during student-to-student interactions, did students engage in discussions with their peers to make meaning of content or deepen their understanding. Lastly, in 88% of classes, students used academic talk and, when necessary, teachers consistently and appropriately supported students in speaking academically.

Key action 1.3: Teachers use multiple data sources to adjust practice.

Teachers analyze students’ progress toward goals. According to school leadership and teachers, teachers use data analysis templates, or data trackers, to analyze assessment results and standards, and identify areas of strength and deficits to determine next steps. Teachers added that iReady assessment results provide lessons and suggestions, based on student performance. Further, school leadership noted that teachers discuss data and strategies during weekly content meetings. Review of the data team cycle template document revealed that it included the assessment results, student groups based on data (proficient, close to proficient, far from proficient), strengths and obstacles, smart goals, strategies, and results indicators. The site visit team also observed data walls posted with assessment results in classrooms.

Teachers modify instruction in response to data. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers reported that teachers create small instructional groups based on data, and activities are differentiated for students based on their skill level, which review of three-week small group action plans confirmed. School leadership added that teachers also complete corrective action plans after assessments, which document next steps, and which review of corrective action plans confirmed. Further, teachers noted they may adjust instruction by providing a whole class re-teach of a lesson if the majority of students did not master a particular skill or standard, reviewing prior knowledge at the beginning of a lesson, or adjusting homework. Continuing, some teachers indicated that they provide coach class for struggling students.
Teachers appropriately recommend students for some tiered interventions, including some opportunities for acceleration. According to school leadership, staff and teachers, the school has a literacy-focused Power Hour intervention three days a week for students in kindergarten through second grade, which is based on Amplify and Fundations data; review of the Power House schedule and groups confirmed the intervention. However, when probed, school leadership and teachers noted that there is not a similar intervention for students in upper grades (due in part to the fact that there were long term subs in upper grades for the first half of the year) or for math. Regarding acceleration opportunities, school leadership and teachers stated that the school is a Gifted and Advanced Learner (GAL) site, and has identified students through administering the Naglieri test, and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) have been developed for students. Review of ILPs confirmed that they had been developed for the current year. Continuing, school leadership noted that Jacob’s Ladder is being used for gifted students, and they are clustered at some of the grade levels, though the cohort is small – approximately 12 students. Lastly, school leadership, teachers and staff reported that the school has a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) team to which students can be referred for academic, behavioral and attendance concerns.

Key action 1.4: School leadership supports highly effective instruction.  

Effective

- School leadership holds and promotes instructional vision of high student achievement. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers reported that academic discourse and close reading, per the district’s Cycles of Professional Learning, have been a focus during instruction. School leadership added that unpacking the standards and ensuring that objectives and tasks are aligned with standards has also been a focus, which some teachers confirmed. Further, school leadership and teachers stated that fidelity to the curriculum and its implementation has been emphasized. Continuing, school leadership noted the use of data, while some teachers reported that higher-order questioning and student engagement were also being highlighted as focus areas. Review of close reading informal observations confirmed the focus on close reading.

- School leadership ensures that teachers engage in the planning of the curricula through oversight of standards-based units, lessons and pacing. According to school leadership and teachers, the math and literacy reps, who are teachers, are tasked with overseeing pacing and implementation of the curriculum, and school leadership has pacing calendars to monitor where teachers are during informal observations. Teachers added that they also receive and send emails from and to school leadership regarding pacing and complete data trackers to determine if they were on pace. Further, teachers noted that planning and pacing are discussed in collaborative planning meetings. Review of emails confirmed that teachers received numerous emails to determine which unit they were on, what grades have been entered, what assessments have been completed, and more.
• School leadership provides formative feedback and guidance to teachers about the quality of planning, teaching, and adjustment of practice. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers reported that informal observations and learning walks are conducted frequently, and feedback is provided both verbally and in written form. School leadership and teachers added that the focus of the feedback ranges from classroom environment to instruction, as well as implementation of the Cycles of Professional Learning. Further, school leadership and teachers noted that there was no consistent template used for observations, and it depended on the focus. Review of informal observations forms confirmed that they included learning walks, such as Fundations and SABES. In one observation in which strengths, growth and wonderings were noted, the growth opportunity was: “There was a missed opportunity to pull scholars in to small groups. It was evident that scholars were on task during this time and there was little need of teacher support. This is an ideal opportunity to hone the skills where scholars are behind.” Lastly, teachers stated that the feedback was beneficial to their professional growth and development.

• School leadership demonstrates an understanding of data analysis and ensures the use of a complete student learning data-cycle. According to school leadership and teachers, teachers analyze data in content meetings with staff, and are required to submit data trackers to content leads. School leadership and teachers added that teachers received training from school leadership this year regarding data analysis, and also receive support from staff and teachers in completing data trackers. Review of a PowerPoint presentation also confirmed that teachers received training on data analysis this year. Review of emails confirmed that there is an expectation for teachers to complete and submit trackers, and if not submitted, there is follow up. For example, one email regarding an upcoming data meeting noted “This meeting will focus on revisiting action plans, analyzing success and areas for growth, then seeking connections for small groups,” and also action items in preparation for the meeting.

| Key action 1.5: Teachers establish a classroom environment in which teaching and learning can occur. | Highly Effective |

• Most teachers implement routines to maximize instructional time. In 75% of classrooms visited (n=8), students were only idle for very brief periods (less than two minutes) while waiting for the teacher. Additionally, in 75% of classes, routines and procedures ran smoothly with minimal or no promoting from the teacher. For example, the use of countdowns was noted to assist with transitions.

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2 Key action 1.5 evidence comes directly from classroom observations that were conducted as part of the SER. All classroom observations are twenty minute in which the observers are looking for teachers to demonstrate components of the Instructional Framework. The completed classroom visit tool can be found in appendix A.
• Teachers build a positive, learning-focused classroom culture. In 100% of classrooms observed (n=8), teacher interactions with students were positive and respectful. For example, teachers were observed praising students and using color charts with student names on clips. Additionally, in 100% of classes, student interactions with teachers were positive and respectful. Finally, in 88% of classes, student-to-student interactions were positive and respectful.

• Most teachers reinforce positive behavior and re-direct off task or challenging behavior, when needed. In 88% of classrooms visited (n=8), teachers promoted and reinforced positive behavior. For example, in one class, a teacher was observed saying “Everyone is working nicely...I see students underlining their words... I’m proud of...” and so on. Additionally, in 62% of classes, students were on task and active participants in classwork and discussions. Lastly, in 88% of classes, teachers addressed behavioral issues with minimal interruption to instructional time.
School leadership has created and implemented an organizational and staffing structure that meets the diverse needs of all students. According to school leadership, staff and teachers, the school has two administrators (a principal and an assistant principal), and responsibilities are evenly divided between them. School leadership, staff and teachers added that the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support team includes an MTSS coach, an IEP chair, psychologists and a psych intern (some of which are supported through Prevention and Intervention for Early Learners (PIEL), a social worker, a speech pathologist, a health clinician through the University of Maryland, and an attendance monitor to support the academic and socio-emotional needs of students. Further, school leadership and teachers reported that resource classes include art, library, health, and technology, as well as a college and career readiness class that allows students to learn about soft skills and research future options for themselves. Review of the organizational chart confirmed the roles of the principal, assistant principal, MTSS team and coach, IEP chair, and more.

School leadership leverages a pipeline for staff recruitment and uses some measures and includes stakeholders in the assessment of candidates. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers stated that teachers are identified through a variety of pipelines, including partnerships with local universities (Towson and Coppin State), referrals from other principals, social media, and the district’s hiring fair. School leadership and teachers added that prospective candidates participate in a panel interview with both administrators and teachers. Further, school leadership noted that candidates may be asked to conduct a demonstration lesson or if they are currently teaching, be observed at their school; some teachers confirmed that they were observed at their schools during the hiring process. However, other teachers noted that the process was conducted over the summer for the current year, and therefore were not required to conduct a demonstration lesson, though one teacher was asked to bring an instructional portfolio and walk the administration through a lesson during the interview. Review of interview questions revealed that they included the following: “What is your philosophy of education? What role do standards play in your classroom? What do you think is the greatest challenge facing students today? Describe your ideal lesson.”

School leadership includes staff members and other stakeholders in the development and retention of effective teachers and staff. According to school leadership and teachers, math and literacy reps are used to provide teachers with content-specific support, and one of the teachers is a mentor. Teachers added that other teachers and staff also provide professional development to teachers, such as one staff member who is providing an Achievement Unit course to teachers. Further, school leadership and teachers noted that they conducted peer observations related to academic discourse, which review of peer observation notes confirmed. Continuing, school leadership and teachers stated that district
office staff supports the school through learning walks and in content meetings, and Scholastic has provided professional development around guided reading; a review of emails confirmed supports from both. Regarding retention, school leadership and teachers indicated that teachers stay at the school due to the support received from both colleagues and leadership, relationships with students and the family feeling of the school and community. Lastly, school leadership and teachers noted that the school has a culture and climate committee that supports morale, among other things. Review of culture and climate agendas revealed that the committee planned events such as a Thanksgiving potluck, a holiday party and more.

- School leadership has created mentoring and induction programs, when applicable, to support the development of new teachers and staff and monitors the program’s effectiveness. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers reported that the school has two teachers who serve as mentors to early career teachers, who meet monthly with them to provide supports related to planning, behavior management, creating small groups, and also conducting observations and debriefing; review of accountability logs and site-based mentoring meetings confirmed that supports included observations and feedback, planning, management and more. However, one early career teacher noted that due to scheduling conflicts, she has not been able to meet with the mentors, and was participating in her first meeting that week. Regarding oversight, school leadership noted that they meet regularly with the new teacher mentors to discuss the progress of new teachers, which review of meeting agendas confirmed. Lastly, school leadership and teachers stated that new teachers also participated in a site-based orientation at the beginning of the school year that included a tour, review of the curriculum, and policies and procedures.

**Key action 2.2: The school has created and implemented systems to evaluate teachers and staff against individual and school-wide goals, provide interventions to those who are not meeting expectations, and remove those who do not make reasonable improvement.**

- School leadership makes full use of the evaluation system to develop faculty and staff capacity. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers stated that the school has two qualified observers, who follow the district’s formal evaluation process, including a pre-observation conference, the observation and a post-observation conference. School leadership added that the observers switch teachers for the second formal observation, so that teachers receive feedback from both. School leadership and teachers added that teachers also complete a self-reflection as part of the process, and the post-observation conversation allows teachers to openly discuss ratings and provide evidence to support a higher rating. Further, teachers noted that the feedback from school leadership is beneficial to their instructional practice, and is aligned with the Teach indicators from the Instructional Framework. Review of formal observations confirmed that they were aligned with the Instructional Framework, and revealed that a summary of strengths and growth areas were included, along with recommendations, such as the following: “By unpacking the standards to see what students know and
be able to do, [teacher] can begin creating activities and questions that are at a higher level for students to incorporate during his lessons. By doing this in advance, [teacher] can be more strategic in moving to higher tiers on the cognitive rigor matrix...”

- School leadership provides timely support and interventions to struggling teachers and staff as indicated by data and/or informal or formal observations and holds them accountable for performance. According to school leadership and teachers, teachers are identified as struggling through informal and formal observations and data such as office referrals. School leadership and teachers added that supports for struggling teachers could include support from the mentors, regular meetings with administration, planning support, increased observations, and more. Further, some teachers noted that there would be interventions prior to a teachers having a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), such as MTSS support and referrals. Lastly, school leadership indicated that one staff member has a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), which review of the PIP confirmed. Review of a series of memos also revealed that absences had been documented and shared with various staff members, as well as overdue data trackers, etc.

- School leadership engages faculty in a school-wide professional development plan based on identified needs and in alignment with the school’s instructional vision. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers reported that the district’s Cycle of Professional Learning (CoPL) around academic discourse has been a primary focus for the year, which review of shared content meeting agendas and power point presentations confirmed. Teachers added that the district’s Blueprint has also been discussed, as well as a deeper dive into the curriculum, including Eureka (Math) and Fundations. Further, teachers noted that focus areas specific to the school have included Move This World and Gifted and Advanced Learners (GAL). Lastly, school leadership indicated that professional development has also been provided around data analysis, small group instruction, guided reading, and will soon focus on the use of data from the iReady assessment. Review of professional development offered to teachers and a professional development calendar confirmed that it included the CoPL, gifted learners, MTSS, Move This World, and more.
Domain 3: Vision and Engagement

Key action 3.1: The school provides a safe and supportive learning environment for students, families, teachers, and staff.  

- The school community shares an understanding of, and commitment to, the school mission, vision, and values, including a clear understanding of strategic goals and initiatives. According to all stakeholders – students, parents, teachers, school leadership and staff – the school’s vision is focused around preparing students for college and career and global citizenship, which is posted around the building and noted on all school agendas. Review of the mission in the school’s handbook revealed that it is “Every scholar will graduate with strong academic foundational skills, processing the mind and habits, good character necessary to achieve in college, career and inherit communities of the global future.” School leadership, teachers, staff, students, and parents added that the vision and mission are manifested through a college and career resource class that is offered to students, USOAR (Uniform, succeed, obey, attend and respect) values, rigorous instruction, engagement of families and the community, and field trips. Further, school leadership noted that the work of the school is divided into four buckets – achievement, climate and culture, family engagement, and attendance, which are all aligned with the school’s mission. Continuing, parents reported that students also complete research projects and attend college and career fairs with guest speakers.

- Students, staff, and families feel physically safe and students, families and most staff feel emotionally safe at the school. In focus groups, school leadership, teachers, students, parents and staff reported that the school is physically safe, due to the leadership and staff, the lack of fighting amongst students, safety codes, clear communication, and school-wide rules and procedures. Review of the faculty handbook revealed that it included drill protocols and emergency procedures. Staff added that the school has a visitor sign-in process, locked doors, and parent volunteers who wear specific colors to identify themselves as such. Regarding emotional safety, school leadership stated that students participate in monthly town hall meetings, as well as groups such as lunch bunches, which teachers and staff confirmed. Further, school leadership, teachers, staff, and students noted that there are a variety of individuals with whom students can speak about non-academic issues, including teachers, staff, and members of the MTSS team. Lastly, most teachers and staff indicated that they have a good relationship with the administration and feel comfortable approaching leadership with concerns and feedback, though some teachers indicated that while it is encouraged, they do not always see follow through from school leadership. Review of schedule revealed that MTSS staff have taught lessons focused on bullying and character development to classes.

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3 There were less than six families in attendance at the parent focus group.
• School leadership establishes structures for the acknowledgement and celebration of student, faculty and staff success. According to school leadership, teachers, staff, students and parents, students are celebrated for behavior and attendance through Belmont bucks and monthly E-club celebrations if they have 80% of E’s, and participate in trips to Sky Zone as well as Fun Friday activities, lunch bunches, dances and parties. School leadership, students and teachers added that students are also recognized through quarterly awards assemblies, during which they receive awards for honor roll, perfect attendance, citizenship, and most improved. Review of flyers confirmed celebration such as dances for students, and revealed that students are also celebrated for growth on assessments. Further, parents noted that students are recognized as student of the month and student of the week. Regarding staff celebrations, teachers stated that there is a staff member of the month who receives a parking spot, and staff also receive gift cards for perfect attendance. School leadership added that teachers are celebrated during teacher appreciation week, during American Education week, and will receive tokens of appreciation during Valentine’s Day week. Lastly, teachers and school leadership indicated that teachers are provided with lunch periodically in meetings and for other occasions.

• The school develops systems that proactively attend to individual students’ social and emotional needs. In focus groups, school leadership, teachers, parents and students reported that the school implements the Move This World program daily, which is a social-emotional program that teaches students to use non-verbal body language and facial expressions to engage and express themselves appropriately, which review of an implementation report confirmed. School leadership added that the school has monthly town hall meetings for older students, supported by University of Maryland, to resolve and diffuse conflicts and discuss issues such as bullying. Further, school leadership, staff, parents, and teachers reported that students participate in small groups with MTSS staff to discuss various topics, including grief, coping, and making positive choices. Review of a list of small groups confirmed the focus on coping, as well as resilience, and also whole class lessons on topics such as whole body listening and tattling. Lastly, staff and school leadership indicated that some classes have “cool down corners” so that students can take a break from instruction when necessary and prevent behavior challenges from escalating.

| Key action 3.2: The school cultivates and sustains open communication and decision-making opportunities with families about school events, policies, and the academic and social development of their children. | Effective |

• The school uses multiple strategies and vehicles to communicate information about school progress, policies, events, and the academic and social development of students to families and the community. According to school leadership, teachers, parents and students, the school uses a variety of communication methods, including a monthly newsletter, a weekly newsletter (Belmont Blast), Parent Link (an automated district call service), flyers, letters, phone calls, daily folders, and a calendar of student conduct. Review of letters, flyers and newsletters confirmed these communication methods.
Review of the newsletter revealed that it included information related to school procedures, expectations, the curriculum, upcoming events and more.

- The school establishes regular structures for two-way communication, which facilitate opportunities for families and the community to participate in, or provide feedback on, school-wide decisions. In focus groups, school leadership, students, parents, and teachers reported that the school has a School Family Council (SFC) and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) that meet monthly. Parents added that the PTO discusses student needs, ways to engage families and fundraisers and other events. Further, parents and school leadership stated that the school also hosts the Rosemont Community Association meetings, in which the school participates to discuss how the school can work with the community and ways to provide support. Review of PTO and SFC agendas revealed that they included a data review, budget discussions, planning, fundraising, parent concerns, and more.

- School leadership establishes multiple structures for frequent communication with teachers and staff members regarding policies, progress, and school culture. According to school leadership and teachers, school leadership communicates with teachers and staff through a weekly Belmont Blast (sent via email on the same day and time each week), emails, morning and afternoon announcements, text messages, and meetings (staff, team, and Instructional Leadership Team.) Review of the Belmont Blast confirmed that a variety of topics were covered; one included information on GAL, upcoming events, SLOs, close reading tips and the district’s three-year goal. School leadership added that calendars were also shared with teachers and teachers noted that they also have in person conversations with school leadership.

**Key action 3.3: The culture of the school reflects and embraces student, staff, and community diversity.**

- School leadership, teachers, and staff build strong relationships with families and community stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. According to school leadership and teachers, the school hosts monthly parent workshops on topics such as financial planning and stress management, which parents and a review of a University of Maryland mental health program overview confirmed. School leadership, parents and teachers added that the school hosts events to which families are invited, such as Back to School Night, various academic nights, American Education Week events (Muffins for Moms, Donuts for Dads, and Granola for Grandparents), Girls Rock Tea and 50 Man Friday. Review of flyers confirmed events during American Education Week, 50 Man Friday and Back to School Night. Further, staff noted that the school has a parent liaison, who supports parent volunteers, convenes parent meetings, and connects families to resources such as BGE. Continuing, school leadership noted that the school is open on the weekend for Family Fitness days, and students indicated that they plant flowers in the community garden. Lastly, as noted above, school leadership and parents indicated that the Rosemont Community Association meets with staff and families at the school monthly, which review of an email blast confirmed.
• The school’s curricula, resources and programs consider socioeconomic and some cultural diversity. In focus groups, school leadership, teachers, staff, and parents stated that the school has a food pantry, and a uniform closet for students who might be unable to afford one; review of a flyer confirmed the food pantry was open twice a week by appointment. School leadership, teachers, parents, and students added that resources are supplied by community partners for students, including school supplies, laundry detergent, coats and undergarments, holiday baskets and gifts, and more; review of a flyer confirmed Thanksgiving basket distribution. Regarding cultural diversity, school leadership and teachers reported that the school will host an African American history program at the end of February, and scholars make morning announcements every day of the month of February regarding contributions from notable African Americans. School leadership and teachers added that students will be participating on field trips to the Reginald F. Lewis museum, the aquarium, the B&O railroad, the Smithsonian, and the Blacks in Wax museum. Further, parents, students, teachers, and school leadership noted that the curriculum exposed students to other cultures, through books (Tooth on a Roof) and lessons on families and Native Americans, and research projects.

• The school maintains a positive school culture and climate. According to school leadership, staff and teachers, the school is aesthetically inviting and clean, there are clear procedures for arrival and dismissal and a school-wide behavior management system, and staff work together and support one another and the students; parents confirmed that the school is like a family and positivity begins with staff. Teachers added that the positive culture can also be attributed to initiatives like Move This World and PBIS (Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports) with associated events to celebrate students for behavior and attendance. A review of a Back to School Night PowerPoint presentation confirmed the school’s use of the PBIS program to support the positive culture and climate. Further, school leadership and students noted that the announcements set a positive tone through shout outs and the principal telling students that no one should put anyone down and that she loves them. The site visit team observed that the school was clean, well lit, bulletin boards displayed current student work, and students had hall passes and were in lines during transitions.
Domain 4: Strategic Leadership

Key action 4.1: The school establishes growth goals that guide strategic planning, teaching, and adjusting of practice to meet student needs.

- School leadership and teachers establish goals for the improvement of student learning that are measurable and aligned to student need and school improvement. In focus groups, school leadership reported that the School Performance Plan (SPP) includes the following academic and climate goals, which were confirmed by a review of the SPP: “1.) Scholars in grades Kindergarten through second scoring below or well below proficiency will make one year’s growth from BOY [beginning of year] Amplify TRC assessment to EOY [end of year]; 2.) 60% of third through fifth grade scholars scoring one or more levels below proficiency on Math iReady assessment will increase by one or more tiers as measured by window 3 of iReady. 3.) The number of scholars who receive out of school suspension will decrease by 50%.” School leadership added that the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) reviewed data (academic, climate, attendance, family involvement) over the summer to reflect on last year’s SPP and create goals for the current year; however, while some teachers confirmed contributing to the goal-setting discussion, not all teachers could confirm that they assisted. When probed, most teachers could articulate the academic goals, though some teachers noted that the goal was just to increase student achievement. Lastly, some teachers indicated the school had an attendance goal, instead of the goal around decreasing suspensions.

- School leadership ensures the alignment of some school goals, action plans and key priorities. According to school leadership and teachers, initiatives aligned with academic goals include power hour, data cycles that support the creation of small groups and progress monitoring, coach class, and the cycles of professional learning. Regarding the climate goal, school leadership noted that Move This World, PBIS and lessons on bullying for students were some of the strategies. However, while some teachers confirmed PBIS as a strategy to reach the climate goal, other teachers noted home visits, attendance incentives, parent communication logs and other strategies believing that the goal was around attendance. Some teachers also indicated that the afterschool program and the attendance monitoring supported the climate goal. Review of the SPP confirmed that strategies included attendance trips and incentives, corrective action plans and other trackers based on data analysis, power hour, content meetings, and fidelity with regard to implementation of curriculum.

- School leadership and staff participate in analysis of school-wide data and revisit and adjust action plans as needed. According to school leadership and teachers, the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meets monthly to review data related to achievement and climate, and specifically with regards to progress towards SPP goals. Teachers added that in content meetings and during faculty meetings, they review iReady, Amplify, and attendance data. Review of administrative agendas confirmed that data analysis was a topic, with notes regarding corrective action plans and data trackers for various assessments. Review of ILT agendas confirmed that School Performance Planning and reflection was a topic. Lastly, school leadership and teachers noted that mid-year testing had just been completed, and data would be reviewed to re-group students for the Power Hour literacy intervention time.
• Budget distributions and resource allocations somewhat support teaching and learning. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers reported that staff is sufficient, with most class sizes being small, and that there are no vacancies. However, parents and students noted that some of the classes are large, with over 30 students. Leadership and teachers added that materials and supplies are sufficient, with ample paper, manipulatives, Scholastic books, and more. However, students noted more supplies were needed in art, and students and parents noted more books were needed. Teachers also stated that there is a request process if additional materials are needed. Further, regarding technology, school leadership, teachers, students, and parents reported that while the school has a computer lab, two laptop carts and an iPad cart, much of the technology is not functioning properly or is only available for testing, and even testing can be a challenge due to the limitation in the number of laptops. Lastly, school leadership and teachers indicated that in classrooms, there are promethean boards, smart boards, some desktop computers, projectors, and document cameras. Finally, a review of K12 Buy documents confirmed that funding was allocated for supplies, materials, and technology.

• School leadership leverages teacher and staff talent, expertise, and effectiveness by delegating essential responsibilities and decisions to appropriate individuals. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers reported that each grade level has a lead that serves on the Instructional leadership Team (ILT). School leadership and teachers added that teachers also serve on committees, including attendance, achievement, culture and climate, and family/community engagement. Review of the committee structure for the current year confirmed the aforementioned committees, and also included goals, budgets and responsibilities. Further, school leadership and teachers noted that teachers serve as the math and literacy representatives.

• School leadership consistently provides and focuses common staff time on instructional practices and development in support of student achievement. According to school leadership and teachers, teachers meet weekly to plan, alternating groups organized either by grade level or content. School leadership and teachers added that topics include the district’s Cycle of Professional Learning (CoPL) and Guided Reading training and support from Scholastic. Further, teachers stated that they discuss curriculum, planning and data, as well as progress monitoring, students’ groups, and peer observations. Lastly, teachers indicated that they discuss business and logistical items such as field trips, kudos and more. Review of shared content team schedules and agendas confirmed all aforementioned topics.

• The school collaborates with families and community partners to garner resources to meet the needs of students and the school. In focus groups, school leadership, parents, students, and teachers reported that families assist at the school in various ways, including support with making copies, supporting small groups in classes, monitoring hallways, in the cafeteria, distributing fruit, creating bulletin boards and planning events, such as the Sweetheart dance. School leadership and teachers added that there is a
designated room for parent volunteers at the school, and volunteers are distinguished by aprons they wear. Review of an application and sign in sheet confirmed parents volunteered in classrooms, the cafeteria, in the food pantry, and in the office. Further, school leadership, parents and teachers reported that the school has a variety of partners who support in various capacities, including One more, One less (mentoring supports), Whitestone and Gospel Tabernacle churches (providing books, donations and beautification), Rosemont Neighborhood Association (providing donations and guest readers), Bridging the Gap (managing before and after care), the Maryland Food Bank, Boys and Girl Scouts and more. Lastly, school leadership indicated that interns from Towson University support in classrooms. Review of a partnership lists confirmed all partners, and revealed additional partners included Threshold, The Center for Urban Families, and Russell Bunn.
Performance Level Rubric

The SER team will use the following guidance to select a performance level for each key action. Note that the quality standard for each performance level is based upon: the extent to which the SER team finds multiple types\(^4\) and multiple sources\(^5\) of evidence AND the extent to which the SER team finds evidence of high levels of adoption and/or implementation of a practice or system. The SER team will also reflect on the Instructional Framework and School Leadership Framework in their analysis prior to assigning a rating for each key action.

![Diagram showing Performance Level Rubric]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Performance Level</th>
<th>Quality Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not Effective</td>
<td>Evidence indicates that the key action is not a practice or system that has been adopted and/or implemented at the school, or the level of adoption/implementation does not improve the school’s effectiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>Evidence indicates that the key action (including some indicators) is a practice or system that is emerging at the school, but that it has not yet been implemented at a level that has begun to improve the school’s effectiveness, OR that the impact of the key action on the effectiveness of the school cannot yet be fully determined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Evidence indicates that the key action (including most indicators) is a practice or system that has been adopted at the school, and is implemented at a level that is improving the school’s effectiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Highly Effective</td>
<td>Evidence indicates that the key action (including all indicators) is a practice or system that has been fully adopted at the school, and is implemented at a level that has had a strong, significant or sustainable impact on the school’s effectiveness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 “Multiple types of evidence” is defined as evidence collected from two or more of the following: document review, stakeholder focus groups; and classroom observations.

5 “Multiple sources of evidence” is defined as evidence collected from three or more stakeholder focus groups; two or more documents; and/or evidence that a descriptor was documented in 75% or more of lessons observed at the time of the visit.
The classroom visit tool is aligned to Baltimore City Schools Instructional Framework. During each classroom visit, the observer collects evidence based on his/her observations and then determines whether the indicator was “evident”, “partially evident” or “not evident” for each of the 22 indicators. Below is the summary of the 8 classroom observations that were conducted.

### Appendix A: Classroom Observation Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACH 1: Communicate Standards-Based Lesson Objectives</th>
<th>Evident</th>
<th>Partially Evident</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication of objective</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning activities and resources align with lesson objective</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACH 2: Present Content Clearly</th>
<th>Evident</th>
<th>Partially Evident</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accurate, grade-level content</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternate presentation of content</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis of Key Points</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACH 3: Use Strategies and Tasks To Engage All Students In Rigorous Work</th>
<th>Evident</th>
<th>Partially Evident</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scaffolded and/or Differentiated Tasks</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities To Engage With Complex Texts and Tasks</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACH 4: Use Evidence-Dependent Questioning</th>
<th>Evident</th>
<th>Partially Evident</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions Requiring Justification</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear And Scaffolded Questions</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACH 5: Check For Understanding and Provide Specific, Academic Feedback</th>
<th>Evident</th>
<th>Partially Evident</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informative Checks for Understanding</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific, Academic Feedback</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACH 6: Facilitate Student-To-Student Interactions and Academic Talk</th>
<th>Evident</th>
<th>Partially Evident</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for student-to-student interaction</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence-based discussions</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student academic talk</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACH 7: Implement Routines To Maximize Instructional Time</td>
<td>Evident</td>
<td>Partially Evident</td>
<td>Not Evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximized instructional time</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smooth routines and procedures</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACH 8: Build A Positive, Learning-Focused Classroom Culture</th>
<th>Evident</th>
<th>Partially Evident</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-to-student interactions</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-to-teacher interactions</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-to-Student interactions</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACH 9: Reinforce Positive Behavior, Redirect Off-Task Behavior, and De-escalate Challenging Behavior</th>
<th>Evident</th>
<th>Partially Evident</th>
<th>Not Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reinforce positive behavior</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-task behavior</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time impact of redirection/discipline or off-task behavior</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix B: School Report Comments

### Domain 1: Highly Effective Instruction
None

### Domain 2: Talented People
None

### Domain 3: Vision and Engagement
None

### Domain 4: Strategic Leadership
None
Appendix C: SER Team Members

The SER visit to the Belmont Elementary School was conducted on February 5-7, 2018 by a team of representatives from Baltimore City Public Schools.

**Mona Khajawi** is a Program Evaluator II in the Office of Achievement and Accountability in Baltimore City Public Schools. She has had a variety of experience in the field of education, including teaching, program management and evaluation. Most recently, she worked in the capacity of Evaluation Specialist with City Year in Washington, D.C., assessing the quality of educational programming implemented by 140 AmeriCorps members in eleven schools throughout the district. She initially gained exposure to evaluation while interning with the Academy for Educational Development, where she assisted in conducting reviews of a subset of the Gates-funded small schools in New York City. Previously, she also taught English in a rural high school in Ukraine, and served as an Assistant Program Coordinator of the AmeriCorps program at the Latin American Youth Center in Washington, D.C. Mona holds a Bachelor’s degree in English Literature from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Master’s degree in Education Policy from Teachers College, Columbia University.

**Brianna Kaufman** is the Manager for the School Effectiveness Reviews in the Office of Achievement and Accountability in Baltimore City Public Schools. Brianna began her career as an elementary art teacher in Bryan, TX. After obtaining her Master’s degree, she interned and worked at a number of art museums in the education department including the: Dallas Museum of Art, The National Gallery of Art in DC, and the Walters Art Museum. In 2008, Brianna made the shift from art education to general education reform as a Program Manager at the Fund for Educational Excellence. There she managed a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that focused on College and Career Readiness. Prior to joining OAA, Brianna worked as the College and Career Readiness Education Specialist for Baltimore City Public Schools. Brianna holds a Bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Texas Lutheran University, a Master’s degree in Art Education from University of North Texas, and a Master’s of Business Administration from Loyola University in Maryland.

**Reginald Trammell** is a Program Evaluator II in the Office of Achievement and Accountability in Baltimore City Public Schools. Reginald began his career in education in 2000 as an elementary classroom teacher with Baltimore City Public Schools. After a decade of providing direct service to scholars, he transitioned to the Office of Teaching and Learning as the Education Associate for Elementary and Middle School Mathematics. In this role, he wrote curriculum, modelled instruction and facilitated professional development opportunities for math instructors. In 2011, Reginald continued to support Baltimore City Public Schools through the work of the Engagement Office. Here, he served as a Family and Community Engagement Specialist and subsequently secured the role as Parent Involvement Manager. His responsibilities included coordinating district-wide learning opportunities for school staff on engaging of families and community members and supporting the district’s Title I Parent Involvement Program. Reginald is currently earning his Administrator I Certificate to continue his mission of improving public education.