BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Achievement and Accountability
Division of Research Services

Virtual School Effectiveness Review

for Charter Schools

2020 - 2021

Southwest Baltimore Charter School #328

1300 Herkimer Street

Baltimore, MD 21223

March 22-23, 2021

200 East North Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
www.baltimorecityschools.org

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OVERVIEW OF 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.

For the 2020-2021 school year SER visits were conducted virtually, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, using a modified and abbreviated version of the SER protocol. The SER team comprised of representatives from City Schools and consultants from Schoolworks, (an education consulting group) 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 reviewed submitted electronic school documents and conducted virtual focus via Microsoft Teams or Zoom platforms, with school leadership, teachers, students, and parents. For classroom observations schools submitted one recorded synchronous lesson from each of the school's academic content teachers. The Team Lead then randomly select 60% of lessons submitted. Lessons were observed during the beginning, middle, and end of the recording.

The SER team analyzed evidence collected over the course of the visit 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. Those key actions that were not rated for the virtual SER have been grayed out in the report. 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

Southwest Baltimore Charter School serves approximately 427 students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. The school is in the southwest quadrant Baltimore.

Virtual SER Context
Southwest Baltimore Charter School has been virtual since the beginning of the year and at the time of the site visit (March 22-23, 2021). Some students will return to in-person learning starting April 12, 2021. All classroom observations conducted for the purpose of this report were recorded within two weeks prior to the visit.
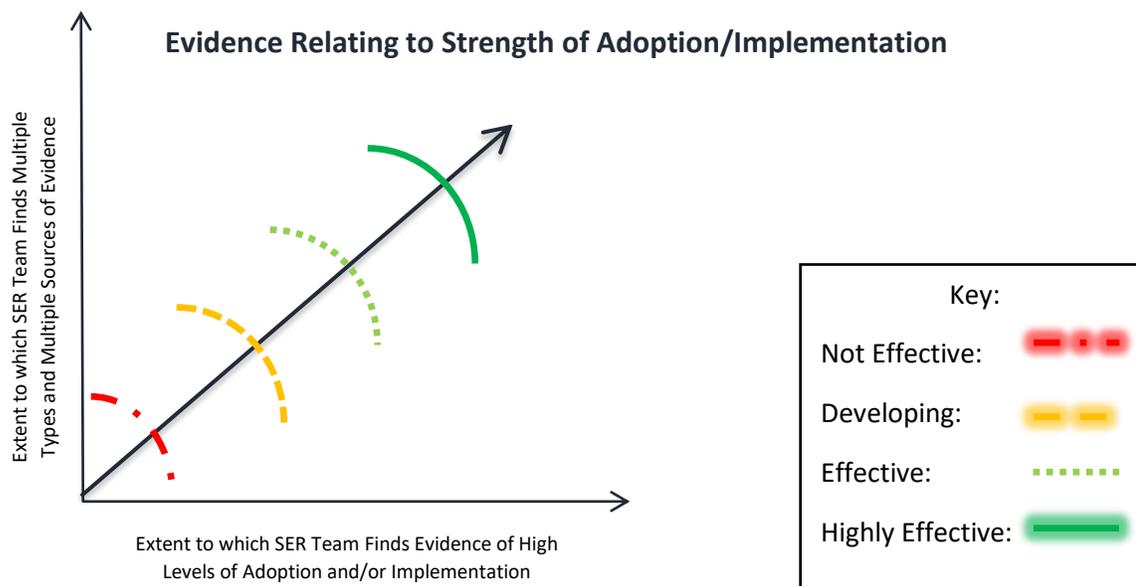
School Leadership and Staffing:
The principal, Joseph Eldridge, has been at the school for one year and with the district for eight years in various roles. For the purpose of this SER site visit, staff designated as school leadership are listed below.

School Leadership Focus Group Members	
Name	Role
Joseph Eldridge	Principal
Turi Nilsson	Director of Instruction, Primary grades
Gena Proctor	Lead Teacher
Siobhan Vicens	Teacher Support Coach
Krysta Jenks	IEP chair

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[1] and multiple sources[2] 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.

Evidence Relating to Strength of Adoption/Implementation

Extent to which SER Team Finds Multiple Types and Multiple Sources of Evidence

Extent to which SER Team Finds Evidence of High Levels of Adoption and/or Implementation

Key:

Not Effective: ▬ ▬ ▬

Developing: ▬ ▬

Effective: ••••••

Highly Effective: ▬▬▬

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

[2] "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.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE LEVELS

Based on trends found in the collected evidence, the SER team assigns a performance level to each key action.
Please note: due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to virtual learning, the School Effectiveness Standards have been reduced for this academic year. Key actions and indicators highlighted in grey are not under review during the 2020-2021 SER review cycle.

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 School leadership supports highly effective instruction.	**Effective**
1.2 Teachers use multiple data sources to adjust practice.	**Not Rated**
1.3 Teachers deliver highly effective instruction.	**Developing**
1.4 Teachers establish a classroom environment in which teaching and learning can occur.	**Not Rated**
Domain 2: Talented People	
2.1 The school implements systems to select effective teachers and staff whose skills and beliefs meet the needs of the school.	**Not Rated**
2.2 The school develops teacher and staff capacity through individualized support and professional development.	**Effective**
Domain 3: Vision and Engagement	
3.1 The school has a clear vision and mission that promotes a student-centered, culturally relevant learning that prepares students for future success.	**Effective**
3.2 The school cultivates and sustains open communication and decision-making opportunities with families and the community.	**Effective**
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.	**Not Rated**
Domain 4: Strategic and Professional Management	
4.1 The school establishes clear goals for student achievement and tracks progress towards goals.	**Effective**
4.2 The school allocates and deploys the resources of human capital and funding to address the priority growth goals for student achievement.	**Effective**
4.3 School's board of trustees (or operator) provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school.	**Developing**

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.	Effective

- School leadership somewhat ensures that teachers engage in the planning of the curricula through oversight of standards-based units, lessons and pacing. School leadership reported, and teachers confirmed, that teacher's lesson plans are expected to address the standards and meet the needs of students through differentiated strategies. Additionally, teachers noted that they spent time back-mapping the curriculum to ensure that all the standards were covered, which a review of Trimester 2 back-map with standards and a weekly plan overview confirmed. Regarding oversight of units, lessons, and pacing, school leadership and teachers reported that administrators have access to teacher's weekly plans, and they are discussed in their team meetings. However, a review of team meeting agendas did not indicate planning or pacing as a topic; instead, the standard meeting agenda topics include: Data, SPED meeting, and Gen Ed reports, 504 Meetings, SST referrals, Kid Talk, Upcoming Dates, Announcements, and Notes/Outcomes/Next Steps. Finally, teachers state that feedback on lesson plans is provided through informal and formal observations.

- School leadership consistently provides actionable feedback and guidance to teachers, aligned with the Instructional Framework. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers receive informal feedback which includes strengths, areas of growth, and next steps. A review of informal observations confirmed feedback provided to teachers. Specifically, one coaching tracker showed a focus on Teach 2 and Teach 5 of the Instructional Framework with feedback, wonderings/suggestions, and next steps & accountability. For example, the next step included "brainstorm strategies for virtual engagement that build both student leadership and optimizes opportunities for student voice/choice." In addition, school leadership and teachers reported that formal feedback is provided by school leadership through the district's formal observation process aligned to the Instructional Framework, which a review of formal observations confirmed.

- School leadership ensures the use of a complete student learning data-cycle. School leadership, teachers and the operator reported that this is the first year the school is using the i-Ready assessment, which is given three times a year with two progress monitoring assessments in between. Additionally, school leadership and teachers reported that teachers review i-Ready and

other formative data during weekly team meetings. Teachers stated, and a review of the data review protocol confirmed that teachers identify goals and create action steps based on the i-Ready data. For example, one action plan stated, "By November, students will increase their scores in phonics on the November i-Ready progress monitoring benchmark by 6 or more points." Additionally, school leadership and teacher stated that I-ready data is used to target small group instruction for students in need of support and acceleration.

Key action 1.2	Teachers use multiple data sources to adjust practice to meet learners' unique needs.	Not rated

- Teachers plan instruction in response to data
- Teachers appropriately recommend students for structured, school-wide interventions.
- Teachers appropriately recommend students for structured, school-wide opportunities for acceleration.

Key action 1.3	Teachers deliver highly effective instruction.[3]	Developing

Data for Key Action 1.3 was collected from classroom observations in order to provide trends in instruction across the school, as it relates to Teach Action 1-6 of the 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 14 indicators. Below is the summary of the 14 classroom observations that were conducted.

- Some teachers use and communicate standards-based lesson objectives and align learning activities to the stated lesson objectives.

Communication of objective	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers communicate lesson objectives to students by explaining and/or referencing it during lessons**.** **Partially Evident:** Teachers communicate lesson objectives by posting it. **Not Evident:** Teachers do not communicate lesson objectives to students.	57%	0%	43%
Learning activities and resources align with lesson objective	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Lesson activities and resources have a clear and intentional purpose and are aligned with lesson objectives. **Partially Evident:** Lesson activities and resources are generally aligned with lesson objectives and/or some tasks have a clear, intentional purpose.	57%	43%	0%

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[3] Percentages shown in the table are subject to rounding and may appear to not sum to exactly 100%.

Not Evident: Lesson activities and resources are not aligned with lesson objectives OR Lesson activities and resources do not have a clear intentional purpose.			

- Most teachers present content in various ways and emphasize key points to make content clear.

Accurate, grade-level content	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers present students with accurate grade level content aligned to appropriate content standards. **Partially Evident:** Teachers present students with mostly accurate grade level content aligned to appropriate content standards. **Not Evident:** Teachers present students with inaccurate grade level content and/or not aligned to appropriate content standards.	**71%**	**21%**	**7%**
Alternate presentation of content	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers present content in various ways (two or more) to make content clear. **Partially Evident:** Teachers attempt to present content in various ways (two or more), but attempts do not make content clear. **Not Evident:** Teachers do not present content in various ways.	**79%**	**14%**	**7%**
Emphasis of key points	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers emphasize important points to focus learning of content. **Partially Evident:** Teachers attempt to emphasize important points to focus learning of content, but attempts do not make content clear. **Not Evident:** Teachers do not emphasize important points to focus learning of content.	**64%**	**29%**	**7%**

- Some teachers use multiple strategies and tasks to engage all students in rigorous work.

Scaffolded and/or differentiated tasks	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers scaffold and/or differentiate tasks by providing access to rigorous grade-level instruction for all students. **Partially Evident:** Teachers attempt to scaffold and/or differentiated tasks, but not all students are supported in accessing rigorous grade- level instruction. **Not Evident:** Teachers do not scaffold or differentiated tasks.	**57%**	**43%**	**0%**
Opportunities to engage with complex texts and tasks	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Students have opportunities and time to grapple with complex texts and/or rigorous tasks. **Partially Evident:** Students have opportunities to engage with complex texts and rigorous tasks superficially. **Not Evident:** Students have rare or no opportunities to engage with complex texts and rigorous tasks.	**50%**	**36%**	**14%**

- Some teachers use evidence-dependent questioning.

Questions requiring justification	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers asks questions that require students to cite evidence and clearly explain their thought processes. **Partially Evident:** Teachers ask questions that require students to explain their thought processes or cite evidence but not both. **Not Evident:** Teachers does not ask questions that require students to cite evidence or explain their though processes.	29%	36%	36%
Clear and/or scaffolded questions	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers asks questions that are clear and scaffolded. **Partially Evident:** Teachers asks questions that are somewhat unclear to students or lack scaffolding. **Not Evident:** Teachers do not ask scaffolded questions.	50%	50%	0%

- Most teachers check for student understanding and provide specific academic feedback.

Informative checks for understanding	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers conduct one or more checks for understanding that yield useful information at key points throughout the lesson. **Partially Evident:** Teachers attempt to conduct checks for understanding, but checks may only yield some useful information. **Not Evident:** Teachers do not check for understanding during the lesson. OR Teachers' checks for understanding are inappropriate or ineffective.	79%	21%	0%
Specific, academic feedback	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident – Teachers give specific academic feedback to communicate current progress and next steps to move forward. **Partially Evident** – Teachers give general academic feedback, but feedback may not clarify next steps to move forward. **Not Evident** – Teachers do not give academic feedback. OR When needed, teachers do not address student misunderstandings.	57%	36%	7%

- Some teachers facilitate academic talk.

Opportunities for student-to-student interaction*	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers provide multiple or extended opportunities for student-to-student interactions. **Partially Evident:** Teachers provide one opportunity for student-to-student interactions. **Not Evident:** Teachers provide no opportunity for student-to-student interactions.	21%	29%	0%
Evidence-based discussions*	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: In most student-to-student interactions, students engage in discussions with their peers to make meaning of content or deepen their understanding.	7%	0%	93%

	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Partially Evident: In few student-to-student interactions, students engage in discussions with their peers to make meaning of content or deepen their understanding. **Not Evident:** Students do not engage in discussions with their peers to make meaning of content or deepen their understanding.			
Student academic talk	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Students use academic talk and, when necessary, teachers consistently and appropriately support students in speaking academically. **Partially Evident:** Students sometimes use academic talk, and teachers inconsistently or inappropriately supports students in speaking academically. **Not Evident:** Students do not use academic talk, and teachers does not support students in speaking academically.	36%	29%	36%

*Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the shift to virtual learning, and the limitation of the recorded synchronous recorded lessons, two of the three indicators above (opportunities for student-to-student interaction and evidence-based discussions) were not included in the calculation to determine the overall rating for this Key Action. The percentages for these indicators are provided for informational purposes only. The percentage for student academic talk was still included in the overall rating.

Key action 1.4	Teachers establish a classroom environment in which teaching and learning can occur.	Not rated

- Teachers implement routines to maximize instructional time.

Maximized instructional time	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Students re only idle for very brief (less than 2 minutes) periods of time while waiting for teachers. **Partially Evident:** Students may be idle for short periods of time (2-4 minutes) while waiting for teachers. **Not Evident:** Students may be idle for significant periods of time (4 minutes or more) while waiting for teachers.	%	%	%
Smooth routines and procedures	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Routines and procedures run smoothly with minimal or no prompting from the teachers. **Partially Evident:** Routines and procedures run smoothly with some prompting from the teachers. **Not Evident:** Routines and procedures are in place but require significant teachers prompting and direction. OR There are no evident routines or procedures, so the teachers direct all of them.	%	%	%

- Teachers build a positive, learning-focused classroom culture.

Teacher-to-student interactions	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teacher interactions with students are positive and respectful. **Partially Evident:** Some interactions among teachers and students demonstrate a positive rapport and respect while other interactions demonstrate a lack of rapport/respect. **Not Evident:** Little to no interactions among teachers with students demonstrate a positive rapport/mutual respect.	%	%	%
Student-to-teacher interactions	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Student interactions with teachers are positive and respectful. **Partially Evident:** Some interactions among students and teachers demonstrate a positive rapport/mutual respect while other interactions demonstrate a lack of rapport/respect. **Not Evident:** Little to no interactions among students with teachers demonstrate a positive rapport/mutual respect.	%	%	%
Student-to-student interactions	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Student-to-student interactions are positive and respectful. **Partially Evident:** Some interactions among students demonstrate a positive rapport/mutual respect while other interactions demonstrate a lack of rapport/respect. **Not Evident:** Little to no interactions among students demonstrate a positive rapport/mutual respect.	%	%	%

- Teachers reinforce positive behavior and redirect off-task or challenging behavior, when needed.

Reinforce positive behavior	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers promote and reinforce positive behavior. **Partially Evident:** Teachers occasionally acknowledge positive behavior but focus more on negative behavior. **Not Evident:** Teachers primarily focus on negative behavior.	%	%	%
On-task behavior	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Students are on-task and active participants in classwork and discussions. **Partially Evident:** Some students exhibit frequent off-task behavior in the classroom. AND/OR Most students exhibit occasional off-task behavior in the classroom. **Not Evident:** Students exhibit consistent off-task behavior in the classroom.	%	%	%
Time impact of redirection/discipline of off-task behavior	Evident	Partially Evident	Not Evident
Evident: Teachers address behavioral issues (if any) with minimal interruption to instructional time (less than 2 minutes). **Partially Evident:** Teachers address behavioral issues with some interruption to instructional time (2-4 minutes). **Not Evident:** Teachers address behavioral issues in a manner that does not fully solve the issue causing significant interruption to instructional time (4 minutes or more). OR Teachers does not address behavioral issues, allowing student misbehavior to continue or escalate.	%	%	%

Domain 2: Talented People

Key action 2.1	The school implements systems to select effective teachers and staff whose skills and beliefs meet the needs of the school.	Not rated

- School leadership has implemented organizational structures for selection and/or placement across staffing positions that addresses student well-being and academic performance.
- School leadership recruits' candidates using multiple stakeholders and measures to assess each candidate's qualifications in alignment with school needs.

Key action 2.2	The school develops teacher and staff capacity through individualized support and professional development.	Effective

- School leadership ensures the implementation of an informal mentoring program, when applicable, to support the development of most new teachers and staff and monitors the program's effectiveness. School leadership reported that they have a designated on-site mentor and their traditional mentoring program last for two -years and focuses around on-boarding teachers into Southwest Baltimore Charter School's culture and classroom management. School leadership stated that this year they do not have any teachers who qualify for needing new teacher support. However, school leadership and teachers noted that two teachers are in their third year of teaching. Further, school leadership stated that Team Leads act as the primary mentors and that support is provided through professional development. Regarding monitoring the mentoring program's effectiveness, school leadership reported that historically the mentor has conversations with school leadership around planning and supports for the new teachers. Teachers confirmed previous years mentoring program and supports but could not speak to what was offered this year. Finally, the site team did not review any mentoring documents to confirm supports provided for this year.

- School leadership uses multiple methods to provide timely support and interventions to struggling teachers and staff as indicated by data and/or informal or formal observations. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers in need of support are identified through classroom observations, review of student's academic data, or can self-identify. Continuing, school leadership and teachers reported that follow-up for teachers in need of support is provided by school leadership and discussed weekly as an administration team. Further, school leadership stated that teachers in need of support are placed on a PACT (Professional Adjustment Contract for Trailblazers). A review of a PACT confirmed that an area of concerns is described, as well as action steps that will be taken to improve practice. For example, a review of a PACT revealed the following action steps that administration will provide as supports: "observe Monday and

Tuesday's lessons and provide feedback prior to Wednesday, Attend Wednesday grade level meeting to discuss technology tools, and weekly Friday meetings to review progress and set goals for next week."

- School leadership engages all staff in differentiated professional development based on identified needs. School leadership, teachers, and the operator reported that professional development for the school year has focused on i-Ready and digital platforms and tool; which an overview of a professional development plan confirmed. Additionally, school leadership, teachers, and the operator reported professional development on equity provided by a consultant Lisa Williams, which a review of an invoice confirmed. School leadership and teachers reported that professional development is differentiated through teacher choice/interest, which a review of the Homegrown PD Plan confirmed. Finally, school leadership reported that professional development is identified based on the need of the moment. For example, the equity professional development was identified based on current events and what is happening in our society. Further, the internally created professional development is based on teachers identified needs and i-ready professional development is based on a need to better understand the new assessment.

Key action 3.1	The school has a clear vision and mission that promotes student-centered, culturally relevant learning that prepares students for future success.	Effective

- Most of the school community shares a clear understanding of the school's mission and vision, including a clear understanding of initiatives and values, that support high student achievement. A review of the school website and handbook noted the following vision and mission: Vision: "Thinkers ready to navigate our world." Mission: "To create extraordinary learning experiences that inspire the thoughtful, courageous, compassionate citizen in every child." School leadership, teachers, the operator, and governing board confirmed key aspects of the vision and mission. However, families and students were less clear, stating that it was about creating independent students ready to go out into the world. School leadership, the operator, and governing board reported that the school was founded on expeditionary learning, arts integration, and a focus on individualized learning approaches, which a review of the handbook confirmed. Additionally, school leadership, the operator, governing board, and teachers reported that the vision and mission are exemplified through school programming such as Habits of Scholarship (I am Responsible, I strive for Quality, I Persevere, I have Integrity, I show Empathy, I display Autonomy), CREW meetings (advisory program), and real-world experiences through Outward Bound, North Bay and others. Both families and students noted an emphasis on individual learners and small groups support. Finally, students spoke about programs that identify students with an interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and supports these scholars throughout middle school and beyond such as Middle Grades Partnership and CURE with University of Maryland.

- School leadership ensures that the school's programs are culturally relevant and incorporate skills for 21st century success. In terms of culturally relevant programming, school leadership, the operator, the board, teachers, and students reported that the school is in the beginning stages of their equity plan. As such, stakeholder reported that an Equity Alliance has been formed which includes parents, staff members, and a 6th-8th grade student that will put in place policies, structures, and practices that help dismantle systemic oppression and are anti-racist, which a review of an email to the SBCS community confirmed. The operator and families both stated that currently cultural programming is general and not robust enough to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion; however, they are aware of this as an area of growth and they are working on it. School leadership, the operator, teachers, families, and students reported that currently they conduct black history month projects and participated in a Black Lives Matter rally. A review of a weekly

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[4] Less than 6 families participated in the family focus group

newsletter to staff, dated Feb 16-19, 2021, confirmed Black History Month activities and the BLM Rally. Furthermore, school leadership, teachers, and students reported that students have been exposed to other cultures through virtual field trips, guest speakers, book, and art projects. Regarding skills for 21st century success, school leadership, teachers, and students reported that students participated in expeditions and field work that allow for real world application and cooperation. As noted above, students participate on trip with Outward Bound and to North Bay as well as have a chance to interact with guest speakers. For example, a review of a CREW lesson plan confirmed that students met author and activist Wes Moore. Additionally, school leadership, teachers, families, and students reported that students collaborate on projects and communicate with others. All stakeholders reported that the school has ensured that all students have access to devices for virtual learning.

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

- The school implements systems to build strong relationships with families and garners feedback in order to make schoolwide decisions. School leadership, teachers, families, students, and the operator reported that the school communicates with families through the Remind App, automated calls, the website, and social media. School leadership and teachers reported that the school hosts a weekly virtual Family Town Halls, which families are invited to attend. In addition, school leadership and teachers reported that families provided input on reopening timelines and the budget through these Family Town Halls. A review of Family Town Hall agendas confirmed this practice. School leadership and students reported and a review of a letter to 6th grade families confirmed, that "in response to parent concern and high student workload, we are reducing our students' Cultural Arts classes from three to one. Two 'Independent Study Halls' will replace the Cultural Arts classes in your child's schedule". School leadership and teachers reported that the has also hosted virtual events that families attend, such as the student led conferences. The operator and board members reported that parents serve on the governing board and are part of the Equity Alliance Committee, which school leadership and teachers confirmed. To engage all families and students, school leadership and teachers reported that the school has a community school coordinator and a student wellness support team that help ensure families in need have food and supplies, which the operator confirmed. Finally, school leadership stated that relationships are built through the longevity and consistency of the staff teaching multiple siblings.

- The school builds strong relationships with community stakeholders and leverages resources to meet the needs of students and the school. School leadership, teachers, and the operator, reported that several partnerships have been initiated and continue to be cultivated through the work of the recently hired community school coordinator. As such, school leadership, teachers, the operator, and board reported that the school has strong partnerships with various institutions in the community including CURE University of Maryland (STEM mentoring); Middle Grades Partnership (summer programing and mentorship), Gilman (summer program), Paul's Place (afterschool programing), Elev8 (community Coordinator), Young Audiences (artists residency) Maryland Food Bank, and Johns Hopkins (tutoring); and students were able to confirm some of these partnerships. School leadership reported that community partners are invited to the weekly Family Town Halls. A review of a document entitled *Community Partners* confirmed partners listed above for the current school year who are donating time, funding, and in-kind donations.

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.	Not rated

- The school implements and monitors school protocols that create an environment where students, staff, and families feel welcome and safe.

- The school develops proactive systems that support individual students' social, emotional, and socioeconomic needs.

- School leadership establishes consistent structures to recognize and celebrate student achievement.

- School leadership establishes consistent structures that demonstrate value and recognition of staff.

Domain 4: Strategic and Professional Management

Key action 4.1	The school establishes clear goals for student achievement and tracks progress toward goals.	Effective

- School leadership collaborates with teachers to establish and communicate measurable goals for the improvement of student learning and strategies aligned to the goals; however, not all teachers could articulate the goals. School leadership and the operator reported that historically the school has used NWEA MAP assessment data to set and measure schoolwide goals. However, the ILT along with the new principal decided to use the i-Ready assessment this year. School leadership and the operator reported that the goals are as follows: LITERACY GOALS- By June 2021, each grade level (K-4) will show growth in the vocabulary strand of I Ready of 10 percentage points or more. 50% or less of 5-8th grade students will be represented in tier 3 i-Ready data. MATH GOAL- Students in the fifth through eighth grade will demonstrate knowledge of multiplication and division fluency by increasing their number and operations score on the i-ready exam by 20 points, by April 2021. STUDENT WHOLENESS GOALS- By June 2021, the percentage of students who qualify as chronically absent will be no higher than 35%. When teachers were asked about the school wide goals, they reported knowing of goals for math and literacy based on the I-ready assessment and an attendance goal, however teachers could not speak to specific targets for the goals. The operator stated that the schoolwide goals have been communicated to teachers but have not been ingrained into memory like in the past; partly due to the new assessment and to school not being in-person. Further, school leadership, the operator and teachers stated that teachers serve on the ILT and have broken down the schoolwide goals into grade level goals, which are discussed in team meetings. As for the strategies aligned to the school-wide goals, school leadership and teachers reported the following strategies for literacy: using open court's word analysis curriculum, prioritizing vocabulary instruction, use online tools such as Nearpods and Wordly Wise, and differentiate during small group literacy. As for math: tiered instruction for small groups, domain focus on numbers and operations, fluency math games, and intervention programs such as Number worlds and Horizon. Teachers also stated that they use i-ready lessons for both math and literacy. Finally, the attendance strategies include: Re-Engagement Support Team (RST) meetings, home visits, and ensuring students have materials for virtual learning (devices, hotspots, headphones, etc.). A review of the SMARTe Goal and Action Plans confirmed the above-mentioned goals and strategies.

- School leadership and all staff participate in regular analysis of school-wide data and instructional practices to monitor progress towards goals, revisiting and adjusting action plans as needed. School leadership and teachers reported that i-Ready is given three times a year (BOY, MOY, EOY) with progress monitoring occurring in between each assessment. Further, school leadership, the operator, and teachers reported that the ILT meets monthly to review i-Ready data but most data

is being reviewed at the teacher team level, bi-weekly, where they are making real-time adjustments to small groups based on data. A review of an email to team leads confirmed that teams are asked to "look at groups' I-ready data and set small group goals that can be met with six weeks of targeted small group instruction. The goals should be written to reflect measurement through I-ready and this is what will be presented to ILT. This process will help us as a school to increase our capacity to use and review data at all levels." Continuing, school leadership and teachers reported that attendance goal is monitored weekly by the RST and attendance team. Finally, school leadership reported that an adjustment to one of the intervention strategies (switched some students from using Number Worlds to i-Ready lessons) was made after reviewing the i-Ready benchmark data. A review of a SPP goal tracker confirmed that the ILT is monitoring the goals at each monthly ILT meeting discussing strategies and noting what to continue, discontinue or change.

Key action 4.2	School leadership allocates and deploys the resources of time, human capital, and funding to address the priority growth goals for student achievement.	Effective

- Budget distributions and resource allocations are aligned to school goals and priorities that support equitable learning environments. School leadership and teachers reported that staff and families had opportunities to provide input on budget priorities during Family Town Hall meetings, which the operator confirmed. Families and a review of Family Town Hall agendas in which budget was identified as a topic, confirmed families' participation. School leadership and the operator reported that budget priorities include small class sizes (more staff), differentiation, culture and climate, and arts integration. Teachers confirmed the addition of paras to support small group instruction and prioritizing arts integration. Additionally, school leadership and the operator stated that the school recently made some building improvements (adding a dance studio and gym) which supports the priorities. The operator and teachers stated that the school purchased i-Ready assessment and lessons as well as trainings for teachers and staff. Further, teachers stated that Number Worlds, Open Court, and Horizon were all new purchases to help support with virtual learning. As for inequities, the school recognized that for students to be successful with virtual learning they needed devices, hotspots, and class supplies. School leadership, the operator, teachers, and parents reported that the school distributed grade specific supplies (books, manipulatives, paper, etc.) for each student as well as ensured that each student had a device and internet connection. Additionally, school leadership and the operator stated that based on attendance and academic data of some students the school became a student learning center (SLC) for the most vulnerable students they had identified. A review of the Southwest Budget 2020-2021 as well as the Principal's budget Tool FY 21 and FY 22 confirmed the curriculum and material purchases.

- School leadership leverages staff in key roles in support of school-wide goals. School leadership and teachers reported that the school has identified a teacher lead for each grade band. Additionally, school leadership and teachers reported that teachers serve on the ILT and facilitate professional development. A review of a homegrown PD schedule and plan confirms that teachers are leading these sessions. School leadership stated that teachers are selected for these roles through their own personal interest as well as their level of experience and overall performance. School leadership and teachers reported that oversight of roles and responsibilities occur through meetings with individuals and groups, emails, and shared documents. School leadership, teachers, and the operator also reported that teachers serve on the equity alliance committee, which a review of an email recruiting teachers and non-teaching staff to serve on the equity committee confirmed. Finally, the operator also mentioned that teachers serve on the hiring committee.

- School leadership leverages common staff time to focus on professional learning and collaboration in support of student achievement. School leadership and teachers reported that teachers meet bi-weekly by content and also by grade level. Additionally, school leadership and teachers reported that teachers collaborate during professional development and informally during the day. Further, school leadership reported that there is a standing agenda that includes: data, SPED meetings, and Gen Ed Reports, 504 Meetings, SST referrals, kid talk, upcoming dates, announcements or celebrations for the good of the group, notes/outcomes/next steps, which a review of the meeting agendas confirmed. Teachers confirmed that during these meetings they discuss i-Ready data, student performance, small group instruction, and IEPs. Finally, school leadership reported that paras and interventionists also receive supported planning and collaboration during the noncollaborative planning weeks.

Key action 4.3	School's board of trustees (or operator) provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school.	Developing

- The governing board and operator maintain essential knowledge of the school. The operator provides oversight of the academic program and the governing board provides some oversight of the academic program. School leadership and the operator reported that the operator attends various weekly meetings, serves on the ILT, attends professional development, and interacts daily with school leadership. A review of administration weekly meeting agendas and notes confirmed the operator's attendance along with school leadership. The board was aware of the mission and vision of the school and understood the main tenants of which the school was founded (expeditionary learning, arts integration, and a focus on individualized learning approaches). Further, the board stated that one way in which they maintain essential knowledge of the day to day of the school is through having parents on the board, which all stakeholder groups confirmed. The board and operator stated that the board meets bi-monthly and the operator attends board meetings and provides school updates

as needed. Further, the board stated that updates from the operator have included topics such as: hiring and staffing, COVID related needs, and reopening plans, which a review of emails and board meeting notes confirmed. The board and operator reported that the primary role of the board is fiduciary. As such both the operator and board reported that they are provided with a treasurer's report and development report at each meeting, which a review of the board meeting agendas and minutes confirmed. Regarding schoolwide goals, school leadership, the board, and operator reported that the goals were created by the school team, and then communicated to the board. A review of an email from the operator to the board revealed that the diagnostic i-Ready data print outs were provided after the first administration (BOY). Further, the email stated that "we are formulating our school performance plan goals with the ILT around meeting benchmarks in math and literacy….If you would like to sit in on the ILT meetings, please let me know." Although board members were aware of the goals ;they reported that they have been more focused on engagement data such as attendance, student and staff satisfaction, and distribution of Chromebooks. Finally, board members and the operator stated that they will discuss i-Ready results at the end of the year.

- The governing board and operator provide financial oversight by monitoring the school's financial records and ensuring that the school remains fiscally viable. As mentioned previously, the board and operator reported that the primary role of the board is fiduciary, and the board receives monthly updates on the budget, which a review of the board meeting agendas and minutes confirmed. Further, the board and operator reported that the fiscal state of the school is sound, adding that financial audits are conducted regularly, which a review of the Southwest Baltimore Charter School Audited financial statements June 30, 2020 and 2019 confirmed. Additionally, the board, operator, and school leadership reported that the school has received additional funds through grants and fundraising efforts. A review of a grant request letter to the Thomas Wilson Foundation and a thank you letter to a donor for a gift of $10,000 to the SBCA annual fund confirmed these additional revenue streams. The operator stated that as part of their lease agreement with Baltimore City Schools they must make capital improvements to the building each year. As such, the operator reported that they had just renovated the gym and dance studio, which school leadership and the board confirmed. Finally, school leadership, the board and operator spoke to a budgeting process that involved seeking input and feedback from staff, parents and the board before the board approves the final budget.

- The operator maintains effective governance practices and the governing board maintains some effective governance practices to ensure organizational viability, including the systemic selection and oversight of the school leader. School leadership, board members, and the operator reported that the board currently has nine members; two of which are current parents and two who are parents of alumni. The board stated that the board structure includes a chair, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary. Continuing, the board stated that members serve one-year terms, with no term limits, which a review of the by-laws confirmed. The operator stated that because the board is small, they do not have formal sub-committees; however, stakeholders stated that board members are part of the equity alliance committee along with teachers, parents, and a student. Additionally, the board reported that

board members served on the hiring committee for the current principal. School leadership and the operator reported that the board supports school leadership and the operator in receiving professional development on topics such as equity and data. The operator stated that the board holds a retreat every couple of years, however due to the pandemic one was not held this past year. Additionally, the operator and board stated that the board does not has currently have a strategic plan. Regarding the hiring of school leadership, the operator, board and school leadership stated that multiple interviews were conducted with various stakeholders, including the operator, board members, teachers, staff, and parents, which a review of a formal letter to Baltimore City's Human Capital Office about the principal selection waiver confirmed. Continuing, school leadership and the operator reported that school leadership is evaluated by the operator using the Baltimore City Public School System's leadership framework, which a review of the principal's MOY evaluation confirmed. Finally, regarding oversight of the operator, the board and operator stated that the operator is evaluated every 3 to 5 years based on the charter contract with the City Schools. Further, the board reported that the operator is evaluated on a variety of data points such as: school community feedback (5 Essentials survey), fiduciary information (Annual audit) and SER results, which a review of the Executive Director's last evaluation from SY 2017-2018 confirmed and revealed other data sources such as academic data (MAP and PARCC), Expeditionary Learning Implementation and the overall results of the charter review. Finally, a review of an email from the Board chair to the Executive Director on March 14, 2021 stated, "the SBCS Board evaluates the executive director on a regular basis, consistent with our by-laws. We developed an ED evaluation plan several years ago in order to articulate and record the evaluation process. 2 key parts of the evaluation were recognized: 1) the outcome of the charter renewal process and 2) data collected from school stakeholders. To reduce burden and redundancy, the board elected to include data from the SER in order to address item 2. Due to the postponement of the SER from spring of 2020 to the spring of 2021, your evaluation was delayed and will now be conducted in summer of 2021, with final results available when the school system provides the renewal results. Though the formal process has been delayed, the board has provided informal feedback to you at regular board meetings"

APPENDIX A: 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 B: SER TEAM MEMBERS

The SER visit to the Southwest Baltimore Charter School was conducted on March 22-23, 2021 by a team of representatives from Baltimore City Public Schools.

Team Lead/Writer: 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.

Team Support: 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.

Team Support: 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.

Team Support: Kara Dunn is a consultant with SchoolWorks. As school quality reviewer, she has been a frequent team lead or team writer for school quality reviews and charter renewal visits in California, Colorado, Massachusetts, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. She is also the CEO and consultant of ApogeeVision – a consulting firm that works with many public and private organizations in the areas of administration, facilitation, teacher and staff training, organizational and curriculum development, and program evaluation. She has been an educator for more than 15 years, serving K-12 students. Among many instructional positions, she has worked in Boston Public Schools as a teacher, district lead teacher, teacher trainer, instructional coach for math/science educators, and a school-based administrator. She graduated from Spelman College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Educational Psychology. She has earned two Masters degrees – a Masters of Education from the University of Massachusetts, and Masters of Divinity from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She has served as an adjunct professor at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary (Boston Campus). She has served as a curriculum developer and instructor for the Office of Diversity and Community Partnerships at Harvard Medical School. She is the author of several curricula, including one made for the national film tour, *Kunta Kinteh Island: Coming Home without Shackles*.

Team Support: Dominique Astier is currently a consultant for SchoolWorks. She taught French and Spanish for 15 years in Rhode Island, New York and Massachusetts and served as a department head, student counselor, teacher mentor and school improvement coach. For the past 14 years, she has been working as a consultant, conducting charter school renewals and Department of Education reviews of underperforming and exemplary schools across the nation; developing and guiding the execution of school improvement plans; and conducting program evaluations. Dominique holds a B.A. in French and Spanish Education and an M.A. in French Language and Literature from the Ohio State University. She is fluent in French and Spanish.