DC PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

November 29, 2016

Elizabeth Heider, Board Chair
Excel Academy Public Charter School
2601 Martin Luther King, Jr., Ave SE
Washington, DC 20020

Dear Ms. Heider,

The DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews (QSRs) to gather and document evidence to support school oversight. According to the School Reform Act § 38-1802.11, DC PCSB shall monitor the progress of each school in meeting the goals and student academic achievement expectations specified in the school's charter. Your school was selected to undergo a QSR during the 2016-17 school year for the following reasons:

- School eligible for 10-year Charter Review during 2017-18 school year
- School designated Focus or Priority by Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

Qualitative Site Review Report
A QSR team conducted on-site reviews of Excel Academy Public Charter School between September 26, 2016 and October 7, 2016. Enclosed is the team's report. You will find that the QSR report focuses primarily on the following areas: charter mission and goals, implementation of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) strategies, classroom environments, and instructional delivery.

We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that you and your staff gave the monitoring team in conducting the QSR at Excel Academy Public Charter School.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: Deborah Lockhart, CEO
Dana Bogle, Principal

Qualitative Site Review Report

Date: November 29, 2016

Campus Information

Campus Name: Excel Academy Public Charter School
Ward: 8
Grade levels: PK3- 8

Qualitative Site Review Information

Reasons for visit:

- School eligible for 10-year Charter Review during 2017-18 school year
- School designated Focus or Priority by Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

Two-week window: September 26, 2016- October 7, 2016
QSR team members: 5 DC PCSB staff members including a special education specialist, and 2 consultants
Number of observations: 42
Total enrollment: 704
Students with Disabilities enrollment: 53
English Language Learners enrollment: 0

Summary

Excel Academy Public Charter School's (Excel PCS) mission is to provide prekindergarten through eighth grade girls a solid academic foundation and enrichment opportunities to prepare them to succeed in high school and college and to develop the skills and confidence they need to make healthy, positive lifestyle choices. The school offers a weekly character education block called "My Sister, My Self" that integrates the meaning of each of the school's values, also known as IDEALS: Integrity, Discipline, Enjoyment, Achievement, Leadership, and Sisterhood. Students have access to a variety of enrichment classes including art, digital literacy, and dance.

During the QSR two-week window, the team used the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to examine classroom environments and instructional delivery (see Appendix I). The QSR team scored 73% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Classroom Environment domain. Students displayed enthusiasm for learning and often encouraged one another. Teachers successfully managed classroom procedures to maximize learning time in the majority of observations. Most students were respectful of their teachers and peers. The QSR team scored 54% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain. Some teachers asked questions designed to promote deeper thinking and learning activities promoted high levels of engagement. Other teachers asked questions that only required recall answers and student participation was limited.

DC PCSB staff reviewed board meeting minutes from Excel Academy PCS' Board of Trustees meeting on August 20, 2016. A quorum was present. During the meeting, the Board received an introduction of Mrs. Dana Bogle, Excel Academy PCS' new principal. The board approved new ELA curriculum and discussed preliminary year-end financial statements.

According to the 2014 Memorandum of Understanding that DC PCSB has with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) around implementation of the 2012 Waiver to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA Waiver), DC PCSB must "Ensure that public charter schools identified as Focus or Priority are providing interventions and supports to students and their teachers consistent with that school's Intervention and Support Plan" (p.5). Excel Academy Public Charter School was identified as a focus school for the performance of its special education students in math during school year 2014-15 based on its DC CAS performance during the 2013-14 school year. As part of this designation, Excel PCS developed intervention strategies to address its underperforming subgroup.

While the ESEA Waiver expired on August 1, 2016, Focus and Priority schools are still required to implement Intervention and Support Plans as the state transitions to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) during school year 2016-17. OSSE granted certain flexibilities, including flexibility from intervention and support plan monitoring, to Focus and Priority Schools that met specific performance thresholds[1] based on 2016 PARCC results. Excel PCS did not meet these minimum performance thresholds,[2] thus DC PCSB is required to continue monitoring the school's implementation of its intervention and support plan during school year 2016-17.

Prior to the two-week window the school submitted responses to an ESEA Questionnaire focusing on instructional improvement strategies that observers could see in classrooms. The school explained that DC PCSB observers should see: (1) co-teaching and differentiation in math classes; (2) standards-based instruction that is aligned to the Common Core evidenced by modeled math strategies, checks for understanding that occur early and throughout instruction, flexible groupings to provide students with targeted instruction, appropriate pacing, guided practice, exit tickets, and posted exemplary work; (3) math supports for special education in the general education, pull-out and intervention group settings; (4) technology class for students to learn PARCC-skills and practice math fluency.

Co-Teaching and Differentiation in Math Classes:

DC PCSB observed co-teachers in most classes. In two observations co-teachers pulled small groups for guided practice as students cycled through centers. Other co-teachers monitored student progress and gave individual feedback, saying phrases such as "Go back and check your work here." Some co-teachers only monitored behavior, reminding students to fix their posture and focus on the learning task, saying phrases such as "Keep

[1] Flexibilities will be granted for eligible schools in which:

- ✓ At least 25 percent of students in the school performed at level 3 or above (for Focus schools this includes only students in the identified subgroup and subject area);
- ✓ At least 5 percent of students in the school performed at level 4 or above (for Focus schools this includes only students in the identified subgroup and subject area).

SOURCE: Letter from OSSE to Excel Academy PCS dated April 1, 2016

[2] Nine percent of Excel Academy PCS's special education subgroup performed at level 3 or above on the 2016 PARCC math assessment and zero percent of the school's special education subgroup performed at a level 4 or above, making the school ineligible for flexibility from monitoring.

your feet flat on the floor" and "Keep going. You can do it." DC PCSB observed minimal differentiation in math classes. In a few observations the learning process was differentiated through centers. Teachers explained the learning target to a small group of students in centers rather than the whole group. The math content was not differentiated. Students were given the same assignment or worksheet in all observations.

Standards-Based Curriculum:

Excel PCS chose new curriculum as part of their ESEA Turnaround Plan. DC PCSB observed Eureka math in grades kindergarten through eighth grade, Journeys in Kindergarten through fifth grade English Language Arts (ELA) and Collections in sixth through eighth grade ELA.

Math Supports for Special Education:

DC PCSB did not observe a math pull-out session; however, DC PCSB observed special educators push-in to math classes. In most observations special educators circulated the classroom and provided individual feedback to students, asking questions about their answers and reminding them to stay on task.

Technology Class:

DC PCSB observed three digital literacy classes. In each class students worked on ELA using Achieve 3000. In one math class observation, students worked on computers to complete a diagnostic test. DC PCSB did not observe any computer-based math fluency programs in technology class or in the core math classes.

Special Education

Prior to the two-week window, Excel PCS provided answers to specific questions posed by DC PCSB regarding the provision of instruction to students with disabilities in the Special Education Questionnaire.

- The school indicated that special education teachers pull out students to provide special education services. The special education specialist observed three pull-out small group sessions focused on reading fluency and comprehension.

- The school stated that the push-in model allows both a general education and special education teacher to collaborate together to provide instruction and academic supports to students with and without disabilities. DC PCSB observed three push-in sessions. Both educators shared the instructional role and provided support to all of the students in their classes.

- The school indicated that special and general educators plan together on a weekly basis. In the two of the three co-taught classes teachers collaborated and had positive rapport. Responsibility and ownership over instruction appeared equitable and consistent between both educators.

- The school also noted that informal assessments, hand signals, and checks for understanding are used in assessing student understanding. DC PCSB saw the following strategies in special education observations: redirection, scaffolding techniques, overhead projectors and videos for visual supports, and repetition of directions and information.

CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

This table summarizes qualitative evidence related to the goals and academic achievement expectations as detailed in the school's charter and subsequent charter amendments. Some charter goals can only be measured quantitatively. The Qualitative Site Review (QSR) team recorded evidence of what the school is doing on the ground to meet these quantitative goals. During the 5-year charter review, 10-year charter review, or 15-year charter renewal process, DC PCSB staff will use quantitative data to assess whether the school met those goals.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
Mission: Excel Academy Public Charter School will provide pre-school through eighth grade girls a solid academic foundation and enrichment opportunities to prepare them to succeed in high school and college and to develop the skills and confidence they need to make healthy, positive lifestyle choices.	The QSR team saw evidence that students at Excel PCS are working to develop the skills and confidence they need to make healthy, positive lifestyle choices. Many celebrations of academic progress and supporting one another as "sisters" took place over the two-week window. During the morning announcements the principal led the students in a chant, such as, "I am proud because I am a girl, we are strong, and we will change the world. "Classrooms and hallways had inspirational displays such as "Black Girl Magic" and exemplary student work. The principal invited all interested students to hear a female doctor speak about how she made her dreams come true. Teachers gave praise to students who made good choices with phrases such as, "Wow! You did that with such integrity," and "Way to care about the people around you." Students demonstrated their healthy positive life choices through positive behavior, which was mostly appropriate and. There was mixed evidence that all teachers were providing a solid academic foundation and enrichment activities. Most teachers ensured there was little to no loss of instructional time and students were generally productive working in groups and independently. In about half of the observations teachers asked questions designed to promote higher-level thinking, while in the other half, questions mainly

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	required recall. Academic tasks in about half of the classrooms allowed for high levels of student engagement. In the other half student participation was largely passive. Some students were unable to follow the lesson and teachers were not able to successfully include them in the work.
PMF Indicator #1: Student Progress – Academic Improvement over time PMF Indicator #2: Student Achievement – Meeting or exceeding academic standards	DC PCSB observed all ELA teachers using Journeys curriculum in Kindergarten through fifth grade, and Collections in sixth through eighth grade. In a few observations teachers used reading centers during ELA in which students rotated through independent reading and guided reading with a teacher. A few teachers ensured students were reading at appropriate reading levels and made adjustments when necessary. Overall ELA instruction was weaker than math. Most teachers did not effectively model reading and writing strategies and students had difficulty following directions and in some cases, did not follow along with the lesson.
PMF Indicator #1: Student Progress – Academic Improvement over time *Effective instruction supporting student academic progress in math* PMF Indicator #2: Student Achievement – Meeting or exceeding academic standards	DC PCSB observed all math teachers using Eureka math curriculum in kindergarten through eighth grade. DC PCSB observed effective engagement strategies in math, including skip counting, discussion about how students solved for math problems, and an aerobic activity that reinforced times tables. Students in two observations led the checking of answers after "Mad Minute," an activity where students aimed to solve as many times table questions as they could in one minute. In many observations teachers circulated to help students who were stuck on a given problem and gave tokens for good behavior and focused work.
	DC PCSB saw one observation in which third graders were engaged in a writing

Mission and Goals	Evidence
PMF Indicator # 3: Gateway – Outcomes in key subjects that predict future educational success	assignment. In another observation students answered text-based questions about their reading in a whole group setting. DC PCSB saw one observation in which a teacher modeled a reading strategy, but in most observations there was a lack of clear directions and too quick of an instructional pace. Some students were not able to follow along and did not participate in the ELA activities. DC PCSB observed Eureka math in eighth grade. In one observation eighth graders completed a gallery walk that prompted them to complete simple math calculations. In another observation students completed short word problems. DC PCSB did not observe performance tasks in eighth grade math. Overall math instruction was stronger than ELA. Teachers engaged the students in a variety of problem-solving strategies and both teachers and students had opportunities to provide feedback in math observations.
PMF Indicator #4: School Environment – Predictors of future student progress and achievement	**In-seat attendance on the days the QSR team conducted observations:** **Visit 1:** September 27, 2016- 93.80% **Visit 2:** September 29, 2016- 90.60% **Visit 3:** October 4, 2016- 92.60% **Visit 4:** October 5, 2016- 91.80%

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT[3]

This table summarizes the school's performance on the Classroom Environments domain of the rubric during the unannounced visits. The label definitions for classroom observations of "distinguished," "proficient," "basic," and "unsatisfactory" are those from the Danielson framework. The QSR team scored 73% of classrooms as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Classroom Environment domain.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport	The QSR team scored 85% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Interactions between teachers and students were friendly and polite. Students said "please" and "thank you" to their teachers and peers. In a pre-kindergarten class students were able to work out a disagreement during center time with guidance from the teacher. The teacher said, "Are you okay now? It sounds like you are solving the problem." In another observation a student entered a classroom after instruction had begun and was greeted warmly by the teacher, "Hello, how are you? Ready to begin centers? You came at the perfect time for centers!"	Distinguished	5%
		Proficient	80%
	The QSR team scored 13% of the observations as basic in this component. In one observation the students purposefully distracted the learning process, loudly coughing and laughing each time the teacher attempted to give a direction. The teacher responded, "If you think this is so funny, why don't you tell me which numbers to divide?" In another observation a student put down her peer who had won an award for achieving her growth goal on Achieve 3000, laughing and saying "What? How did she get it?"	Basic	13%

[3] Teachers may be observed more than once by different review team members.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored less than 10% observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	3%
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The QSR team scored 63% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. In most observations students participated in lessons and showed pride in their work. One student jumped up and exclaimed, "I did it!" upon finishing her work at an art center. The teacher responded by saying, "Wow! You worked so hard and you did it." In most observations teachers and students demonstrated passion for the subject matter and teachers held high expectations for all students. Teachers expected all students to participate, saying "Let's do it again. I realized we didn't do it all together."	Distinguished	3%
		Proficient	60%
	The QSR team scored 33% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations teachers did not include every student in the learning task. In one observation students had to cut out sentences and put them in sequential order and many students did not understand the task and ended up playing with the scissors. In some observations the teachers only assisted some students. Some students had their heads down, closed their books, and did not write on the paper to practice words while other students moved through a series of activities. The teacher did not encourage or redirect the disengaged students.	Basic	33%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored less than 10% observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	5%
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team scored 73% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Students responded to attention-getting signals such as claps, timers, chimes, and songs. Students knew the procedures and reacted positively when prompted. In one distinguished observation students put their names on the board for a bathroom break and self-monitored by taking turns. In another observation students passed out snacks without direction from the teacher. The students ate snack while the teacher played videos that reviewed the prior day's lesson. One student whispered to another, "Let's be first to clean up," and proceeded to get a trash bin without prompting.	Distinguished	8%
		Proficient	65%
	The QSR team scored 28% of the observations as basic in this component. Several teachers had to repeat directions multiple times. In one observation the teacher repeated a direction five times and a student responded by calling out, "Say what?" Some students required multiple redirections and asked for clarification about what they should be doing after the teacher gave directions. In some observations teachers lost instructional time because of unclear procedures. One classroom took over five minutes to take out a worksheet in their desk because students were confused about where to find it.	Basic	28%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Managing Student Behavior	The QSR team scored 73% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Overall student behavior was appropriate and teachers effectively managed minor behavior infractions through redirection. Many teachers used scholar points and color charts to reinforce positive behavior. Teachers circulated the classroom and narrated positive behavior by saying phrases such as, "Thank you for raising a silent hand!"	Distinguished	10%
		Proficient	63%
	The QSR team scored 25% of the observations as basic in this component. In one observation student threw small bits of paper at another student and repeatedly slapped another student's desk. The other students ignored her but she continued to be disruptive and the adults in the room did not intervene. In another observation a significant loss of instructional time resulted from students intentionally coughing over the teacher's voice. One student said, "This class is dumb. Remind me to be absent tomorrow."	Basic	25%
	The QSR team scored less than 10% observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	3%

INSTRUCTION

This table summarizes the school's performance on the Instruction domain of the rubric during the unannounced visits. The label definitions for classroom observations of "distinguished," "proficient," "basic," and "unsatisfactory" are those from the Danielson framework. The QSR team scored 54% of classrooms as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Instruction domain.

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Communicating with Students	The QSR team scored 57% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Teachers communicated clear directions and students demonstrated their understanding. One teacher modeled how to read from left to right by putting her finger on a sentence and tracing it before asking the students to do the same. In a few observations teachers stated the reason for completing a learning task. Another teacher prefaced a Reader's Theater activity by stating, "We are going to continue practicing our reading. We practice so our reading	Distinguished	8%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	can be smooth." She then modeled dramatic reading and said, "We keep reading so we can get better and better." Students and teachers in these observations used rich age-appropriate language. In one pre-kindergarten observation students referred to different parts of the books they were reading: spine, back cover, front cover, and page numbers. In another observation the teacher showed the students an example of what their finished product would look like. The teacher slowly explained each step and concluded with, "Do you all understand?" In one distinguished observation, a science teacher encouraged students to share their experiment results by saying, "This is what scientists do. They share their data and ask questions about why they found inconsistencies."	Proficient	49%
	The QSR team scored 38% of the observations as basic in this component. In some observations the instructional purpose of the lesson was unclear. Students knew how to complete the task, but it was not clear why they were asked to complete it. In one observation students were assigned tasks in small groups. The teacher did not give directions for how to complete the task and when work time began three out of four groups did not begin working. In one observation students asked the teacher to repeat the directions and the teacher responded, "I'm hearing the same complaints over and over again."	Basic	38%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored less than 10% of observations as basic in this component.	Unsatisfactory	5%
Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques	The QSR team scored 52% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. In these observations teachers asked students to explain their thinking or add on to another student's thinking. A teacher said, "How did you get to that answer?" and "Do you agree with your peer? What would you like to add?" In one observation students answered questions related to text in a large group. The teacher posed open-ended questions such as, "What happened on this page that is most important?" Some teachers called on students who were not raising their hands or used random name generators to ask questions.	Distinguished	3%
		Proficient	49%
	The QSR team scored 46% of the observations as basic in this component. Questioning was largely recall in these observations, such as, "Who is the main character?" In one observation the teacher stated the answer to each question and then asked the class to chorally repeat the answer. There was limited participation in several classrooms; the teacher only called on a cluster of students to answer questions.	Basic	46%
	The QSR team scored less than 10% of observations as basic in this component.	Unsatisfactory	3%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team scored 58% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. In these observations students enthusiastically participated in the learning tasks. Pacing was appropriate with enough time for all students to participate. In some observations students had choice in how to complete work in various centers. In one observation students rotated through activities such as categorizing letter sounds and reading on individual reading levels. In one center a student was not reading and the other students in her group suggested she sit out for a minute and then come back ready to work. In two observations students who finished early were given an extension task.	Distinguished	3%
		Proficient	55%
	The QSR team scored 43% of the observations as basic in this component. Teachers did not ask questions to extend student thinking in these observations. Some students did not participate in discussions and teacher attempts to engage all students were unsuccessful. In one observation students were given options for how to practice their spelling words, however when prompted most students did not participate and a few had their heads down on their desks.	Basic	43%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Using Assessment in Instruction	The QSR team scored 55% of the observations as proficient in this component. Teachers monitored student understanding by circulating the classroom and looking at student work while asking questions to check for understanding. Some teachers assessed each student by asking for individual responses. In a few classes students completed exit tickets at the end of class or were asked to share what they had learned. In one observation a teacher ensured that each student could identify three letters and the sound the letters made before moving on to a new group. One teacher asked the class to count to six in their own way. She then circulated to each student and gave individual feedback.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	55%
	The QSR team scored 43% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations teacher only assessed some students and in some of them, there was no evidence that students understood the rubric for a given assignment. Feedback in these observations was global or meant to keep students on task, rather than provide content support. One teacher summarized the previous lesson without student input. Another teacher answered each question about vowel sounds instead of prompting the students to answer on their own.	Basic	43%
	The QSR team scored less than 10% of observations as basic in this component.	Unsatisfactory	3%

APPENDIX I: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT OBSERVATION RUBRIC

The Classroom Environment	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport	Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students, are negative or inappropriate and characterized by sarcasm, putdowns, or conflict.	Classroom interactions are generally appropriate and free from conflict but may be characterized by occasional displays of insensitivity.	Classroom interactions reflect general warmth and caring, and are respectful of the cultural and developmental differences among groups of students.	Classroom interactions are highly respectful, reflecting genuine warmth and caring toward individuals. Students themselves ensure maintenance of high levels of civility among member of the class.
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The classroom does not represent a culture for learning and is characterized by low teacher commitment to the subject, low expectations for student achievement, and little student pride in work.	The classroom environment reflects only a minimal culture for learning, with only modest or inconsistent expectations for student achievement, little teacher commitment to the subject, and little student pride in work. Both teacher and students are performing at the minimal level to "get by."	The classroom environment represents a genuine culture for learning, with commitment to the subject on the part of both teacher and students, high expectations for student achievement, and student pride in work.	Students assumes much of the responsibility for establishing a culture for learning in the classroom by taking pride in their work, initiating improvements to their products, and holding the work to the highest standard. Teacher demonstrates as passionate commitment to the subject.
Managing Classroom Procedures	Classroom routines and procedures are either nonexistent or inefficient, resulting in the loss of much instruction time.	Classroom routines and procedures have been established but function unevenly or inconsistently, with some loss of instruction time.	Classroom routines and procedures have been established and function smoothly for the most part, with little loss of instruction time.	Classroom routines and procedures are seamless in their operation, and students assume considerable responsibility for their smooth functioning.
Managing Student Behavior	Student behavior is poor, with no clear expectations, no monitoring of student behavior, and inappropriate response to student misbehavior.	Teacher makes an effort to establish standards of conduct for students, monitor student behavior, and respond to student misbehavior, but these efforts are not always successful.	Teacher is aware of student behavior, has established clear standards of conduct, and responds to student misbehavior in ways that are appropriate and respectful of the students.	Student behavior is entirely appropriate, with evidence of student participation in setting expectations and monitoring behavior. Teacher's monitoring of student behavior is subtle and preventive, and teachers' response to student misbehavior is sensitive to individual student needs.

APPENDIX II: INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Instruction	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Communicating with Students	Teacher's oral and written communication contains errors or is unclear or inappropriate to students. Teacher's purpose in a lesson or unit is unclear to students. Teacher's explanation of the content is unclear or confusing or uses inappropriate language.	Teacher's oral and written communication contains no errors, but may not be completely appropriate or may require further explanations to avoid confusion. Teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose, with limited success. Teacher's explanation of the content is uneven; some is done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.	Teacher communicates clearly and accurately to students both orally and in writing. Teacher's purpose for the lesson or unit is clear, including where it is situation within broader learning. Teacher's explanation of content is appropriate and connects with students' knowledge and experience.	Teacher's oral and written communication is clear and expressive, anticipating possible student misconceptions. Makes the purpose of the lesson or unit clear, including where it is situated within broader learning, linking purpose to student interests. Explanation of content is imaginative, and connects with students' knowledge and experience. Students contribute to explaining concepts to their peers.
Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques	Teacher makes poor use of questioning and discussion techniques, with low-level questions, limited student participation, and little true discussion.	Teacher's use of questioning and discussion techniques is uneven with some high-level question; attempts at true discussion; moderate student participation.	Teacher's use of questioning and discussion techniques reflects high-level questions, true discussion, and full participation by all students.	Students formulate may of the high-level questions and assume responsibility for the participation of all students in the discussion.
Engaging Students in Learning	Students are not at all intellectually engaged in significant learning, as a result of inappropriate activities or materials, poor representations of content, or lack of lesson structure.	Students are intellectually engaged only partially, resulting from activities or materials or uneven quality, inconsistent representation of content or uneven structure of pacing.	Students are intellectually engaged throughout the lesson, with appropriate activities and materials, instructive representations of content, and suitable structure and pacing of the lesson.	Students are highly engaged throughout the lesson and make material contribution to the representation of content, the activities, and the materials. The structure and pacing of the lesson allow for student reflection and closure.
Using Assessment in Instruction	Students are unaware of criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated, and do not engage in self-assessment or monitoring. Teacher does not monitor student learning in the curriculum, and feedback to students is of poor quality and in an untimely manner.	Students know some of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated, and occasionally assess the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards. Teacher monitors the progress of the class as a whole but elicits no diagnostic information; feedback to students is uneven and inconsistent in its timeliness.	Students are fully aware of the criteria and performance standards by which their work will be evaluated, and frequently assess and monitor the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards. Teacher monitors the progress of groups of students in the curriculum, making limited use of diagnostic prompts to elicit information; feedback is timely, consistent, and of high quality.	Students are fully aware of the criteria and standards by which their work will be evaluated, have contributed to the development of the criteria, frequently assess and monitor the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards, and make active use of that information in their learning. Teacher actively and systematically elicits diagnostic information from individual students regarding understanding and monitors progress of individual students; feedback is timely, high quality, and students use feedback in their learning.