

**BALTIMORE CITY**  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Office of Achievement and Accountability**  
**Division of Research Services**

**School Effectiveness Review**  
**2017 - 2018**

**Dickey Hill Elementary/Middle School**

**January 23-25, 2018**

200 East North Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202  
[www.baltimorecityschools.org](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org)

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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

Dickey Hill Elementary/Middle School serves approximately 378 students in Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade. The school is located on Dickey Hill Rd in the Gwynn Oak neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland. The principal, Mr. Aaron Clark, has been at the school for nine 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.

Domains and Key Actions	Performance Levels			
	Level 4: Highly Effective	Level 3: Effective	Level 2: Developing	Level 1: Not Effective

Domain 1: Highly Effective Instruction	
1.1 Teachers plan highly effective instruction.	Effective
1.2 Teachers deliver highly effective instruction.	Effective
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.	Effective
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

## Part III: Findings on Domains of Effective Schools

Domains and Key Actions	Performance Levels			
	Level 4: Highly Effective	Level 3: Effective	Level 2: Developing	Level 1: Not Effective

### Domain 1: Highly Effective Instruction

Key action 1.1: Teachers plan highly effective instruction.	Effective
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- Teachers develop and/or implement standards-based daily lessons, units, and long-term plans using appropriate curriculum planning documents. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers use the Baltimore City Public Schools’ (City Schools) curriculums to create long-range plans. From the long-range plans, school leadership and teachers stated that teachers create their daily lesson plans. A review of daily lesson plans confirmed that plans are created from the long-range plans which are based on City Schools’ curriculum planning documents. Continuing, a review of plans indicated that objectives in the lesson plans were grounded in the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards. Specifically, one lesson plan noted the following objective: “Explain ideas in a scientific text, including what happened and why, based on information in the text.” The previously mentioned objective was linked to standard RI.4.3 “Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text including what happened and why, based on information in the text.”
- Teachers design daily lessons that meet learners’ unique needs. School leadership reported that all plans should be grounded in appropriate standards and note a daily objective. School leadership and teachers stated that small instructional groups should also be included in lesson plans. Additionally, school leadership and teachers reported that accommodations for students with disabilities should be included in lesson plans. A review of lesson plans confirmed the inclusion of standards, a daily objective, and small instructional groups. Particularly in one lesson plan, the teacher indicated the following: “I have students working in different groups with different texts based on their i-Ready results. The students are listed on the lesson plan attached...”
- Teachers set and track goals based on students’ performance levels. School leadership reported that teachers have created and submitted student learning objectives (SLO) and completed data sheets that monitor how students perform on certain assessments which may include goals, which teachers confirmed. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers have established goals around writing (increasing levels per a certain rubric), Amplify (increasing reading fluency by a specific amount of words), and i-Ready (increasing by a certain number of points). In terms of tracking students’ progress towards goals, school leadership reported that teachers track through middle of year testing, which teachers confirmed. Teachers also reported that they track students’ progress towards goals through formative assessments. A review of SLOs, progress monitoring forms, and data tracking forms confirmed that teachers are setting and tracking goals for student performance.

<b>Key action 1.2: Teachers deliver highly effective instruction.<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Effective</b>
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- Most teachers use and communicate standards-based lesson objectives and align learning activities to the stated lesson objectives. In 50% of classes (n=10), teachers communicated standards-based lesson objectives by explaining and/or referencing the objective during the lesson. Continuing, in 80% of classes, the learning activities and resources aligned with the lesson objectives. In one class, the teacher referred to the following posted objective at the end of class: “Students will be able to decode words by segmenting words into phonemes.” During the class, students used strategies such as sounding and tapping out sounds to decode words.
- Teachers present content in various ways and emphasize key points to make content clear. In 100% of classes (n=10), teachers presented students with accurate grade-level content aligned to appropriate content standards. In one class, the objective was “Students will be able to describe the character in *One Hen* by analyzing the text and completing a graphic organizer” which was linked to a standard RI 8.1 “Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.” Additionally, in 80% of classes, teachers presented content in various ways (two or more) to make content clear. For example, in the previously mentioned class the teacher presented content through a discussion, the text, and a graphic organizer. Finally, in 100% of classes, teachers emphasized important points to focus the learning of content. In a class, where the objective was that students would use multiplication and division to create identities, the teacher had students define “identities” and to practice creating identities using the operations of multiplication and division.
- Teachers use multiple strategies and tasks to engage all students in rigorous work. In 100% of classes (n=10), teachers scaffolded and/or differentiated tasks by providing rigorous grade-level instruction for all students. In several classes, teachers explicitly modeled for students how to complete assignments before practicing with them, and then releasing them to complete assignments on their own. Continuing, in 60% of classes students had opportunities and time to grapple with complex texts and/or rigorous tasks. In one class, students read a text in order to identify information to answer the following question posed by the teacher: “What is the direct effect of Sudan’s lingering war?”

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

- Teachers use evidence-dependent questioning. In 80% of classes (n=10), teachers asked questions that required students to cite evidence and clearly explain their thought processes. Additionally, in 100% of classes, teachers asked questions that were clear and scaffolded. In one class, the teacher asked the following questions when having students retell the story using key details and describing major events from the text: “Who were the main characters in the text? What is the setting? What are some events that happened in the beginning? Middle? End? How are Elizabetti and her mother the same? How are they different?”
- Most teachers check for student understanding and provide specific academic feedback. In 80% of classes (n=10), teachers conducted one or more checks for understanding that yielded useful information at key points throughout the lesson. In one class, the teacher listened to groups of students as they discussed answers to questions regarding a given text. In 60% of classes, teachers gave students specific academic feedback to communicate current progress and next steps to move forward. In one class, the teacher asked a student, “What did we just do?” The student responded, “We blended words apart.” The teacher then asked, “Did we take them apart or put them together?” The student replied “together”. The teacher said, “That’s right. We put words together”.
- Some teachers facilitate student-to-student interaction and academic talk. In 60% of classrooms (n=10), teachers provided multiple or extended opportunities for student-to-student interactions and academic talk. In 60% of those interactions, students engaged in discussions with their peers to make meaning of the content or deepen their understanding. In some classes, students completed assignments in groups. Specifically, in one class students completed an Exploratory Math Challenge working in table groups. Finally, in 90 % of classes, students used academic talk, and when necessary, teachers consistently and appropriately supported students in speaking academically. For example, in one class, students used mathematical terms such as “factor” and “number line”.

<b>Key action 1.3: Teachers use multiple data sources to adjust practice.</b>	<b>Effective</b>
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- Teachers analyze students’ progress toward goals. School leadership reported that teachers formally analyze data from formal assessments at the beginning, middle, and end of year for i-Ready, which teachers confirmed. Continuing, school leadership reported that the processes for each assessment varies. School leadership and teachers reported that i-Ready analysis includes analyzing data based on performance, identifying areas of strength and weakness, and implementing strategies to target skill deficits. A review of i-Ready analysis forms confirmed the previously mentioned steps. School leadership reported that teachers are beginning to are engage in item analysis with ANet assessment results to participate in a four-step decision process which includes choosing standards for analysis, aligning assessments to instruction, analyzing student work to identify strengths and areas of growth, and determining strategies to address skill gaps. Teachers also confirmed the ANet data analysis process.

- Teachers modify instruction in response to data. School leadership and teachers reported that if 70-80% of students do not master the concept or skill assessed, teachers should re-teach the concept or skill to the whole class. Continuing, school leadership and teachers reported that small instructional groups are also utilized to address misunderstanding of small groups of students. Teachers reported that they may modify the instructional materials to better meet the needs of students. A review of i-Ready analysis forms and math module assessments confirmed that teachers are implementing small group instruction as a strategy to target students' instructional deficits. For example, one i-Ready Data Analysis Tracker indicated that the teacher would focus on the following topics with three small groups based on the results of the i-Ready assessment: Vocabulary, Comprehension of Informational Text, and Comprehension of Literature.
- Teachers appropriately recommend students for some tiered interventions including opportunities for acceleration. School leadership and teachers reported that students needing intervention following whole group instruction receive it through small group instruction, which a review of monthly small group calendars, lesson plans, and data analysis forms confirmed. Further, school leadership and teachers reported that some students are receiving additional pull out intervention support through volunteers and some staff in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth, which members of the site visit team observed, and a review of a Volunteer Service Provider document confirmed. School leadership also reported that students attending the afterschool program receive one hour of instruction in groups, arranged by their instructional data and students receive instruction in coach class, which teachers, a review of after school program class rosters and student data, and coach class rosters confirmed. Regarding opportunities for acceleration, school leadership and teachers reported that the school does not have a specific program for accelerated students but students may be given individual projects or more challenging work. Teachers added that accelerated students are also targeted and supported through small group instruction.



<b>Key action 1.4: School leadership supports highly effective instruction.</b>	<b>Effective</b>
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- School leadership holds and promotes a clear instructional vision of high student achievement. School leadership and teachers reported that the following strategies should be implemented across classrooms: the gradual release model, small group instruction, and the Cycles of Professional learning, specifically academic talk and discourse. Continuing school leadership and teachers reported that the instructional vision is communicated through professional development sessions and in collaborative planning meetings. A review of the Dickey Hill Elementary/Middle School Monitoring Form indicated that evidence of the following items are expected during informal observations: the gradual release model, student-to-student interaction and academic talk, and an area designated for small group instruction
- School leadership ensures that teachers engage in the planning of the curricula through oversight of standards-based units, lessons, and pacing. School leadership and teachers reported that planning and pacing is monitored through the submission of teachers' monthly long-range plans, conversations during collaborative planning meetings, learning walks, and informal observations. A review of informal observations and long-range planning forms confirmed school leadership's oversight. Specifically, a review of long-range planning feedback forms revealed that teachers receive feedback on the lesson's alignment with City School's curriculum in terms of standards and pacing, the identified skill, the identified assessment, and the identifications of small instructional groups.
- School leadership provides formative feedback and guidance to teachers about the quality of planning, teaching, and adjustment of practice. School leadership reported that teachers receive feedback on the long-range planning form, which teachers and long range planning feedback forms confirmed. Continuing, school leadership and teachers reported that teachers also receive feedback from informal observations in verbal and written form. Teachers added that they find the feedback beneficial, particularly the verbal feedback as some teachers reported that they find the form to be vague. Finally, school leadership reported that trends from learning walks are shared with teachers after each learning walk occurs, which a review of documents indicating trends from learning walks confirmed. Specifically, one long-range planning form noted the following feedback on plans: ...thank you for being so specific with your Foundations, as well as including both reading AND writing on your plan...Please remember to highlight any assessments given." Additionally, Dickey Hill Elementary/Middle School Monitoring Forms noted general feedback or evidence observed during the lesson such as "small groups working and discussing questions", "[teacher is] working with small groups", and [students are] completing worksheets."

- School leadership demonstrates an understanding of data analysis and ensures the use of a complete student learning data-cycle. School leadership reported that teachers have been trained on the data analysis process this year for the ANet assessment, which teachers and a review of the training PowerPoint confirmed. School leadership reported that data analysis protocols have been in place for the i-Ready assessment, which teachers also confirmed. Continuing, school leadership reported that teachers complete data analysis protocols after the administration of each assessment at the beginning, middle, and end of year, which teachers also confirmed. Continuing, school leadership and teachers reported that discussions about data are held during collaborative planning meetings.

<b>Key action 1.5: Teachers establish a classroom environment in which teaching and learning can occur. <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Highly Effective</b>
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- Teachers implement routines to maximize instructional time. In 90% of classes (n=10), students were idle for very brief (less than 2 minutes) periods of time while waiting for the teachers. Specifically, in one class, students had the all of the materials needed for class including the manipulatives and handouts before the lesson began. In 80% of classes, routines and procedures ran smoothly with minimal or no prompting from the teacher. In one class, students followed a specific procedure for turn and talks when prompted by the teacher.
- Teachers build a positive, learning-focused classroom culture. In 100% of classes (n=10), teachers’ interactions with students were positive and respectful. In one class, after listening to students’ responses, the teacher stated, “I love all of the good ideas I heard.” Also, in 100% of classes, students’ interactions with the teachers were positive and respectful. Students responded promptly and respectfully to teachers’ requests. Finally, in 70% of classes, student to student interactions were positive and respectful. In most classes, all students related positively to one another.
- Teachers implement routines to maximize instructional time. In 90% of classes (n=10), teachers promoted and reinforced positive behavior. In one class, the teacher awarded points to students for being on task. In one class, the teacher praised students for how they were sitting on the carpet. Continuing, in 70% of classes, students were on task and active participants in classwork and discussions. Lastly, also in 100% of classes, teachers addressed behavioral issues (if any) with minimal interruption to instructional time (2 minutes or less). In most classes, teachers’ redirection of students occurred swiftly and was effective.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

## Domain 2: Talented People

**Key action 2.1: The school creates and implements systems to select, develop, and retain effective teachers and staff whose skills and beliefs represent the diverse needs of all students.**

**Effective**

- School leadership has created and implemented an organizational and staffing structure that meets the diverse needs of all students. School leadership reported that an effort is made to keep class sizes under 30 students and students are grouped in classes according to data. To that end, school leadership stated part of the role of temporary employees this school year is to assist in providing support for large class sizes in two grades, which teachers confirmed. Continuing school leadership stated that the schedule for the previously mentioned staff includes blocks of time for them to provide intervention to approximately seven students which reduces the number of students in the class during those blocks of time. Teachers reported that the primary classes (Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten) also have support from Para-educators. Additionally, school leadership and teachers reported that the school has a part-time social worker, a part-time psychologist, two speech pathologists, one clinician through a partnership along with an intern, which student support staff confirmed. Finally, school leadership and teachers reported that students have the following resource classes: art, library science, technology, music, and physical education and health. A review of the school's roster and master schedule confirmed the previously mentioned classes and positions.
- School leadership leverages a pipeline for staff recruitment and uses a measure and includes stakeholders in the assessment of candidates. School leadership reported that the Office of Human Capital is the pipeline used to recruit candidates, which teachers and a review of emails confirmed. In terms of the assessment process, school leadership reported that after resumes are reviewed and ranked, candidates are invited to the school for a tour of the school and an interview. School leadership reported that teachers participate as interviewers, which teachers confirmed. Teachers added that along with participating as interviewers, members of the Instructional Leadership team (ILT) assist with reviewing resumes.
- School leadership includes staff members and other stakeholders in the development and retention of effective teachers and staff. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers have had opportunities to conduct ghost walks and share the feedback with one another, which completed Ghost Walk forms confirmed. Continuing, school leadership and teachers reported that teachers have led professional development sessions this year, such as sessions on creating Student Learning Objectives (SLO) and how to analyze student assessment data. Teachers added that teachers informally learn from one another during collaborative planning time. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers have received professional development from external stakeholders such as A Net and Scholastic Books. Regarding retention of staff, school leadership and teachers reported that transparency with staff, acknowledgement of staff's accomplishments, and having an open door policies are structures in place to support teacher retention. Continuing, school leadership reported that there are opportunities for leadership roles for teachers and that the school's staff is like a family.

Teachers added that the school has a safe environment and they appreciate the balance of the support provided with the high expectations as well as the expertise of school leadership.

- School leadership has created mentoring and other induction programs, when applicable, to support the development of all new teachers and staff and monitors the program’s effectiveness. School leadership reported that the school has one teacher with less than three years’ experience and one teacher new to Baltimore City Public Schools from another educational setting. School leadership reported that a mentor has been assigned to the novice teacher and a buddy teacher has been assigned to the new teacher. A review of City School’s Staff Contact Roster and Instructional Support Summaries confirmed the assignment of the mentor. Some teachers were not aware that the school has any novice teachers, however some teachers confirmed the mentorship of and the support provided to the novice teacher. Teachers were able to speak to the buddy teacher assigned to the teacher that is new to City Schools. School leadership reported that members of school leadership check in regularly with new teachers to monitor the supports.

<p><b>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.</b></p>	<p><b>Effective</b></p>
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- School leadership makes full use of the evaluation system to develop faculty and staff capacity. School leadership and teachers reported that the formal observation process includes the pre-observation conference, the formal observation period, and the post observation conference. School leadership and teachers reported that the post observation conference includes discussions about strengths, areas for growth, and next steps in regards to improvement. Teachers added that they are able to ask clarifying questions and provide evidence to support how they may have met certain key actions. Teachers reported that the feedback is beneficial to their instructional practice and provides areas to focus on moving forward. A review of formal observations confirmed the formal observation period and feedback. Specifically, one formal observation noted the following feedback: “You did clearly communicate the lesson objectives using developmentally appropriate language and facilitated discussion of the criteria. You did not communicate the significance of the lesson objective. You did not facilitate a discussion. For example, you could ask: Why do you think it is important to be able to recognize primary documents? Turn and talk to your partner and share out.”
- 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. School leadership reported that struggling teachers are identified through formal observations and discussions with the instructional support teacher. Teachers confirmed this and reported that teachers are also open with sharing their areas of growth. School leadership reported

that a more comprehensive approach is used to address concerns in that the entire school leadership team works to address the area of concern instead of one person providing all of the feedback. Teachers reported that the instructional support teacher models instructional strategies for teachers and provides professional development on any areas of need, which may include arranging peer observations with other teachers according to the area of need. School leadership reported that no teachers were on a Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) at the time of the review. However, a review of a Memorandum to a teacher from school leadership revealed that a teacher was reminded to have a daily lesson plan and was informed that their progress in this area would be monitored.

- School leadership engages faculty in a school-wide professional development plan based on identified needs and in alignment with the school's instructional vision. School leadership and teachers reported that professional development has been focused on the Cycles of Professional Learning, including close reading and academic discourse as these areas are district initiatives. Teachers added that the school has also been focused on how to implement City School's Blueprint. A review *Strengthening Communication Skills through Discourse about Complex Texts and Tasks* and *Student Wholeness* PowerPoint presentations confirmed these professional development sessions.

## Domain 3: Vision and Engagement <sup>3</sup>

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

**Effective**

- 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. School leadership reported that the school’s vision and mission was adjusted earlier in the year to more closely align with City School’s Blueprint. To that end, a review of the school’s brochure revealed that the current vision and mission is the following: Vision- “If Students are motivated and excited about learning, have the foundational skills to think critically, analyze deeply, and express themselves powerfully, and have adults around them who encourage them to persist and excel, they will be positioned to move steadily toward high school graduation and post-secondary success.” Mission- “Excellence in education for every child at every level by focusing on quality instruction, managing systems efficiently, and sustaining a culture of excellence.” School leadership, teachers, and parents reported that components of the mission include motivating students to learn, providing the foundational skills for students, preparing students for academic success, and producing 21<sup>st</sup> century, global learners. Students reported that the mission of the school is to help them go to college and be successful and to increase Partnership for the Assessment Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) scores. Student support staff reported that the mission is to move students forward and motivate students to learn. Community partners confirmed that motivating students to learn is a component of the mission and added that getting students to graduate and become good citizens are part of the vision and mission. School leadership reported that initiatives aligned to the vision and mission include addressing the whole child through having safe spaces and the work of the social worker and service providers, a focus on literacy, incentives for students who excel or meet expectations, various extracurricular activities, and supporting high school choice. Teachers, parents, and students confirmed the focus on high school choice, incentives, and extracurricular activities. Parents and students added that interventions and social and emotional support for students help move the school towards the vision and mission.
- Students, staff, and families feel physically and emotionally safe at the school. School leadership reported that the school has hall sweeps, practices emergency drills and lockdowns, requires visitors to check in at the main office, and has time restraints around early dismissal. Teachers confirmed the previously mentioned procedures and added that emergency drills are regularly practiced and strictly enforced and staff are always given immediate feedback following emergency drills. Parents and students confirmed the sign-in procedures and emergency drills. Parents added that staff are vigilant about monitoring the building for visitors and directing them to the main office, which student support staff and community partners confirmed. Student support staff and students also reported that the student safety patrol monitors student behavior in the hallways. Regarding emotional safety, school leadership, teachers, students support staff, students, and parents reported

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<sup>3</sup> The parent focus group consisted of fewer than 6 participants.

that the school has a “safe space” for students in crisis and the school has student support staff who work with students as needed or on a consistent basis to provide individual and group counseling, which students confirmed. Students added that school leadership is available if they have issues and the school has a peer mediation program. Parents reported that the teachers are also a source of emotional support for students.

- School leadership establishes structures for the acknowledgement and celebration of student, faculty and staff success. School leadership, teachers, students, and parents reported that students may receive Student of the Month recognition per recommendations from teachers based on their academic progress, compliance with uniforms, and behavior. Site visit team observations confirmed the Student of the Month recognition. Additionally, school leadership reported that students are recognized for honor roll, the principal’s honor roll, and having perfect attendance during awards ceremonies, which teachers, students, and parents confirmed. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers also have their own individual methods of recognition. Regarding staff recognition, school leadership and teachers reported that teachers receive shout-outs, Park Bench (the name of the award) recognitions, free appetizers during staff social hours, and catered meals periodically throughout the year.
- The school develops systems that proactively attend to individual students’ social and emotional needs. School leadership, teachers, student support staff, students, and parents reported that the school has the Calm Down Corner which is a safe space for students needing to debrief their feelings with an adult. School leadership, teachers, student support staff, students, and parents reported that the social worker and the clinician from the University of Maryland facilitates social and emotional learning groups as well as individual counseling when necessary. Some teachers reported that the Prevention and Intervention for Early Learners (PIEL) team also conducts social and emotional learning activities, which a review of a Whole Class Lesson Menu confirmed. Further, school leadership, teachers, student support staff, and students reported that there is a peer medication group for students in which some students are trained by a group of law students on how to mediate conflicts before they escalate. Additionally, community partners reported that there is an anti-bullying component in the after school program for fourth and fifth grade students as well as a mentoring group for a small, targeted group of middle school students. Moreover, school leadership, teachers, and students reported that fifth grade students serve as mentors for Kindergarten students, which an overview of the program confirmed. Finally, students reported, and site visit team observations confirmed that school leadership has an open-door policy with students as indicated by an invitation to students during the morning announcements asking them to talk to teachers first if they have any concerns and then to come to school leadership if those concerns persist.

**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. School leadership, teachers, students, parents, and community partners reported that the school communicates weekly through Parent Link, as well as Class Dojo notifications, parent conferences, flyers, emails, individual phone calls, and text messages. Parents and community partners also reported that the school communicates through in person interactions. Parents added that the communication from the school is more than sufficient and they feel that they are aware of what is happening in the school. A review of the Parent Link calls logs, letters, flyers, and Class Dojo notifications confirmed the previously mentioned methods of communication.
- The school establishes a regular structure for two-way communication, which facilitates opportunities for families and the community to participate in, or provide feedback on school-wide decisions. School leadership and teachers reported that the school has a School Family Council (SFC) that meets monthly. Continuing, school leadership and teachers reported that the school is in the process of forming a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). School leadership added that a survey given during Back to School Night indicated that parents wanted a PTO, so the school gave them guidance on how to facilitate the group as parents. Teachers added that some parents have had an initial PTO-planning meeting. Lastly parents stated that the school presents information about the academic standing of the school during parent workshop nights. School Family Council agendas and sign-in sheets confirmed the SFC meetings. A review of an agenda dated November 28, 2018 revealed the following agenda items: Review of School Performance Plan goals, Discussion of Professional Development Plan for teachers, Discussion of parent compact and parent concerns, Discussion of transition plan for middle school students, and Interventions.
- School leadership establishes multiple structures for frequent communication with teachers and staff members regarding policies, progress and school culture. School leadership and teachers reported that communication takes place through emails, memorandums, regular collaborative planning and staff meetings, ad hoc “stand-up” meetings, and the school-wide announcements. Meeting agendas from collaborative planning and staff meetings, emails, and memorandums confirmed these methods of communication.



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

**Effective**

- School leadership, teachers, and staff build strong relationships with families and community stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. School leadership and teachers reported that the school has a family engagement committee that plans parent workshop and learning nights for parents, which parents confirmed. A review of the *FY18 Title I FCE Sample Spending Plan* and catering receipts confirmed the planned parent workshops and learning nights. School leadership, teachers, and students reported that the school has hosted Back to School Night, a Winter Concert, and awards assemblies for families to attend. School leadership, teachers, students, and parents reported that the school has a food bank that distributes food monthly to the community, which community partners confirmed. School leadership reported that the school worked in collaboration with the community and hosted community meetings to close a business that was the source of some unlawful activity. Finally, students reported that students have conducted a community clean-up with the recycling team after school.
- The school’s curricula, resources and programs consider cultural and socioeconomic diversity, and is planning to consider linguistic diversity. School leadership, teachers, students, and parents reported that students learn about other cultures through various texts in the classroom such as *Tooth on a Roof*, *The Colors of Us*, *What the World Eats*, *Chew on This*, and multi-cultural articles from Newsela. Continuing, the previously mentioned focus groups reported that students have attended various field trips such as to the Baltimore Aquarium, Port Discovery, the Maryland Science Center, a performance of the Nutcracker, and a farm for the Days of Taste. A review of permission slips confirmed the field trip to the performance of the Nutcracker. Moreover, school leadership, teachers, students, and parents reported that the school hosted a Winter Concert where students in the school’s strings quartet and the school’s music program played and sang holiday songs from various cultures, in addition to students reading poetry. Finally, school leadership, teachers, and students reported that the school will continue its tradition of hosting the Day of the Arts, which a review of the vendor’s contract confirmed. Regarding socioeconomic diversity, as previously mentioned school leadership, teachers, students, parents, and community partners reported that the school has a food pantry, the fresh fruit and vegetable program, vouchers to assist with uniforms, and has offered school supplies in collaboration with a partnership. A review of the Maryland Food Bank newsletter confirmed the school as a distribution site. Additionally, school leadership, teachers, and students reported that the school has offered mobile dentist and vision services for students. Concerning linguistic diversity, school leadership reported that budget constraints prevented the school from implementing the computer-based foreign language program, however they intend to offer 8<sup>th</sup> grade students text-based foreign language instruction during the second half of the year

- The school maintains a positive school culture and climate. School leadership, teachers, students, and parents reported that members of the school community are like a family. Teachers spoke to the approachability and the open-door policy of school leadership. Teachers also stated that the students are positive. Students added that the teachers are loving and have high expectations for students, school leadership is approachable and talks with students, and the school has a variety of activities for students. Finally, community partners reported that school leadership and staff make the school positive. While on-site, members of the site-visit team observed monitored transitions and quiet hallways during the instructional day as well as student work posted particularly on the elementary grade floors.

## 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.**

**Effective**

- School leadership and teachers establish goals for the improvement of student learning that are measurable and aligned to student need and school improvement. School leadership reported, and a review of a document entitled *School Goals* confirmed that the goals are the following: 1) The average percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the PARCC Reading assessment will increase from 17% to 31% by the 2017-18 PARCC administration 2) The average percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the PARCC Math assessment will increase from 6% to 20% by the 2017-2018 PARCC administration. 3) There will be a school-wide increase in student attendance from 91.5% June 2017 to 93% by June 2018 as measured by the ILT climate report 6. All teachers were able to confirm the attendance goal and most teachers were able to confirm the academic goals of increasing 14 points in Reading and Math on the PARCC assessment.
- School leadership ensures the alignment of some school goals, action plans and key priorities. School leadership reported that strategies aligned to the academic goals include implementation of the gradual release strategy, small group instruction, long-range planning, and the data protocols. Only some teachers were able to speak to the alignment of small group instruction in classes and the afterschool program to school wide goals. Concerning the attendance goal, school leadership and teachers reported that the social worker follows an attendance protocol which includes making phone calls, sending letters, and conducting home visits after students have been absent a certain number of days, in addition to providing incentives to students with good attendance. The *School Goals* document noted that the following strategies are aligned to the academic goals: targeted small group instruction based upon data, re-teaching, interventions, and long-range planning. The *School Goals* document also noted that the following strategies are aligned to the attendance goal: monitoring attendance data, supporting students through telephone calls and home-visits, and incentivizing students with good attendance.
- School leadership and staff participate in regular analysis of school-wide data and plan to revisit and adjust action plans as needed. School leadership reported that data is analyzed during staff and Instructional Leadership Team meetings, which teachers confirmed. School leadership and teachers reported that the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) analyzes i-Ready, Amplify, and PARCC data. School leadership reported that they will review progress toward their goals after they have received middle of year testing results. An ILT agenda from December 1, 2017 indicated that the ILT analyzed Interim 1 data, using the data analysis tool to identify school wide trends strengths and weaknesses of students in several classes.

**Key action 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.**

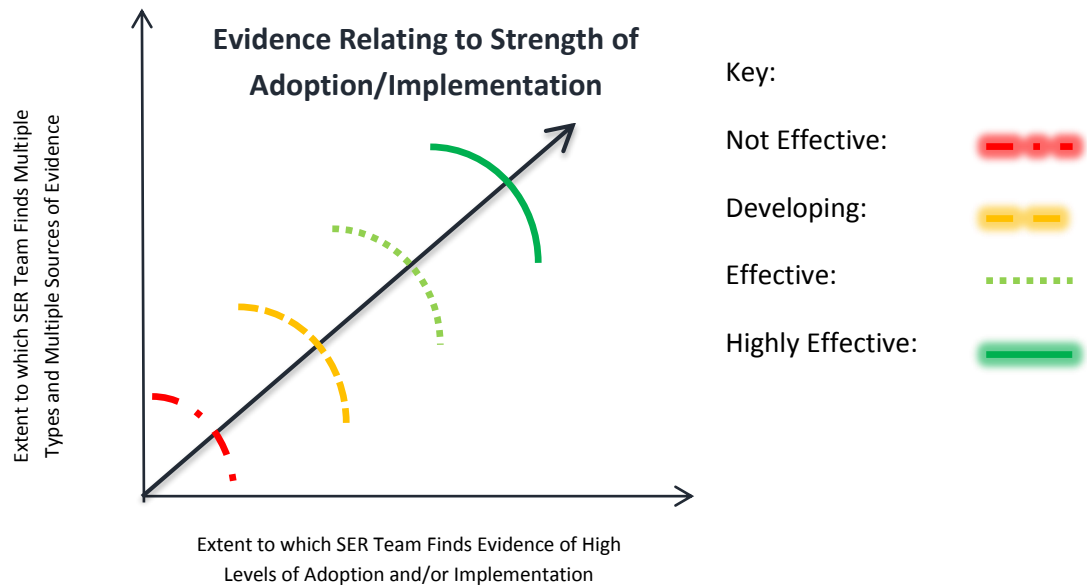
**Effective**

- Budget distributions and resource allocations somewhat support teaching and learning. School leadership and teachers reported that the school currently has no vacancies, which students and parents confirmed. Teachers added that the school is finding ways to maximize the resources provided by City Schools and added that they would like to see some paraprofessionals added to support certain grades with larger class sizes, which parents confirmed. Regarding materials, school leadership, students, and parents reported that the school has sufficient supplies, which most teachers confirmed. Some teachers stated that materials provided by City Schools are sometimes insufficient and teachers have to find ways to obtain more resources. In terms of technology, school leadership reported that the school purchased 15 additional laptops this school year, which added to the school's 50 laptops on two laptop carts, promethean boards, the three computers in each class, and document cameras. School leadership stated that some of the technology is outdated which does impede instruction. Teachers confirmed access to the promethean boards, the computers in classrooms, and document cameras. Teachers, parents, and students confirmed that technology is insufficient and needs to be updated. A review of K-12 Buy expenditures revealed that the school purchased instructional materials, touch screen computer monitors, supplementary materials for intervention and afterschool programs, copy paper, and more.
- School leadership leverages teacher and staff talent, expertise, and effectiveness by delegating essential responsibilities and decisions to appropriate individuals. School leadership reported that teachers teach in the after-school program, serve on committees, and serve in special roles such as the SLO Ambassador. Teachers confirmed that they serve on committees and work in the after-school program as well as volunteer with school clubs. A review of SFC committee agendas confirmed that teachers have signed up for the following committees: Partnerships, Fundraisers, and Grants, Title I Parent Involvement, Achievement, Climate, and more.
- School leadership consistently provides and focuses common staff time on instructional practices and development in support of student achievement. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers meet weekly for collaborative planning meetings which are led by members of school leadership, which a review of agendas confirmed. School leadership reported that during collaborative planning meetings teachers analyze data, review student work, plan lessons, and engage in professional development, which teachers confirmed. Specifically, review of a collaborative planning agenda and notes from November 29, 2017 noted that the following outcomes were addressed: "Teachers will identify 2 types of small group structures and explain the purpose and characteristics of each. Teachers will identify the 5 stages of guided reading, as well as the characteristics that define each stage. Teachers will begin to determine appropriate small groups based on deeper analysis of assessment data."

- The school collaborates with families and community partners to garner resources to meet the needs of students and the school. School leadership, teachers, and parents reported that parents volunteer in the main office and in classrooms assisting with clerical duties. Parents added that some parents volunteer with leading clubs and activities after school. In terms of community partnerships, school leadership reported that the school partners with the After School Program (services for students in K-8 including dinner, summer camp); Dickey Memorial Presbyterian Church (weekly volunteers-literacy intervention; liaison to Irvine Nature Center; sponsor nature hikes); Dr. Martin Luther King Memorial United Methodist Church (Back to School Celebration in fall, bags of food for needy families; volunteers), the Maryland Food Bank (food and toiletries for the school's pantry), Young Audiences (culture program and Day of the Arts), New Fit Kids (athletic program), Outward Bound (peer leadership activities), Play Works (structured recess), Young Men's Christian Association (head start program), and University of Maryland Rehabilitation and Orthopedic Institute (movie nights, family gatherings). Teachers, parents, and students confirmed the After School Program, and partnerships with Dickey Memorial Presbyterian Church, Dr. Martin Luther King United Methodist Church, the Maryland Food Bank, and the University of Maryland Rehabilitation and Orthopedic Institute. Community partners confirmed the partnerships with Dickey Memorial Presbyterian Church, Dr. Martin Luther King United Methodist Church, and the Maryland Food Bank. A review of partner letters, brochures, pictures, and newsletter confirmed the previously mentioned partnerships.

## 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<sup>4</sup> and multiple sources<sup>5</sup> 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.



Rating	Performance Level	Quality Standard
1	<b>Not Effective</b>	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.
2	<b>Developing</b>	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.
3	<b>Effective</b>	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.
4	<b>Highly Effective</b>	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.

<sup>4</sup> "Multiple types of evidence" is defined as evidence collected from two or more of the following: document review, stakeholder focus groups; and classroom observations.

<sup>5</sup> "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.

## Appendix A: Classroom Observation Data

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 10 classroom observations that were conducted.

<b>TEACH 1: Communicate Standards-Based Lesson Objectives</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Communication of objective	50%	50%	0%
Learning activities and resources align with lesson objective	80%	20%	0%
<b>TEACH 2: Present Content Clearly</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Accurate, grade-level content	100%	0%	0%
Alternate presentation of content	80%	0%	20%
Emphasis of Key Points	100%	0%	0%
<b>TEACH 3: Use Strategies and Tasks To Engage All Students In Rigorous Work</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Scaffolded and/or Differentiated Tasks	100%	0%	0%
Opportunities To Engage With Complex Texts and Tasks	60%	40%	0%
<b>TEACH 4: Use Evidence-Dependent Questioning</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Questions Requiring Justification	80%	20%	0%
Clear And Scaffolded Questions	100%	0%	0%
<b>TEACH 5: Check For Understanding and Provide Specific, Academic Feedback</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Informative Checks for Understanding	80%	20%	0%
Specific, Academic Feedback	60%	30%	10%
<b>TEACH 6: Facilitate Student-To-Student Interactions and Academic Talk</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Opportunities for student-to-student interaction	60%	10%	30%
Evidence-based discussions	60%	0%	40%
Student academic talk	90%	0%	10%

<b>TEACH 7: Implement Routines To Maximize Instructional Time</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Maximized instructional time	90%	10%	0%
Smooth routines and procedures	80%	20%	0%
<b>TEACH 8: Build A Positive, Learning-Focused Classroom Culture</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Teacher-to-student interactions	100%	0%	0%
Student-to-teacher interactions	100%	0%	0%
Student-to-Student interactions	70%	30%	0%
<b>TEACH 9: Reinforce Positive Behavior, Redirect Off-Task Behavior, and De-escalate Challenging Behavior</b>	<b>Evident</b>	<b>Partially Evident</b>	<b>Not Evident</b>
Reinforce positive behavior	90%	0%	10%
Off-task behavior	70%	30%	0%
Time impact of redirection/discipline or off-task behavior	100%	0%	0%



## 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 Dickey Hill Elementary/Middle School was conducted on January, 23-25, 2018 by a team of representatives from Baltimore City Public Schools.

**Katherine Harris Toler** is a Program Evaluator II in the Office of Achievement and Accountability in Baltimore City Public Schools. Prior to joining OAA, Ms. Toler was a District Mentor in the Office of Teacher Support and Development. In Baltimore City Public Schools, Ms. Toler has served as teacher, Academic Coach, Dean of Instruction, and High School Administrator. Ms. Toler has also served as teacher in the Anne Arundel County Public School System, the Baltimore County Public School System and the Vance County Public School System in North Carolina. She holds a B.A. in English with a Concentration in Secondary Education from North Carolina Central University and a Masters of Education in School Improvement Leadership from Goucher College.

**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.

**Veronica Harris** is currently a School Supports Liaison in the Office of School Supports with Baltimore City Public Schools. Prior to joining School Supports, Mrs. Harris taught middle school Language Arts in Baltimore City Public Schools, and then went on to support high schools as the Student Support Team Chair Person and Dean of Student Support. She has implemented several conflict resolution programs and school-wide interventions to improve school climate and student achievement. Mrs. Harris holds a Bachelor of Arts in English with a concentration in Professional Writing from the University of Memphis and a Master of Arts in Teaching (Secondary Education) from Morgan State University. She also holds a School Principal certification with Administration I & II endorsement, and a PPW endorsement.