BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Achievement and Accountability
Division of Research Services

School Effectiveness Review

2018 - 2019

Highlandtown 237 Elementary/Middle School

January 8-10, 2019

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Baltimore City Public Schools, 2018-19

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-and-a-half-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

Highlandtown 237elementary/middle school serves approximately 800 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. The school is located on Eaton Street in the Highlandtown neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland. The principal, Ms. Denise Ashley, has been at the school for eight 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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3.3 The climate and culture of the school creates a welcoming learning environment that meets the academic, social, and emotional needs of each student.	**Developing**
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Baltimore City Public Schools, 2018-19

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: School leadership supports highly effective instruction.	Developing

- School leadership ensures that teachers engage in the planning of the curricula through some oversight of standards-based units, lessons, and pacing. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers are using Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) curricula and adopted curriculum programs such as Wit & Wisdom (1st-5th grade), Amplify ELA (6th-8th grade), Eureka Math (1st-8th grade), as well as Fundations (Kindergarten- 2nd grade), IQWST (Investigating and Questioning our World through Science and Technology) for middle school science and Imagine Math for advance math; which a review of lesson plans confirmed. As for oversight of planning, school leadership reported that all teachers submit lesson plans three days to a week in advance, which teachers confirmed. School leadership stated that mentors are providing feedback on lesson plans to early career teachers and veteran teachers are receiving feedback during informal observations. However, some teachers reported not receiving feedback on their lesson plans. Further, teachers stated that school leadership monitors teachers' planning and pacing during collaborative planning meetings and informal observations. A review of collaborative planning notes confirms check-ins around pacing. For example, notes from a November 7th meeting stated "3rd grade should be in Module 2 at this point. Need to do backward mapping to ensure that skills are taught."

- School leadership provides limited formative feedback and guidance to teachers, aligned to the Instructional Framework; however, it is unclear if feedback is actionable or clearly describes strengths and areas for growth. School leadership reported that teachers are not observed as frequently as they would like, due to school climate issues. In addition, school leadership stated that this is an area of growth as they do not have formal structures for providing formative feedback to teachers. Teachers confirmed this stating that most feedback is verbal and does not always include next steps or suggestions. However, school leadership did state that they have systems in place for peer feedback such as Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) ghost walks, peer observations, and mentors for early career teachers. Some teachers confirmed receiving feedback from their mentors. A review of emails from school leadership dated mostly from September revealed that feedback is not clearly presented in a way to help teachers understand next steps. For example, one email showed the following notes: "teacher gave directions- some students continued to talk. It is important that you get the attention of all students so that you are not talking over them. The time you spend now pays off in the long run."

- School leadership demonstrates an understanding of data analysis; however, does not ensure the use of a complete student learning data-cycle. According to school leadership, teachers use the three-stack protocol and the Atlas protocol to analyze data during collaborative planning meetings. However, school leadership stated that an area of growth for the school is around completing the data cycle, ensuring that teachers are reflecting, and evaluating the success of the strategies used. While teachers confirmed that they use data to create small groups, when probed, some teachers could not articulate specific steps in a data analysis process. Further, some teachers stated that there is no school-wide data cycle, therefore data analysis looks different in each grade level. Finally, review of some collaborative planning meeting agendas noted the three-stack protocol but the notes were v general and did not demonstrate a complete student learning data-cycle.

Key action 1.2: Teachers use multiple data sources to adjust practice.	Not Effective

- Teachers do not consistently analyze students' progress toward goals. According to school leadership, teachers are setting goals based on iReady, Amplify, and Achievement Network (ANet), which teachers confirmed. Further, school leadership stated that teachers are tracking student's progress through data boards in their classrooms and progress monitoring as it related to m-class and Amplify data. A review of iReady diagnostic growth print outs confirmed teachers are tracking data. As stated above, school leadership stated that during collaborative planning meetings teachers are using the three-stack protocol for math and the Atlas protocol for writing. Although a review of collaborative planning notes confirmed the three-stack protocol as a topic of discussion, there was no evidence of teachers completing this protocol as a way to analyze student's progress towards goals. For example, one collaborative planning note stated "We discuss how to sort student work using the protocol and how X was better able to give insight into student learning. We discussed strategies that students could use to show their work." Although teachers confirmed looking at student work and creating small groups, not all teachers confirmed that a standardized template was being used for data analysis in the school. Some teachers stated that teachers are developing their own process and there is no formal process Further, school leadership stated that as a group they look at student work and create actionable steps. In addition, school leadership stated that after the first administration of ANet testing, teachers created an action plan. A review of a second grade ANet A1 Data Analysis Note Catcher showed that teachers looked at grade level and class level data and identified what standards students are doing well in and what standards are students struggling with. The template provided space to group students into tiers, however it was left blank. Finally, the template provided space to identify action steps/strategies for each tier. Tier 1 stated "reteach whole group measurement and key words to go with operations" and tier 2 stated "reteach addition and subtraction word problems using the cube strategy."

- Teachers adjust instruction in response to data; however, do not consistently plan in response to data. In focus groups, school leadership and teachers reported that teachers modify instruction through the use of small groups, modifications, and accommodations, and providing scaffolds. Review of lesson plans confirmed some teachers use the above strategies, such as one plan that noted three small groups with differentiated activities related to shapes– one group used a matching game with flat shapes (below-level), one group sorted by shapes (on-level) and one group counted shapes (above level). However, small groups were not consistent across all lesson plans. Accommodations were included in plans, although most plans the accommodations were general and only some identified student's initials. Regarding adjustments made based on data, school leadership and teachers noted a variety of strategies, including re-teaching, re-arranging small groups, adjusted pacing, differentiated assignments, and the use of manipulatives.

- Teachers appropriately recommend students for limited tiered interventions, including limited opportunities for acceleration. According to school leadership, staff, and teachers there is a reading interventionist who pulls out students (based on teacher recommendation and Amplify data) in 1st through 4th grade; which students confirmed. A review of the reading interventionist schedule confirmed a pull-out service for students in grades 1st -4th. School leadership and some students also mentioned the afterschool program BELL as an intervention. In addition, school leadership stated that the school purchased the iReady lessons for math but at the time of the site visit, teachers had not started using them. Some teachers confirmed having access to iReady lessons but stated that it was up to individual teachers on how to use the resource. Other teachers stated a need for more intervention support. Regarding acceleration, school leadership and teachers noted that the Imagine Math curriculum is designed for advanced learners; however, at the time of the site visit it had not been implemented due to the pending arrival of technology devices needed. Finally, school leadership and teachers stated that the school has been identified as a new Gifted and Advanced Learning (GAL) site. However school leadership and teachers both stated that they are in the beginning stages of this process, noting that some students have been tested using Naglieri.

Key action 1.3: Teachers deliver highly effective instruction.[1]	**Developing**

- Some teachers use and communicate standards-based lesson objectives and align learning activities to the stated lesson objectives. In 27% of classrooms observed (n=15), teachers communicated lesson objectives to students by explaining and/or referencing them during the lesson. However, in 47% of classrooms observed the teachers communicated the lesson objective by posting it. Additionally, in 40% of classes, lesson activities and resources had a clear and intentional purpose and were aligned with lesson objectives. For example, in one class, the objective that was posted read: "students will be able to develop an investigation in and to study the genetics of zebra fish." During the observation, students made observations with and without a microscope and recorded them in their workbook.

- Some teachers present content in various ways and emphasize key points to make content clear. In 67% of classrooms visited (n=15), teachers presented students with accurate, grade level content aligned to appropriate content standards. In most classes, the objectives posted were aligned to Common Core State Standards. Additionally, in 47% of classrooms, teachers presented content in two or more ways to make content clear. In one class, a teacher presented a word problem, identifying key components (circling the numbers and underlining the question), writing the equation, and drawings to represent ones and tens place. However, in some classes (47%) the content was presented in only one way or no content was being presented at the time of the observation. Further, in 60% of classes, teachers emphasized key points to focus learning of content.

- Some teachers use multiple strategies and tasks to engage all students in rigorous work. In only 33% of classes observed (n=15), did teachers scaffold and/or differentiate tasks by providing access to rigorous grade-level instruction for all students. In most classes (50%) there was no evidence of any scaffolding or differentiated task. Additionally, in 40% of classes, students had opportunities and time to grapple with complex texts and/or rigorous tasks. For example, during one lesson students completed a story map (graphic organizer) in which they identified the setting, character, events, and conflict and then wrote a summary of the story "All Summer in a Day."

- Some teachers use evidence-dependent questioning. In 40% of classrooms visited (n=15), teachers ask questions that required students to cite evidence and clearly explain their thought processes. Additionally, in 73% of classes, teachers asked questions that were clear and scaffolded. For example, in one class in which students wrote a paragraph using text evidence to explain the growth of the character, the teacher asked students the following questions: "How do you know? Why was he scared? What does this evidence show?"

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[1] Key action 1.3 evidence comes directly from classroom observations that were conducted as part of the SER. All classroom observations are twenty minutes 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.

- Some teachers check for student understanding and provide specific academic feedback. In 53% of classrooms observed (n=15), teachers conducted one or more checks for understanding that yielded useful information at key points throughout the lesson. Additionally, in 53% of classes, teachers gave specific academic feedback to communicate current progress and next steps to move forward. In most classes observed, the teacher circulated the room checking on student's progress and asking questions. One example of feedback from the teacher to the students that helps clarify and provide next steps to move forward was when a teacher directed the student to look back on the first page of the book to answer the question, "which animal liked the hat with feathers?"

- Teachers do not facilitate student-to-student interaction and academic talk. In only 27% of classrooms visited (n=15), did teachers provide multiple or extended opportunities for student-to-student interaction. In most classes (73%) observed teachers provided no opportunity for student-to-student interaction, as students were engaged in whole group discussion or independent work. Additionally, in only 13% of classes, in student to student interactions, did students engage in discussions with their peers to make meaning of content or deepen their understanding. Further, in 27% of classes, students used academic talk, and, when necessary, teachers consistently and appropriately supported students in speaking academically. For example, in a science class, students were asked to make observations of an ice cube melting above hot water in a mason jar, and a student stated "the bubbles are going up" instead of using vocabulary terms such as condensation; and the teacher did not support students in using appropriate vocabulary.

Key action 1.4: Teachers establish a classroom environment in which teaching and learning can occur. [2]	Effective

- Most teachers implement routines to maximize instructional time. In 73% of classrooms observed (n=15), students were only idle for very brief (less than two minutes) periods of time while waiting for the teacher. Additionally, in 65% of classes, routines and procedures ran smoothly with minimal or no prompting from teachers. In most classes, teachers were well prepared. In some classes, continuous prompting or reminding students of procedures were needed.

- Teachers build a positive, learning-focused classroom culture. In 100% of classrooms visited (n=15), teacher interactions with students were positive and respectful. For example, in one class, the teacher complimented students and said thank you for following directions. Additionally, in 93% of classrooms, student interactions with teachers were positive and respectful. Further, in 80% of classrooms, student to student interactions were positive and respectful. In a few classes, students were observed arguing, cursing, and throwing things.

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[2] Key action 1.4 evidence comes directly from classroom observations that were conducted as part of the SER. All classroom observations are twenty minutes 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 reinforce positive behavior and redirect off-task or challenging behavior, when necessary. In 87% of classes observed (n=15), teachers promoted and reinforced positive behavior. In some classes, teachers were observed giving out class dojo points to students on-task and following directions. Further, in 67% of classes observed, students were on-task and active participants in classwork and discussions. In a few classes, students were observed having side conversations, listening to music, or looking at their phones. Lastly, in 93% of classes, teachers addressed behavioral issues with minimal interruption to instructional time. For example, teachers used cues such as "eyes on me" or a countdown to quickly redirect and get students attention.

Domain 2: Talented People

Key action 2.1: The school implements systems to select and retain effective teachers and staff whose skills and beliefs meet the needs of the school.	Developing

- School leadership has created and implemented organizational structures for selection and is beginning to implement structures for retention across staffing positions that address student well-being and academic performance. According to school leadership some teachers were moved to a different grade or looped with their students based on fit or relationships. A review of a letter to staff dated July 17, 2018, confirmed the announcement that some staff moved to new positions or grade levels. Further, school leadership and teachers stated that with the continued expansion of their English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) population, additional ESOL positions were created so that now there is one ESOL teacher assigned to each grade. Further, school leadership and teachers noted that resource classes included art, gym, library, music, technology, and instructional games. Continuing, school leadership stated that instructional games was created in order to ensure that teachers could have a 90-minute academic planning time once a week. Lastly, school leadership, teachers and staff indicated that members of the Student Support Team included a guidance counselor, a social worker, a psychologist, a speech pathologist, and a clinician from Hopkins. Review of the roster confirmed all positions. Regarding retention, school leadership stated that teachers are recognized, receive materials, and are provided support through the mentorship program. However, teachers reported that there are no structures to support teacher retention. Some teachers mentioned that some structures for retention are emerging such as a holiday party, birthday recognition, and food at special events. However, some teachers felt these structures are new and unstable.

- School leadership proactively recruits candidates using a measure and sometimes multiple stakeholders to assess each candidate's qualifications in alignment with school needs. School leadership and teachers reported that they use district resources, such as hiring fairs, to identify candidates as well as alternative certification pipelines such as Teach For America (TFA). School leadership added that prospective candidates then undergo an interview, which is comprised of school leadership and teachers when possible. Some teachers confirmed that teachers were included on the interview panel. However other teachers stated that the panel was just school leadership. Lastly, neither school leadership nor teachers noted any measures besides an interview, such as a demonstration lesson. Review of hiring document confirmed that the school hired 13 new staff for the current school year, and at the time of the site visit the school had two vacancies. School leadership stated that they hired six ESOL teachers this year. A review of interview questions for the ESOL position revealed that they included the following: "Why are you interested in teaching ESOL? Tell us what you know about the Highlandtown/Southeast community in Baltimore. What is your experience with Spanish speakers? When co-teaching, how would you make sure your students are getting the best instruction they deserve? What would planning, your instruction, and your relationship with your co-teacher look like?"

- School leadership ensures the implementation of mentoring/induction programs, when applicable, to support the development of all new teachers and staff and monitors the program's effectiveness. School leadership reported that six teachers have been designated as mentors for eighteen Early Career Teachers (ECT) with 1 to 3 years teaching experience; which teachers confirmed. School leadership also stated that any teacher new to Highlandtown #237 receives a mentor. Continuing, school leadership stated that there is a monthly new teacher mentor meeting. A review of an ECT meeting sign-in sheet from October 19 confirmed the following topics were discussed: giving explicit directions, setting expectations, and fall formal observations. Additionally, school leadership and teachers reported teachers meet with their mentors individually and receive support such as lesson plan ideas, classroom management strategies, and observation feedback. Finally, school leadership stated that they are monitoring the program's effectiveness through mentors uploading documents to office 365 and the learning zone as well as informal conversations with teachers and designated mentors. A review of learning zone interaction logs confirms the individual supports mentors are providing to teachers.

Key action 2.2: The school makes full use of the evaluation system to develop faculty and staff capacity through school-wide reflection and professional development and to hold them accountable for performance.	Developing

- School leadership reinforces performance expectations for staff and allocates time to support some staff in meeting those expectations. According to school leadership general expectations regarding formal observations are reviewed during professional development meetings in the beginning of the year. A review of an August 28 professional development agenda confirmed that logistics and expectations (handbook/evaluations/attendance/code of conduct) were reviewed with staff. School leadership and teachers added that the school has three qualified observers. In addition, school leadership and teachers stated that a schedule is sent to staff notifying them of the formal observation process, which includes an initial planning conference, a pre-observation conference, the observation, and a post-observation conference; which a review of the schedule confirmed. Lastly, some teachers indicated that feedback is beneficial; however, some teachers stated that it was not helpful or robust. A review of six completed formal observations revealed that most included a summary of strengths as well as next steps.

- School leadership uses multiple methods to provide limited support and interventions to struggling teachers and staff as indicated by data and/or informal or formal observations. School leadership reported that teachers who are struggling would be identified through informal observations, as well as through the coaches and mentors' feedback. Some teachers added that teachers also self-identify if they need support by asking their peers. Continuing, school leadership stated that supports include observing peers and additional informal observations with feedback. However, while some teachers confirmed additional observations as a support, other teachers stated they are just referred to the book "Well Managed Schools" with no suggestions given from an actual observation. Further, teachers stated that not enough supports are provided to teachers who are struggling. School leadership further noted that one teacher is currently on Performance Improvement Plan (PIP); which a review of the PIP confirmed. A review of emails confirmed suggestions and strategies provided to one teacher around classroom management. For example, one email detailed the following suggestions: "using a signal to help alert students of transition, post classroom procedures and review them as needed, reread chapter 7 in Well Managed Schools to get suggestions for teaching classroom procedures and seek assistance of your mentor."

- School leadership engages all staff in differentiated professional development based on identified needs and in alignment with the school's instructional vision. According to school leadership and teachers, professional development during monthly staff meetings has been focused around strategies from the book "Well Managed Schools". In addition, school leadership and teachers stated that during weekly academic planning sessions, the focus has been on looking at data and student work. School leadership and teachers also mentioned the PARCC assessment as being a focus, noting that Inspired Instruction was conducting a professional development the Saturday following the site visit. In addition, teachers indicated that professional development can be differentiated based on content, grade, or level of experience. Review of professional development agendas confirmed a staff meeting in which Well Managed School strategies were discussed on September 10th and the upcoming Inspired Instruction PARCC PD on January 12th. Finally, an October 3rd PD agenda confirmed breakout sessions by content.

Domain 3: Vision and Engagement

Key action 3.1: The school has a clear vision and mission that promotes a student-centered learning environment that reflects, celebrates, and embraces student, staff, and community diversity.	Developing

- The school creates communication systems so that the school community shares a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the school mission, vision, and values, including a clear understanding of some strategic goals and initiatives that support high student achievement. According to school leadership, the vision of the school is to make sure the students are ready for the rest of the world, and the mission supports the vision, by providing the best instructional practices possible so that students will be able to have post-secondary options. Teachers, staff, parents, and students were able to confirm the focus on college and career readiness and preparing students for their future. Regarding communication of the mission and vision, teachers, parents, students, and staff noted that it is shared via announcements, posted in the school, and sent home in communications, such as newsletters and the Monday Message. A review of a Back to School Night PowerPoint confirmed that the mission and vision were shared with stakeholders. In terms of initiatives, school leadership and some teachers reported that the mission and vision are manifested though programs and events such as career day and high school visits. However, students, parents and some staff could not confirm any initiatives or strategies aligned to the school's mission and vision. Review of the handbook confirmed that the vision and mission, respectively, are as follows: "We at Highlandtown Elementary Middle School #237 are a community of learners committed to the pursuit of excellence. Our scholars" College and Career aspirations begin here.", "At Highlandtown Elementary Middle School #237 we provide our scholars with the foundation for their college and career aspirations through implementation of thorough and effective instructional practices."

- School leadership ensures that the school's program are aligned with the school's mission and vision, are culturally relevant, and incorporate some skills for 21st century success. Regarding cultural relevance, school leadership, teachers, staff, students, and parents mentioned cultural celebrations for Hispanic heritage and black history month. A review of the staff handbook's important dates & events calendar confirmed the above events. In addition, school leadership stated, and a review of the winter concert program confirmed, that songs were sung in both English and Spanish. Finally, school leadership, teachers and some students mentioned the curriculum and books expose students to other cultures. However, stakeholders noted that no field trips had occurred at the time of the site visit. Regarding 21st century skills, school leadership, teachers, staff, and parents mentioned having access to technology. Further, school leadership and some teachers mentioned that the middle school curriculum (Amplify ELA) is all online; which the site visit team observed. Finally, school leadership mentioned programs such as the robotics team, coding hour, and the science fair.

- The school implements and monitors school protocols that create an environment where students, staff, and some families feel welcome; however, students, some families, and few staff feel safe. School leadership, families, students, and some teachers noted that events and resources through the community coordinator make families feel welcome at the school. However, some teachers and staff noted that some families do not feel welcome due to an underlying bias against families that do not speak English. For example, the site visit team observed a staff member using harsh tones with a family (that did not speak English) who was trying to register their child. Regarding safety, school leadership, teachers, families, and students noted that the school is generally safe, due to secure entrances, a visitor sign-in process, and hall monitors posts during around the building. Review of the handbook confirmed other safety procedures, such as drills and arrival and dismissal procedures. However, some teachers and staff reported that student behavior– such as physical altercations with their peers and staff- is a serious concern. Additionally, families stated they have safety concerns and have requested a police officer be assigned to the building. Regarding emotional safety, school leadership, families and students noted there are a variety of adults with whom students could discuss personal issues, including administration, teachers, social worker, psychologist, and guidance counselor. Lastly, most teachers noted that they did not feel emotionally safe citing a general lack of support from leadership and a feeling of favoritism for some staff.

Key action 3.2: The school cultivates and sustains open communication and decision-making opportunities with families and the community.	Developing

- The school employs a variety of regular communication systems with families about school-wide and individual student progress. According to school leadership, teachers, staff, parents, and students, the school communicates with families through a variety of methods, including robocalls, letters, flyers, phone calls, emails, and texts. In addition, all stakeholders reported that written and verbal communication to families is translated into Spanish; which a review of flyers confirmed. School leadership added that the school also sends home a monthly newsletter (Hawk News). Review of the newsletter from September, October, and November revealed that it included principals' corner, important dates and more. Further, teachers and staff indicated that in person conversations occur often between staff and families. Regarding individual student progress, teachers and students reported that progress reports and report cards are sent home, and parents can meet with teachers for parent-teacher conferences or otherwise.

- The school build strong relationships with some community stakeholders and leverages resources to meet the needs of students and the school. According to school leadership, teachers, students, and parents, the school builds relationships with families through the community school coordinator, who connects families to resources, such as assistance with their BGE bill, food bank, and more. School leadership, teachers, staff, students, and parents noted that some families volunteer at the school, including in the cafeteria, copying, and creating bulletin boards, and other capacities as needed. However, families stated that the required background check can be a barrier for some families wanting to volunteer. School leadership, teachers, and staff stated that a small group of parents volunteer with the school garden. A review of a flyer asking parents to attend a volunteer information session confirms the school solicits support from families. Further, school leadership, teachers, staff, and parents stated that partners included local churches (donations and after school programming) and Johns Hopkins University (robotics program) and Parks and People (sports).

- The school provides some opportunities for families to participate in, or provide feedback on, appropriate school-wide decisions and improvement efforts. School leadership, and some teachers and staff stated that the School Family Council (SFC) is convened monthly. Most parents were not aware of the SFC, however during the focus group they did expressed an interest in attending. A review of an SFC agenda from October 30, shows that only staff were listed on the sign-in sheet and the topics included: budget, attendance, climate and safety, and family and community engagement. Further, school leadership, teachers, and families reported that surveys have been administered to families, and meetings convened to receive input on the budget. When asked about how feedback has been used, school leadership stated that new cameras were installed due to the safety concerns expressed by families. A review of an invoice confirmed the purchase of more security cameras. However, when asked families about how feedback has been used, families could not provide an example.

Key action 3.3: The climate and culture of the school creates a welcoming learning environment that meets the academic, social, and emotional needs of each student.	Developing

- School leadership establishes multiple tools and routines for frequent and timely communication with teachers and staff members regarding policies, progress, and school culture. According to school leadership, teachers, and staff, school leadership communicates via a weekly Monday News email, staff meetings, and in person. School leadership added that they have an open-door policy. Review of Monday News emails confirmed communication with staff regarding reminders, announcements, and upcoming events. For example, one Monday news stated "Bullying prevention month is in October. Please begin thinking about lessons/activities you would like to do."

- School leadership establishes structures to recognize and celebrate students and some staff achievements and value. School leadership, teachers, students, and families reported that students are celebrated monthly through Highlandtown Heroes (recognizing student character), which includes as ice cream social. Further, school leadership, teachers, students, and families noted students are recognized for perfect attendance and honor roll. A review of an attendance committee agenda confirms incentives that are used to celebrate students for perfect attendance. Continuing, school leadership, teachers, students, and families stated that an award ceremony is conducted at the end of the year to celebrate students for grades, behavior, and attendance. A review of the staff handbook important dates and events calendar confirm that an Academic & Attendance Superstar Banquet is scheduled for June 5th. Regarding staff celebrations, school leadership and some teachers noted birthday recognitions, shout outs, and a holiday party. However, most teachers felt more could be done. Some teachers and staff stated that there is low moral due to lack of support from administration. Finally, some teachers stated that shout outs do not seem to be a positive acknowledgement but more of a negative acknowledgement of what staff members have not done. For example, a review of a Monday News email showed the following "With the exception of (5 teachers names were listed) everyone is late submitting their emergency sub plans which were due on, Friday September 14th."

- The school develops proactive systems that support individual socioeconomic needs and somewhat support individual social and emotional needs. School leadership, staff, families, teachers, and students indicated that the community school coordinator is able to secure donations of uniforms and other clothing and is also able to support families with BGE payments. In addition, all stakeholders confirmed that the school has a food pantry. Staff indicated that the community coordinator informs families of available resources, as well as through flyers, robocalls and texts. Regarding social and emotional support, school leadership and some teachers reported that staff uses resources such as Ripple Effects, Boystown, and strategies from the book "Well Managed Schools" to support social and emotional skill-building and classroom management; however, other teachers indicated that the level of implementation varies across the school. A review of a section from the Monday News emails from October titled "Reboot" confirms school leadership reminds teachers to use the lesson plan from Boystown to teach the social skills needed in their classroom. In addition, school leadership and some students stated that there is a reflection room for students to use when needed. However, teachers did not confirm this. Further, staff stated that lessons presented in class by the guidance counselor, programs such as Highlandtown Heroes, and an anti-bullying and Kindness contests supports students social and emotional needs; which a review of an anti-bullying class poster contest flyer confirmed.

Domain 4: Strategic and Professional Management

Key action 4.1: The school manages progress towards clear goals through a cycle of planning, action, assessment, and adjustment.	Not Effective

- School leadership establishes measurable goals for the improvement of student learning, however it is unclear how school leadership collaborates with multiple stakeholders to develop and communicate goals. According to school leadership, the goals for the current year were determined by reviewing the previous year's data for PARCC with the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT). A few teachers confirmed that the goals were discussed during an ILT meeting; however, no teachers were able to state academic measurable goals; instead, when asked teachers stated more general goals such as "academic growth" or "improve reading". Teachers were also unaware of a climate goal. School leadership also noted that goals have been shared with community members at a School Family Council (SFC) meeting. However a review of SFC meeting minutes from October 30th only showed that attendance was discussed, stating "based on school improvement plan, the attendance committee is focusing on students in tiers 2 and 3." Review of the School Performance Plan (SPP) revealed that the goals are as follows: "students scoring a 4 or a 5 on PARCC ELA and math will increase by 5% and the number of students with 2 or more Early Warning Indicators will be reduced from 30% to 25%.

- School leadership develops, however does not collaborate or communicate with staff to develop strategies that are aligned to school goals. School leadership reported that the primary strategy supporting academic goals is collaborative planning, during which teachers are looking at the alignment between the curriculum and PARCC, backwards mapping, and using data. Regarding climate, school leadership stated that strategies include the reflection room, use of Ripple Effects, and the book "Well Managed Schools". While school leadership indicated that strategies were developed with input from the ILT, teachers stated that they had contributed to the development of the strategies in their team meetings. Additionally, , no teachers could confirm the aforementioned strategies. Teachers could only speak to climate strategies such as school-wide rules and student celebrations. Further, school leadership stated that the strategies were shared with all staff during opening professional development and then reviewed weekly in Monday News email reminders. Review of the SPP confirmed the strategies of collaborative planning and Implementation of Inspired Instruction (PARCC); review of the SPP also confirmed that teaching social and emotional learning through evidence-based programs was identified as a strategy to support the climate goal.

- School leadership and some staff participate in limited analysis of school-wide data and instructional practices to monitor progress toward goals, revisiting and adjusting action plans as needed. According to school leadership, the ILT monitors progress towards the school-wide goals, though teachers noted that the ILT had not met since October. School leadership added that previous year's data was discussed in the beginning of the year, including PARCC, iReady, ANet, M-class, as well as suspension and attendance; which some teachers confirmed. A review of a PowerPoint from August 30 confirmed that district and school-wide trends were shared. School leadership and some teachers indicated that school-wide data has been reviewed in staff meetings and on professional development days. Further, school leadership stated that teachers review data for their own students in collaborative planning and thus classroom level adjustments are made. Review of three ILT meeting notes (September 6, 25 and November 11) revealed discussion items included: management issues, unpacking questions in math, and supports for struggling teachers. Only one meeting notes dated September 25th mentioned data, and it was a reminder of data windows, for example "NAEP (4th and 8th grades- Feb 13th and 14th), and iReady -last day Friday" and not a review or analysis of school-wide data.

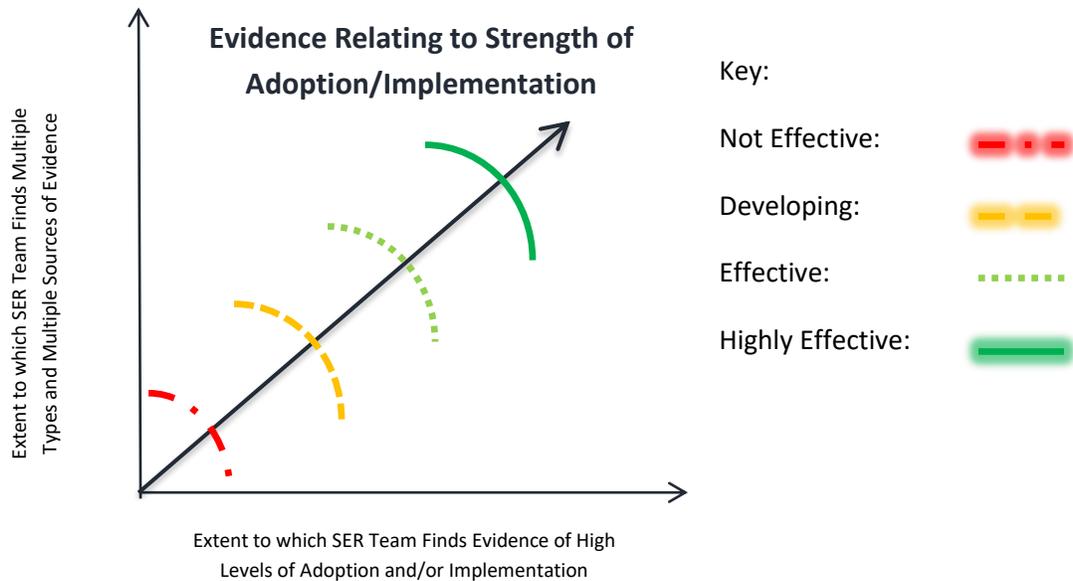| Key action 4.2: The school allocates and deploys the resources of time, human capital, and funding to address the priority growth goals for student achievement.	Developing

- Budget distributions and resource allocations are aligned to school goals and priorities; however, they do not fully support equitable learning environments. According to school leadership, resources purchased that support the academic goals include: inspired instruction professional development, PARCC workbooks, i-Ready lessons for math, and the Imagine math curriculum. Most teachers were able to confirm budget allocation for PARCC workbooks and Inspired Instruction professional development, in addition some teachers included technology and ESOL teachers for each grade as being a budget priority. In regard to equity, some teachers stated a need for more intervention support, stating that only grades 1-4 have access to reading interventions for students. In addition, both families and students stated that the younger grades receive more field trip opportunities than older grades, however school leadership and teachers both stated that no grades had gone on any field trips at the time of the site visit. Continuing, while school leadership stated that teachers can request materials as needed, some teachers noted a lack of supplies and materials, and indicated that they purchase materials for classes themselves. School leadership stated, and parents confirmed that feedback on the budget was solicited after the winter program. A review of a FY20 Priority Additionally Engagement Session agenda dated December 20 confirmed soliciting feedback on priorities for SY19-20. School leadership stated that they also purchased new security cameras based on families' feedback and added a basketball team based on student feedback. A few teachers and a review of an invoice confirmed the purchase of security cameras. Finally, a review of the SPP confirmed the allocation of funds for Inspired Instruction, as well as funds for BELL afterschool, workshops for families, and the Community school partner through family league- Southeast CDC.

- School leadership uses distributive leadership to empower staff to take ownership of essential responsibilities and decisions; however, it is unclear how school leadership holds staff accountable. School leadership and teachers stated that teachers serve as team leads, facilitate professional development, and serve as mentors. In addition, school leadership and teachers stated that teachers facilitate and manage afterschool clubs and activities such as green team, robotics, and coach sports, which students confirmed. Further, school leadership stated that teachers serve on committees, including the School Family Council (SFC), Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), hospitality and attendance; however, teachers could not confirm their participation on committees or that committee were meeting. Lastly, regarding oversight, school leadership stated that they provide oversight through conversations and seeing results. School leadership stated that they do not require agendas, sign-in sheets, or other meeting documentation. Finally, a review of attendance committee agendas confirm that they had met on October 10, 24 and December 11th.

- School leadership leverages common staff time to focus on professional learning and collaboration in support of student achievement. According to school leadership and teachers, teachers meet once a week for 90 minutes, during which time teachers and school leadership discuss the curriculum, student work samples, and data. Teachers added that sometimes the math or literacy lead will facilitate these meetings depending on content and the topic. Further, some teachers noted that district office staff will also participate in planning time meetings occasionally. Review of collaborative planning meeting agendas confirmed the following topics: Wit & Wisdom, ESOL co-teaching model, differentiation, accommodations for English Language Learners (ELL), Beginning of the Year (BOY) iReady data- skills for each group, module 2 and 3 lessons, student behavior/concerns, teaching strategies, amplify ELA fidelity to curriculum, data analysis, etc.

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[3] and multiple sources[4] 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	Not Effective	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	Developing	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	Effective	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	Highly Effective	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.

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[3] "Multiple types of evidence" is defined as evidence collected from two or more of the following: document review, stakeholder focus groups; and classroom observations.

[4] "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 15 classroom observations that were conducted.

TEACH 1: Communicate Standards-Based Lesson Objectives	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Communication of objective	27%	47%	27%
Learning activities and resources align with lesson objective	40%	47%	13%
TEACH 2: Present Content Clearly	**Evident**	**Partially Evident**	**Not Evident**
Accurate, grade-level content	67%	13%	20%
Alternate presentation of content	47%	7%	47%
Emphasis of Key Points	60%	13%	27%
TEACH 3: Use Strategies and Tasks To Engage All Students In Rigorous Work	**Evident**	**Partially Evident**	**Not Evident**
Scaffolded and/or Differentiated Tasks	33%	13%	53%
Opportunities To Engage With Complex Texts and Tasks	40%	33%	27%
TEACH 4: Use Evidence-Dependent Questioning	**Evident**	**Partially Evident**	**Not Evident**
Questions Requiring Justification	40%	33%	27%
Clear And Scaffolded Questions	73%	7%	20%
TEACH 5: Check For Understanding and Provide Specific, Academic Feedback	**Evident**	**Partially Evident**	**Not Evident**
Informative Checks for Understanding	53%	40%	7%
Specific, Academic Feedback	53%	27%	20%
TEACH 6: Facilitate Student-To-Student Interactions and Academic Talk	**Evident**	**Partially Evident**	**Not Evident**
Opportunities for student-to-student interaction	27%	0%	73%
Evidence-based discussions	13%	13%	73%
Student academic talk	27%	33%	40%
TEACH 7: Implement Routines To Maximize Instructional Time	**Evident**	**Partially Evident**	**Not Evident**
Maximized instructional time	73%	13%	13%
Smooth routines and procedures	67%	20%	13%

TEACH 8: Build A Positive, Learning-Focused Classroom Culture	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Teacher-to-student interactions	100%	0%	0%
Student-to-teacher interactions	93%	0%	7%
Student-to-Student interactions	80%	13%	7%
TEACH 9: Reinforce Positive Behavior, Redirect Off-Task Behavior, and De-escalate Challenging Behavior	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Reinforce positive behavior	87%	0%	13%
Off-task behavior	67%	27%	7%
Time impact of redirection/discipline or off-task behavior	93%	0%	7%

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 and Professional Management

None

Appendix C: SER Team Members

The SER visit to the Highlandtown Elementary/Middle School 237 was conducted on January 8-10, 2019 by a team of representatives from Baltimore City Public Schools.

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.

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.

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.

Liepa Boberiene is a Program Evaluator in the Office of Achievement and Accountability in Baltimore City Public Schools, where she analyzes school performance, models teacher and principal effectiveness, and manages state data submissions. Liepa began her career as a school psychologist implementing bullying prevention programs in Lithuania. More recently, she worked as a post-doc research fellow for the Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, heading a task force on safe and humane schools. Her focus has been school climate and reconnecting disengaged youth, promoting mental health, and supporting children without parental care. Liepa has also served as an instructor and researcher at Clemson University, teaching community research and conducting studies on civic education. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from Northwestern University and a Ph.D. in International Family and Community Studies from Clemson University.

Leanne Riordan is an Educational Specialist in the Office of Differentiated Learning, with a focus on English learners and ESOL instruction. Her previous roles in education include teaching ESOL, serving as a para-educator for early childhood, and providing student support as a special education assistant. Leanne has an M.A. in TESOL from Notre Dame of Maryland University, and a B.A. in English and Communication from the University of Delaware.

Erica Adams (Shadow) is a School Quality Reviewer for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD); she is a member of the team providing comprehensive quality assessments of each school in CMSD, an evidence-based process that includes data and information gathered on academic programs and performance, school climate, finance, operations, governance, and stakeholder satisfaction and that is intended to guide school self-assessment and planning. She previously served as a Primary Guide/Teacher and then as the Community Engagement & Admissions Coordinator for Stonebrook Montessori, a public charter sponsored by CMSD. She holds an M.A. in Education from St. Catherine University, St. Paul, MN and a B.A. in Criminology from the University of Illinois-Chicago.