



Findings of Root Cause Analysis for Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools

Anne Arundel
Evening High School

September, 2019



COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION

CENTER FOR EDUCATIONAL
INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT



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This report was prepared by the University of Maryland College Park Center for Educational Innovation and Improvement at the College of Education and in partnership with the Bowie State University College of Education and the

Morgan State University School of Education & Urban Studies. The Root Cause Analysis process was facilitated by Dr. Ebony Terrell Shockley and Dr. Kelli Cummings, who also co-authored this report.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to share the outcomes of a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) conducted to support Anne Arundel Evening High School (AAEHS) in identifying underlying causes of school performance problems. The report provides an overview of the RCA process, school profile, problem statement, root cause analysis and recommendations to address the root causes.

The Maryland Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated State Plan requires schools that have been identified for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) engage in a root cause analysis process facilitated by a third party. CSI schools are the lowest achieving 5 percent of Title I schools; high schools that do not graduate one third or more of their students; or schools that have federal school improvement grants (SIG). AAEHS was identified as a CSI school because of low graduation rates (i.e., under 67 percent). Outcomes of the root cause analysis must be used to inform the development of intervention plans to improve school performance.

CSI schools that were identified during 2018-2019 have three years to exit CSI status. CSI school leaders will receive a leadership coach to support the development and implementation of the intervention plan. CSI principals are also required to participate in the Leading for School Improvement Institute, which provides customized professional learning experiences to support school improvement. CSI principals are also required to engage in monitoring visits by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to ensure that progress is being made toward school improvement goals.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) established a memorandum of understanding with the University of Maryland College Park to facilitate the RCA process. The University of Maryland College Park collaborated with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to develop RCA tools and train field teams. Field teams consisted of researchers, data analysts, and education practitioners from Morgan State University, Johns Hopkins University, Bowie State University, and other organizations. Field team members worked with all CSI schools to go through an RCA process. MSDE will support each school to engage in a long-term continuous improvement process that includes RCA analyses, recommended interventions, and evaluations of employed interventions. As part of this process, CSI schools were first required to go through a needs-assessment process that was used to drive the RCA work.

I. INTRODUCTION

RCA Process for CSI Schools

A Root Cause Analysis Facilitator Guide was developed to promote consistency in the root cause analysis process. The Facilitator Guide contains protocols designed to engage school leaders and stakeholders in identifying a specific problem and prioritizing root causes for the problem.

There was a four-step process used to facilitate the root cause analysis:

1. Craft a Problem Statement Based on Data.
2. Brainstorm Causal Factors
3. Analyze Underlying Causes to Identify Root Causes
4. Prioritize Root Causes for Intervention

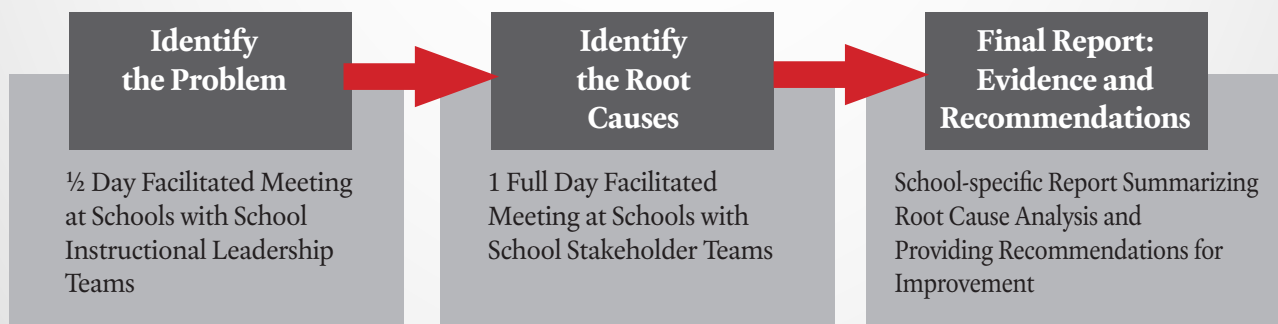
The root cause analysis process translates the successes and challenges identified through the CSI needs assessment into priorities to inform actionable improvement planning. The work with schools was staged in three steps: 1) identify

the problem; 2) identify the root causes; 3) draft a school report with recommendations for improvement.

First, the root cause analysis team worked with school leadership teams to craft a problem statement in a half-day meeting. Using the available school, school system, and state data, the school team selected a problem that relates to their CSI status and provides a direction for the root cause analysis.

Second, the facilitators returned to the school for a full-day meeting with the school's stakeholder team to better understand the root causes of the problem. Once the stakeholders worked through the process of determining the root causes, they prioritized those root causes based on importance, feasibility, and alignment to CSI status.

As a third and final step, the root cause analysis teams created these school-specific reports with recommendations for addressing the problem and root causes in improvement planning.



I. INTRODUCTION

An RCA starts with asking the question: What problem do we face that, if solved or mitigated, would most effectively lead to our desired outcomes (in this case significant improvement in student outcomes that would lead to the school being removed from CSI status)? This “Problem Statement” is then studied and interrogated by a team of stakeholders through the RCA process that answers questions such as:

- Why do we get the outcomes that we currently do?
- Who are the people involved in this problem?
- What policies, procedures, or rules contribute to this problem?
- What resources are currently engaging with this problem?
- What environmental issues impact this problem?

This process led to a small number of “root causes” to the problem designed to help school stakeholders design strategies and programs that are more likely to lead to significant improvement for students. In addition, the process will include conducting research on the problem and prioritized root causes and recommending evidence-based strategies for improvement.

II. SCHOOL PROFILE

School Name: Anne Arundel Evening High School
60 Robinson Rd Severna Park, MD 21146
(410) 222-5384

Total teachers : NO RECORD

Student Demographics

Total Students	Asian	Black African Americans	Hispanic/Latino	White	Other	% Economically Disadvantaged	% English Learners	% Students with Disabilities
249	<10	64	42	120	20	<5%	9.09%	14.54%

Anne Arundel Evening High School MSDE School Report Card Profile for 9-12

Academic Achievement		School Quality and Student Success		Graduation Rate		Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency		Readiness for Postsecondary Success	
% Proficient in Mathematics	9.1%	Students Not Chronically Absent	34.8%	Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate	14.7%	% English Learners Making Progress Toward Learning English	7.1%	Credit for Well-Rounded Curriculum	N/A
Average Performance Mathematics	2.2								
% Proficient in English Language Arts (ELA)	10.9%	Access to Well Rounded Curriculum	42.3%	Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate	38.2%			On Track in Ninth Grade for Graduation	73.2%
Average Performance ELA	2.1								
Earned Points	7.8/30	Earned Points	5.2/25	Earned Points	2.4/15	Earned Points	0.7/10	Earned Points	2.5/5
Total Earned Percent:				23%					

To view this school's full report card, visit www.mdreportcard.org

II. SCHOOL PROFILE

The AAEHS is an alternative secondary school in Anne Arundel County. Students who did not complete their high school education can earn a diploma at AAEHS and previously earned credits can be applied toward a high school diploma. As an alternative high school, AAEHS receives students currently enrolled in traditional high schools, as well as students attending AAEHS solely. With six sites, and an eSchool, Anne Arundel Evening serves 249 **non-concurrent students**, according to the MSDE Report Card (<http://reportcard.msde.maryland.gov/Graphs/#/AtaGlance/Index/3/10/6/02/2233>).

School Quality/Student Success: Attendance-AAEHS continues to study their student attendance (34.8% of students are not chronically absent). One of the challenges is that data includes non-concurrent students only (n=249). Nonetheless, AAEHS faculty and staff continue to problem-solve ways to increase attendance for all students. The majority of the students at AAEHS do not reside in the nearby neighborhood, with many students traveling from across the county after attending their traditional day school. In addition, AAEHS leaders are seeking a more detailed tracking system for attendance given the unique nature of their schedule and their student population. For example, some students attend daily, and others attend on a four-day A/B day rotation.

Graduation-Many AAEHS students have transferred from their day school. The quantitative data from the MSDE Report Card shows a four-year (14.7%) and a five-year (38.2%) adjusted graduation rate. The leadership team began to explore goals for students who come to them after transferring from day school enrollments for three years or more. The qualitative data from the day one and two meetings with faculty and staff indicates that many students transfer not after three years, but at the end of four years in day school. Students enrolled in alternative high schools typically take longer than four or even five years to complete high school.

Academic Achievement-The increase in cultural and linguistic diversity presents both a challenge and an opportunity for AAEHS. With the academic average performance for ELA (2.1%) and mathematics (2.2%), the principal and staff conveyed an interest in increasing student achievement by enhancing modes of instruction. Conversations ensued about increasing student engagement and class participation throughout their academic experiences at AAEHS.

Through interactions with AAEHS's principal, and a subset of county and school-based administrators, faculty and staff, it is evident that leadership, faculty, and staff are open and committed to exploring a range of strategic efforts focused on improving student performance outcomes.

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Description of the Process

The first step in the RCA process was to convene a half-day meeting that was facilitated by a two-member University of Maryland/Bowie State University/Morgan State University RCA team. AAEHS convened on May 21, 2019 for day one of the RCA process (See Appendix A). The convening included the school principal and a local school district representative serving as Director of Alternative Schools. The primary goal of this meeting was to craft a “Problem Statement” that would drive the root cause analysis. A Problem Statement can be defined as a statement describing a situation, issue, barrier, impediment, or challenge that a school must address to significantly improve student outcomes related particularly to those outcomes that led to the school being placed on the CSI list.

The goals of the first day were as follows: 1) to determine a problem statement to drive the analysis of the root causes, and 2) to identify stakeholders for day two of the RCA.

Problem Statement Criteria

Participants arrived at a problem statement by examining how CSI schools were identified; by using data to understand why the school received CSI status; by organizing data trends into themes; by evaluating the feasibility of addressing those themes; and by prioritizing addressable themes to identify the RCA area of focus. The problem statement was crafted based on the following criteria:

1. *How important is the problem to addressing our needs?*

Importance is determined by whether student outcomes will be improved, teacher efficacy is increased, and/or organizational systems will be improved.

2. *How feasible is it to address this problem?*

Feasibility is defined by the availability of adequate resources, staff, and capacity, and whether there is sufficient support and buy-in.

3. *How aligned is the problem to our needs?*

The problem statement should be related to the reason the school was identified as a CSI school. Also the school should be able to address the problem and its root causes by the effective selection and implementation of evidence-based practices.

Day One Summary

The bulk of the conversations on day one focused on the ways in which school context, an alternative school, shaped the results. The team discussed the application of the data to their school context. For example, as articulated above, graduation rates are based on a four-year calculation. Additionally, students cannot enroll in AAEHS until they are sixteen years of age, and students are not at AAEHS for four years. The team contemplated possibilities for the students at AAEHS to meet four-year graduation requirements as a state level indicator, with many discussing the challenges of students arriving at the end of three or more years and needing one or more years in high school to attain adequate credits. The conversation about state level indicators evolved into a discussion about the indicators of success outlined in the SIP, which include: increasing the stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, and families) who feel like valued members of the school, increasing the percentages of students who meet expectations on ELA and mathematics assessments, and increasing the number of students who attend daily. Each component contained an action plan. The group discussed contributing factors for these outcomes.

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Conversations on contributing factors included, the A/B day four-day block system. The group discussed whether a period-based attendance system would assist with identifying persistent issues of absenteeism. Questions included when to gather attendance data for students on varied schedules. The group also recognized the range of goals that students may have upon enrolling in AAEHS. Some attend only to take a few required classes, while others enroll needing multiple credits after attending three to four years at a traditional school. At the age of twenty-one,

the group shared that students are no longer permitted to attend and are offered a GED or Maryland Alternative Diploma.

Overall, the discussions highlighted how the school, given its context, would be able to meet the state criteria for high schools. The group discussed collaboration with other alternative high school leaders on best practices. The group brainstormed on ways to support the learners by focusing on attendance practices and instructional practices necessary for improvement at AAEHS.

Key Data Themes

Data Source	Key Takeaways
Enrollment/Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronic absenteeism (65.2%) needs to decrease. Student attendance must increase for students to increase their achievement. (Note: the data is based on 249 non-concurrent students, which does not represent all students attending.)
School Improvement Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A recording system of daily absences needs revising. Indicator of success #3 on the SIP is to, “increase the percentage of students attending on a daily basis.” (Note: students at some sites are on a two-day schedule and at others a four-day schedule.)
Graduation Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The graduation rate needs to increase (four-year rate: 14.7%; five-year rate: 38.2%).

Themes Across Data Sources (Topics) (1 being highest priority)	Ranking
High rates of absenteeism contribute to the low graduation rate.	1
The graduation rate calculated on a four-year average is not reasonable for an evening high school designed for extender/repeater students.	2
Additional processes for attendance data collection and analysis are needed.	3

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Final Problem Statement

At AAEHS, 65% of nonconcurrent students (n=249) are chronically absent and average daily attendance is 83% based on MSDE data.

Evidence Base for Problem Statement

This section represents a brief research summary of the evidence related to the significance and/or impact of the problem statement identified above.

Current research articulates challenges with chronic absences and how they are linked to school performance. A challenge for many high schools, the national rates of daily attendance are alarming across high school years. Demographic factors such as males, English learners, minorities, low socioeconomic status, and disabilities differentiate absenteeism in secondary students (Chen, Culhane, Metraux, Park, & Venable, 2016). The United States Department of Education (USDE, 2019) found that more than 20 percent of high school students were chronically absent in 2015-2016, with an increase for all racial and ethnic groups compared to middle school chronic absence rates (14 percent).

Absenteeism is predicted to be a better indicator than test scores (USDE, 2019) for whether students will drop out, and high school students who do not attend classes regularly are at risk for failing (Creggan & Adair-Creggan, 2015). Five variables were statistically significant predictors for distinguishing students who regularly attend school, and students who are chronically absent:

- perception of parental discipline (those absent perceived parents as lackadaisical);
- parental control (those absent felt parents were trying to exert control over them);
- students' school perceptions (those absent wanted teachers who will work with their individual learning needs, and they did not view school positively);
- perceived family conflict (those absent experienced conflict at home); and
- students' social competence in classes (those absent struggled with socialization in the classroom) (Railsback, 2004).

It is critical to address chronic absenteeism and support students who do not attend school regularly. Students who are chronically absent are linked to poor outcomes later in life (USDE, 2019), such as poverty, criminal justice system involvement, and diminished health.

IV. ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Day Two Summary

Anne Arundel Evening administrators, faculty, and staff, along with the RCA team convened on June 12, 2019 for day two of the RCA process. Day two was devoted to working with the school's stakeholder team (see Appendix) to identify and prioritize the root causes of the problem so the causes could be addressed in the school's improvement planning efforts.

Stakeholders began the day by reviewing the problem statement developed by the instructional leadership team on day one. Following this review, they comprehensively brainstormed causal factors that contributed to the problem using a "Fishbone" activity. Individual causal factors were then organized into themes and a causal factor statement was crafted for each theme. Using the "5 Whys Activity," stakeholders were encouraged to dig deeper into the causal factor statements by asking "why" questions in order to arrive at underlying causes. Underlying causes were then collectively ranked in order to arrive at a prioritized list of root causes.

Specifically, the goals for day two included:

- Determine factors contributing to the problem statement.
- Identify underlying causes of the problem and determine which underlying causes are primary "root" causes.
- Prioritize the root causes for the importance of impacting student outcomes and the feasibility of implementing strategies to address them.

Given the range of perspectives available, day two participants shared their expertise on the topic of absenteeism in order to compose some of the contributing factors. For example, the classroom teachers discussed student-teacher-staff relationships, instructional delivery, and relevant teaching. The stakeholders in attendance discussed conversations with students and families regarding why students were absent, including students not having basic needs met, and transportation challenges. The collective group of stakeholders brainstormed possibilities in both small and large groups.

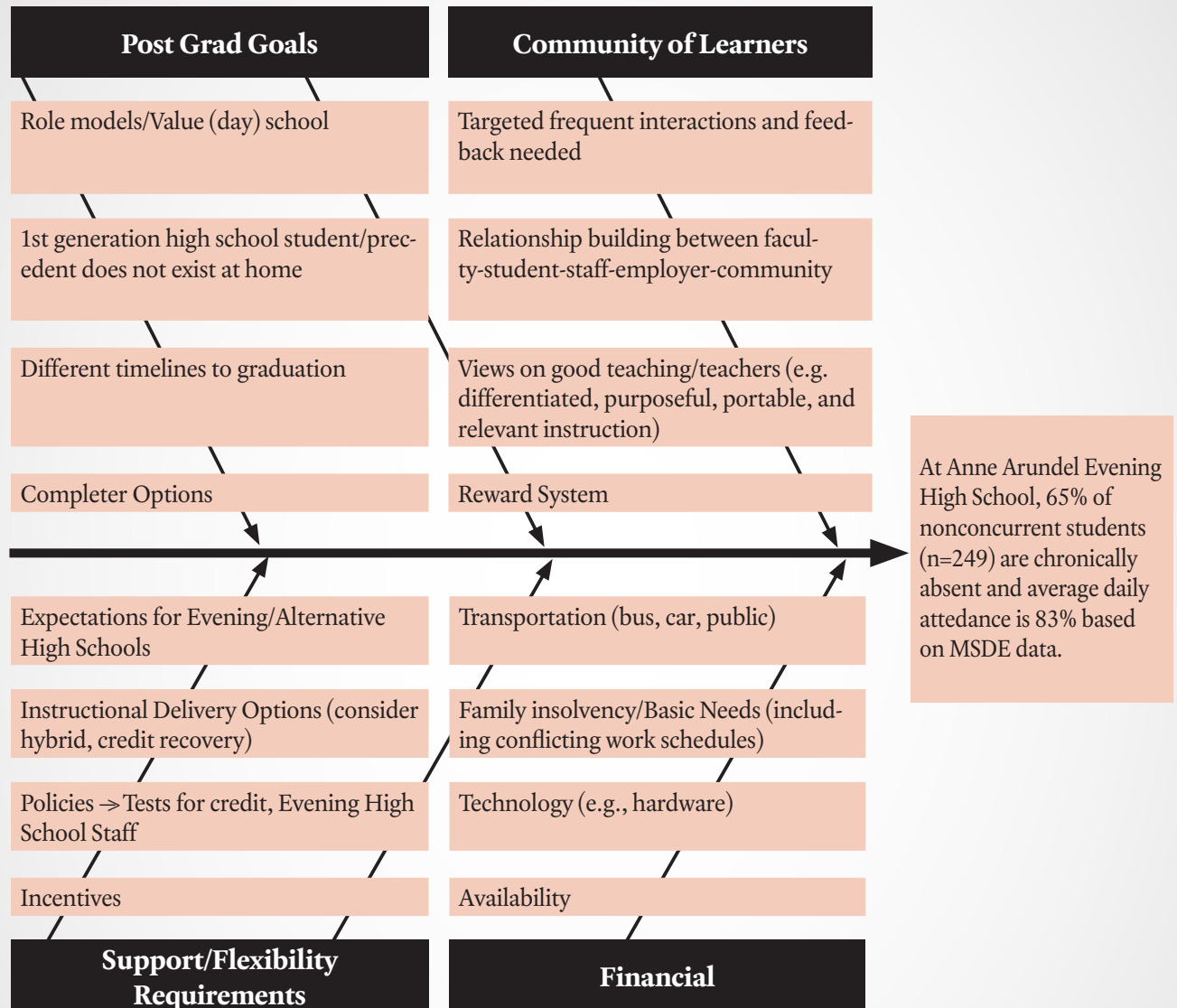
Areas of significant engagement around the problem statement include financial challenges, support and flexibility of requirements, post-graduation goals, and creation of a community among learners and other stakeholders.

Casual Factors

The "Fishbone" diagram represents the stakeholder group's initial assessment of all of the individual factors contributing to the existence or recurrence of the problem statement.

IV. ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Anne Arundel Evening High School Fishbone: Exploring Causes



IV. ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

Prioritized Root Causes

Following several group exercises, the stakeholder group came to consensus on the priority root causes. These are the causes most critical to addressing the problem based on the criteria of importance, feasibility, and alignment.

Final Output. Prioritized Root Causes:	Ranking
Some students have limited knowledge about the importance of attending and completing high school and how it impacts academic success.	1
Many students struggle with the transition to an alternative evening high school, which requires a sense of belonging and community-building among teachers, faculty, staff, and families.	2

Evidence Base for Prioritized Root Causes

Accountability, School Climate and Community

Successful attendance and successful attendance policies involve families and the broader community (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). The practices and context of school characteristics may serve as a predictor of how a school is functioning. Community-building in secondary schools (middle to high school) provides a sense of belongingness (Faulkner, Cook, Thompson, Howell, Rintamaa, & Miller, 2017), which is linked to academic achievement. In order to build community, schools must have transparent processes and clear communication with stakeholders (Chen et al., 2016). For culturally and linguistically diverse schools, this transparency includes multilingual communication about policies for their stakeholders, involving not only students but also their families (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002). Chronic absenteeism is 15 percent less likely for students who are identified as English learners when compared to students who are not (USDE, 2019).

Making attendance a school community priority with clear policies that monitor absenteeism and encourage attendance promotes a positive school culture and environment (Creghan & Adair-Creghan, 2015; USDE, 2019; Van Eck, Johnson, Bettencourt, & Johnson, 2017). Students in schools with a positive culture and climate outperform students in other schools (Faulkner et al., 2017).

Attendance and School Achievement

Peer relationships, school climate, and curricula are some of the malleable factors contributing to chronic absenteeism (Creghan & Adair-Creghan, 2015; Van Eck et al., 2017). Research suggests that investing in out-of-school support programs (O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2014), integrating problem-based learning (Creghan & Adair-Creghan, 2015), and distinguishing between excused and unexcused absences (Chen et al., 2016) are critical components to consider when seeking to understand chronic absenteeism. A commitment to a clear attendance policy includes sharing the correlation to student achievement. Schools with large populations of first-generation college students may require additional emphasis on post-graduation possibilities.

Students should be informed of not only what the attendance rules are, but why attendance matters to impact student interest and motivation to attend school. Schools with large populations of first-generation college students, and students from lower income areas, should increase knowledge and awareness of routes to high school completion, its benefits, and its implications (Cataldi, Bennett, & Chen, 2018; Creghan & Adair-Creghan, 2015). Students may require knowledge about options after high school so that they are college and career ready.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Recommendations for Evidence-Based Improvement

Final recommendations for this report have been developed by the University of Maryland College Park in consultation with RCA facilitators and leaders at MSDE. Recommendations were developed using the following process:

- Reviewing the ideas, notes, and stakeholder perspectives gathered throughout the Root Cause Analysis process;
- Conducting a scan of the research literature related to the problem statement and prioritized root causes identified throughout the process. While a comprehensive research analysis was outside the scope of this project, the team

reviewed research using the standards of evidence model outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to offer research that had moderate or strong evidence of effectiveness (Level 2 or Level 1 on the ESSA framework);

- Compiling, organizing and categorizing over 150 recommendations submitted by RCA facilitators.

These recommendations are offered by the University of Maryland College Park in consultation with MSDE. They represent only a portion of the potential strategies and interventions that will become a part of the school's three-year improvement plan developed in concert with the MSDE Title I office.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

RECOMMENDATION	Domain of Rapid School Improvement ¹
<p>Adopt a school-wide progress monitoring system that uses data to track key academic indicators in order to identify students who are at risk of falling off track.</p> <p>Monitoring and integrating multiple aspects of student data that can be used to direct implementation of student support strategies is an essential foundation for an effective progress monitoring system. Often schools establish inquiry teams and monitoring cycles to address monitoring needs, which include attendance, student performance at progress reporting periods, and on-track status for graduation (Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2009). A comprehensive and well-coordinated monitoring system of multiple indicators helps produce a complete picture of a student's progress that can then aid in predicting student failure before it occurs. The following steps should be considered in establishing an effective data management system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze attendance data to identify students who are at risk of chronic absenteeism. Create a school-wide attendance action plan that establishes a set of prescribed interventions and actions for teachers when students are absent and provides incentives for students with favorable attendance records. Establish a team to monitor the four-year graduation cohort list for each grade level and identify those students at risk of not graduating on time. Fully utilize an early warning system and develop an action plan to address all students who are off track for on-time graduation and any students who are listed on the cohort but are non-attending. Research shows that identifying potential high school dropouts through an early warning data system can have a positive impact on graduation rates. 	<p><i>Culture Shift</i></p> <p><i>Turnaround Leadership</i></p>

¹The Maryland State Department of Education uses the Center on School Turnaround at WestEd's Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement as a framework for continuous improvement. The framework identifies four areas as central to rapid and significant improvement: turnaround leadership, talent development, instructional transformation, and culture shift. The recommendations in this report are aligned to the four domains as a way to organize and frame the improvement efforts. For more information: <https://centeronschoolturnaround.org>.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

RECOMMENDATION	Domain of Rapid School Improvement ¹
<p>Develop or expand a mentor program to ensure every student at risk of failure has an advocate in the school.</p> <p>Pairing students with a mentor or advocate gives at-risk students a positive role model in the school who can provide progress checks against key academic benchmark and graduation requirements, as well as serve as a conduit for referring students to other services as needed. Programs that provide this level of individual monitoring and feedback have been documented to have positive effects on school persistence for low-income urban students (Harris & Kiyama, 2015; Mitchell & Stewart, 2012). This type of intervention has also been demonstrated to be effective for students with disabilities (Pyle & Wexler, 2012).</p> <p>Built into this recommendation is the need to develop an accessible list of support services that mentors can use as a resource bank with students, as it is not reasonable to expect that mentors are able to combat all student needs. Such mentoring programs should focus on authentic goal setting for students that is related to college and career readiness. In addition, researchers recognize that effective mentoring and advocacy require orientation and training for those who serve in the role as mentors, including teachers and other school staff (Dynarski et al., 2008; Rumberger et al., 2017).</p>	<p><i>Culture Shift</i></p> <p><i>Turnaround Leadership</i></p>

The Maryland State Department of Education uses the Center on School Turnaround at WestEd's Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement as a framework for continuous improvement. The framework identifies four areas as central to rapid and significant improvement: turnaround leadership, talent development, instructional transformation, and culture shift. The recommendations in this report are aligned to the four domains as a way to organize and frame the improvement efforts. For more information: <https://centeronschoolturnaround.org>.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

RECOMMENDATION	Domain of Rapid School Improvement ¹
<p>Expand career-related curricular programming, pathways, and opportunities for students.</p> <p>In an effort to make learning more relevant to students, schools should deliberately align curriculum and program offerings to the worlds of work and academics. Effective strategies include career electives, career academies, and more fully developed career pathways or certificate programs (Dynarski et al., 2008; Rumberger et al., 2017; Pyle & Wexler, 2012). Many of the research studies in dropout prevention agree that the integration of career and technical education with academic content is a proven strategy to engage students in school (Loera, Nakamoto, Oh, & Rueda, 2013; Plank, DeLuca, & Estacion, 2008).</p> <p>We recommend expanding access to high-quality career and technical education programs, such as P-TECH, Apprenticeship Maryland, and National Academy Foundation (NAF academies). More robust partnerships with local businesses should be explored from which the school can then develop collaborative learning experiences, career or resume coaching, job shadowing, and internships and mentorships. Additionally, AAEHS can expand its career education offerings to include the integration of project-based learning assessments, exposure to a variety of occupational fields, and guided practice opportunities in developing skills that can be applied in vocational settings.</p>	<p><i>Instructional Transformation</i></p>

VI. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Collaboratively with the Local School System (LSS) and stakeholders, Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) school teams will develop intervention plans that identify SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) intervention goals with measurable annual outcomes and progress indicators that will guide schools toward meeting annual targets and exit criteria in three years. The outcomes of the root cause analysis must be used to inform the development of the SMART intervention goals

and identification of evidence-based strategies included in the intervention plan. Any evidence-based strategy must meet the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) evidence requirements (level 1, 2, or 3). Intervention Plans will be approved by the school, LSS, and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), and monitored annually by staff from the LSS and the MSDE. Additional information and resources are available on the MSDE Resource Hub. <https://www.marylandresourcehub.com/>

APPENDICES

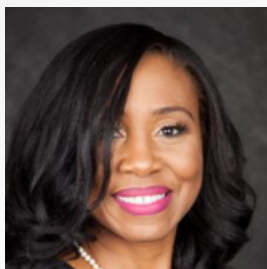
Appendix A: List of Stakeholders

Name	Position
Kimberly Buckheit	MSDE Program Specialist II
Nancy Breslin	Special Educator
Edwin Copeland	Guidance/Counseling
Patrick Crain	Director of Alternative Education
Sonja Davenport	Administrator, Severna Park Campus
Jason Dykstra	Executive Director of Data
William Fidyk	Teacher, English
Nelson Horine	Principal of Evening High Schools
Rebecca Hutchinson	eSchool Representative
Kim Kavanaugh	Administrative Assistant
Bernice Kosla	Teacher, Social Studies
Gordon Lipton	Testing Coordinator
Kevin Randolph	Pupil Personnel Worker
Jesse Reiger	Special Educator
Sidney Shores	Teacher, Social Studies
Patricia Suriano	Administrator, Annapolis Campus

APPENDICES

Appendix B: Bios of Facilitators

Dr. Ebony Terrell Shockley is an Associate Clinical Professor and Director of the Office of Teacher and Leader Education for the Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership at UMD. Dr. Shockley researches under-represented students and their teachers in STEM, exceptional education, and literacy contexts using sociocultural and culturally responsive frameworks. A component of her work includes directing the Master of Education with Certification program. At UMD she teaches content area reading, science methods, digital literacy, and an improvement science doctoral course. Prior to working at UMD, she served as the Professional Development Chair for Maryland Society for Educators of Technology for several years and traveled around the state leading professional development sessions to school districts. Her K-12 experience includes working in a large diverse school district where she taught biology, ESOL, and reading, including in an alternative evening high school. She has also served as an administrator and Instructional specialist for high schools and Title I schools.



Dr. Kelli Cummings is an Assistant Professor of Special Education at UMD. Her research interests lie at the intersection of data-based decision-making and intensive intervention planning. She conducts studies to evaluate and improve the reliability, validity, and accuracy of assessment tools that are used to evaluate student progress. She also focuses on areas of school improvement (e.g., multi-tiered system of supports) in academics and behavior. All of her work is guided through the lens of implementation science. Even efficacious practices that do not take into account school need, education policy, or the infrastructure required to implement the practice at scale are likely to result in low levels of adoption. Additionally, interventions without formal mechanisms for data-based decision-making are less likely to be sustained and reach students from diverse backgrounds. Given recent shifts in policy, funding, and practice-based educational research priorities, Dr. Cummings believes it is critical that special education leaders are equipped to conduct research and develop practices that are scalable, and lead to socially important, sustainable outcomes.



APPENDICES

Appendix C: Citations of research

- Bettini, E., Mason-Williams, L., & Barber, B. (2019). Access to qualified, well-supported principals across alternative educational settings and neighborhood schools. *The Journal of Special Education*, (2019)2. doi:10.1177/0022466919831302
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