PCSB

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

March 8, 2013

Vito Germinario, Board Chair
Excel Academy Public Charter School
2501 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20020

Dear Mr. Germinario:

The Public Charter School Board (PCSB) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews to gather and document authentic evidence to support the oversight of PCSB schools. According to the School Reform Act § 38-1802.11, PCSB shall monitor the progress of each school in meeting student academic achievement expectations specified in the charter granted to such school. Your school was selected to undergo a Qualitative Site Review during the 2012-13 school year for the following reason(s):

- o School eligible for 5-year Charter Review
- o School met less than 30% of targets in Accountability Plan during the 2010-11 school year

Qualitative Site Review Report
On December 4 and 6, 2012, a Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Excel Academy PCS. The purpose of the site review is for PCSB to gauge the extent to which the school's goals and student academic achievement expectations were evident in the everyday operations of the public charter school. To ascertain this, PCSB staff and consultants evaluated your classroom teaching by using an abridged version of the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* observation rubric. We also visited a parent event, and conducted focus groups with a random selection of students, a group of teachers, and your administrators.

Enclosed is the team's report. You will find that the Qualitative Site Review Report is focused primarily on the following areas: mission/goals of the schools charter, classroom environments, instructional delivery, meeting the needs of all learners, professional development, and school climate.

We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that you and your staff gave the monitoring team in conducting the Qualitative Site Review at Excel Academy PCS. Thank you for your continued cooperation as PCSB makes every effort to ensure that Excel Academy PCS is in compliance with its charter.

Sincerely,

Scott Pearson
Executive Director

Enclosures
cc: Kaye Savage

CHARTER GOALS

This table summarizes the goals that Excel Academy PCS contracted to in its charter and the evidence that the Qualitative Site Review ("QSR") team observed of the school meeting the goal during the Qualitative Site Visit. These are the goals the school indicated that it should be held accountable to.

Goal as Identified by the School	Evidence
Pre-school and pre-kindergarten students are school ready in the language arts.	The QSR team did not observe or discuss preschool or prekindergarten instruction.
Pre-school and pre-kindergarten students are school ready in mathematics.	Since the QSR process focuses on grades K through 12 this year, the QSR team did not observe or discuss preschool or prekindergarten instruction.
Students at each grade level will meet or exceed standards for reading and writing; students will express their ideas orally and in writing.	The QSR team observed leveled small group reading, varied questioning techniques, oral discussion, leveled reading stations, and use of journals to promote the reading/writing connection.
Students at each grade level will be able to use numerical, geometric, and probability concepts to solve challenging problems and will meet or exceed standards for math.	Classroom observations indicated leveled small group math instruction with emphasis on concept development and problem solving. The school has adopted a new math program, increased the length of the math block, and divided students into leveled groups for math instruction. Teacher and administrative focus groups stated that they have adopted the Common Core State Standards as their math content standards.
Students at each grade level will meet or exceed the standards for civics and social studies and use grade appropriate concepts of geography, time, community, and other elements to describe their own and other civilizations and engage in positive civic behavior.	Classroom observations noted that social studies was included in the class schedule and on word walls; however, there was little evidence of social studies instruction or content information on bulletin boards, in centers, or in classroom libraries.
Students at each grade level will demonstrate science proficiency by meeting or exceeding the grade specific standards for science, describing and dissecting the elements of the natural world around them, and taking concrete action toward a healthy self and community.	Classroom observations noted that science was included in some classroom schedules and on word walls; there was no indication of science instruction on bulletin board displays, centers, or classroom libraries. During an observed PE hour, the PE teacher provided students with an understanding of the importance of vegetables in their diets. The teacher referenced a vegetable garden outside the school where students helped to grow vegetables and fruits.
Students learn the IDEALS values (integrity, discipline, enjoyment, achievement, leadership, sisterhood).	The QSR team observed IDEALS value signs posted on classroom walls; in classroom observations and the focus groups, students were able to recite the IDEALS values. The review team observed teachers using IDEALS value words when providing feedback or praise to students (example: "Great job showing leadership!")
Students will participate in regular physical activity, learn to make healthy food choices, practice personal hygiene, and dress appropriately.	Classroom observations revealed a focus on this goal through the physical education program; participation in DC's School Garden Program, Girls on the Run team, in which students participated in a 5K race, and field day activities; and the use of a school uniform.

Goal as Identified by the School	Evidence
Students will learn to become comfortable in a variety of settings through monthly field trips: museums, plays, concerts, and visits to other schools.	Focus groups and school observations revealed that Excel's partnerships, such as those with Stone Ridge of Sacred Heart Academy and the Junior League of Washington, and the school's location in the southeast quadrant of the city allow students to participate in academic and community service activities that benefit the school and their neighborhood at large. The QSR team neither observed nor looked for evidence of students attending museums, plays, concerts, or other schools.
Parents and families will play active roles in their daughters' education.	The administration focus groups and an observation of the December parent meeting demonstrated that the school has adopted an open door policy for parents and families and they have set a goal of 85% parent participation in parent-teacher conferences per advisory. In the first advisory, the administration focus group noted that the school surpassed the goal and achieved 86% parent participation. The staff invites parents and families to dinner meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and planning meetings. Parents also sign their daughters' weekly academic progress reports.
The Board will be an active and responsible governing body, ensuring that the school works toward achieving its mission, that business operations are well managed, and that necessary resources are available to operate the school.	The administration focus group described the Board as being intimately involved in the daily governance and management of the school, including the Board chair visiting the school on a weekly basis. The focus group also revealed that the Board consists of experienced executives that have been supportive of the CEO. The Board has provided resource support as necessary, such as 40 new notebook computers to support the use of technology in standardized testing and 20 tickets to The Nutcracker Suite as positive incentives for the students.
The school will recruit and retain students to maintain enrollment projections.	The administration focus group reported enrollment has been an area of concern. They described the goal of increasing enrollment while working with families to improve satisfaction with the school program and opportunities.
There will be complete special needs assessments and IEP's written for every known classified student by Sept 15 of each year.	The QSR team neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this goal.

SCHOOL MISSION

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on aligning its operations with the mission and goals of its charter.

School Mission	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
The school's mission and educational goals as articulated in the charter application and subsequent amendments are implemented in the day to day operations of the school.	Limited observations of day to day observations as aligned with mission and educational goals by any school stakeholders.	Day to day operations and activities as aligned with mission and educational goals are demonstrated by some staff members.	Day to day operations and activities as aligned with mission and educational goals are demonstrated by nearly all staff members.	Day to day operations and activities as aligned with the mission and educational goals are demonstrated by students throughout the school building.
The Board and school administrators govern and manage in a manner consistent with the school's design and mission.	Administrators and Board members demonstrate a limited understanding of the school's design. Evidence of its use in the management and governance of the school is substantially lacking.	Administrators and Board members demonstrate an adequate understanding of the school's design. There is evidence that understanding of the design is sometimes used to effectively manage and govern the school.	Administrators and Board members demonstrate a good understanding of the school's design. There is evidence that understanding of the design is used to effectively manage and govern the school.	All key administrators and Board members demonstrate an excellent understanding of the school's design. There is significant evidence that understanding of the design is used to effectively manage and govern the school.
The school's curriculum and instruction are aligned with the school's mission and educational goals.	School curriculum and instruction are not aligned with the mission and educational goals and/or are utilized in limited/no classrooms.	School curriculum and instruction are aligned with the mission and educational goals and are utilized in some classrooms.	School curriculum and instruction are aligned with the mission and educational goals and are utilized in most classrooms.	School curriculum and instruction are aligned with the mission and educational goals and are utilized in all classrooms.
The school has met or is making progress toward meeting the educational goals of its charter.	The school demonstrates limited evidence of progress towards monitoring and making progress towards few of the goals of its charter.	The school demonstrates adequate evidence of progress towards monitoring and making progress towards some of the goals of its charter.	The school demonstrates proficient evidence of progress towards monitoring and making progress towards most of the goals of its charter.	The school demonstrates exemplary evidence of progress towards monitoring and making progress towards all of the goals of its charter.

School Mission Summary

According to the charter application, the mission of Excel Academy PCS is to provide a highly structured early childhood program for pre-school through 8th grade girls with a solid academic foundation and enrichment opportunities to prepare young learners to succeed in high school and college, and to develop the skills and confidence they need to make healthy, positive lifestyle choices. The Academy's core IDEALS (Integrity, Discipline, Enjoyment, Achievement, Leadership, and Sisterhood) drive all school activities. This is what PCSB staff and consultants looked for when visiting the classrooms, attending a parent meeting, and conducting the focus groups.

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The QSR review team observed evidence that this mission provides the foundation for the all aspects of Excel PCS's educational program. In our meeting with the administrative team, the principal reported that, initially, the school's primary focus was to provide a "disciplined and joyful learning environment to support great teaching and learning." The team's focus now is on maintaining a positive school culture while developing an outstanding academic program to meet local and state standards. To this end, the school has hired a Chief Academic Officer whose primary responsibility is to oversee the instructional program and support professional development.

During the site visit, the review team observed lessons that suggested collaboration across grade levels and small rotating groups in both reading and mathematics. The administration provides teachers with reading and math mastery classes to supplement classroom instruction in these areas. The administration stated the school has adopted a new reading program and has created a reading schedule that supports level-specific differentiated small group instruction. Additionally, the math instruction has a conceptual focus driven by a block schedule that supports leveled cross-classroom grouping and rotation. The school addressed the needs of diverse learners primarily through inclusion with a special education teacher or paraprofessional providing push-in support in a general education environment. For learners that required more intensive support pursuant to their level of need, pull out services by a special education teacher was provided in both small group or on an individual basis.

The administration focus group described the Board as being intimately involved in the daily governance and management of the school, including the Board chair attending the school on a weekly basis. The focus group also revealed that the Board consists of experienced executives that have been supportive of the CEO. The Board has provided resource support as necessary, such as 40 new notebook computers to support the use of technology in standardized testing and 20 tickets to The Nutcracker Suite as positive incentives for the students.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the Classroom Environments elements of the rubric during the scheduled and unscheduled visits.

Class Environment	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
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.

Class Environment	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
Organizing Physical Space	Teacher makes poor use of the physical environment, resulting in unsafe or inaccessible conditions for some students or a serious mismatch between the furniture arrangement and the lesson activities.	Teacher's classroom is safe, and essential learning is accessible to all students, but the furniture arrangement only partially supports the learning activities.	Teacher's classroom is safe, and learning is accessible to all students; teacher uses physical resources well and ensures that the arrangement of furniture supports the learning activities.	Teacher's classroom is safe, and students contribute to ensuring that the physical environment supports the learning of all students.

Classroom Environments Summary

Approximately 85% of all classroom observations scored proficient or exemplary in elements of the Classroom Environment rubric: Environment of Respect, Culture of Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior and Organization of Physical Space.

Eight-nine percent of teachers observed scored proficient or exemplary on Environment of Respect. In most of the classrooms observed, there was a strong environment of respect among the students and the teachers. Most interactions between students and adults and student to student were positive and respectful ("Thank you", "I like how ___ is quietly working").

Eighty-one percent of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Culture of Learning. The Excel PCS staff provides an environment of high expectations, displaying college crests and provides students with clear plastic book bags and lockers to organize personal belongings and materials. Teachers displayed current student work in some of the classrooms.

Eighty-five percent of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Managing Classroom Procedures. Overall, classrooms had rules and procedure charts displayed and used a common language ("I'm looking for scholars in scholar position") to maintain student attention. There were consistent procedures in place to help students manage transitions such as counting down from 5-4-3-2-1 or the use of timers. This was especially evident as students moved to small group instruction. In many cases, teachers posted classroom objectives and standards in the classroom, which aligned with the lessons, but teachers did not post objectives and standards in all observed classrooms at an eye-level.

Eighty-one percent of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Managing Student Behavior. In those cases where interactions between students were not respectful, the teachers used a variety of strategies to prevent an escalation of negative behavior and re-directed the students. There were also many incentives to encourage good classroom behavior, including a school wide system of stars or checks to promote positive student behavior. Observers saw a few situations where teachers did not immediately address students who were not following the rules, which led to further escalation of misbehavior. The co-teaching structure helped to maintain order in some classrooms with an additional adult

supervising the classroom while the other teacher taught. However, in a majority of classrooms, the co-teaching model consisted of "one teach, one observe," though in some cases, the observing teacher did not appear to be fully engaged with the primary teacher's instruction.

Ninety-three percent of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Organization of Physical Space. Teachers organized classrooms with furniture, such as partner desks and large rugs, and space to facilitate student learning. Each classroom had clearly defined instruction, small group, and independent learning areas for students. While teachers structured seating arrangements in the classrooms to facilitate cooperative learning through turn and talk or think-pair-share, the observers did not witness the full utilization of these arrangements in all classrooms. Smartboards were available in each classroom and teachers generally used them to present lessons or to post warm-up questions. Supplies and instructional materials are easily accessible.

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the Instructional Delivery elements of the rubric during the scheduled and unscheduled visits.

Instructional Delivery	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
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.

Instructional Delivery	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
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.
Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness	Teacher adheres to the instruction plan in spite of evidence of poor student understanding or of students' lack of interest, and fails to respond to students' questions; teacher assumes no responsibility for students' failure.	Teacher demonstrates moderate flexibility and responsiveness to students' needs and interests, and seeks to ensure success of all students.	Teacher seeks ways to ensure successful learning for all students, making adjustments as needed to instruction plans and responding to student interest and questions.	Teacher is highly responsive to students' interests and questions, making major lesson adjustments if necessary, and persists in ensuring the success of all students.

Instructional Delivery Summary

Approximately 65% of classrooms scored proficient or exemplary in areas of Instructional Delivery, including: Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction and Demonstrating Flexibility.

Approximately half of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Communicating with Students. Teachers set clear expectations for students through visual and oral descriptions, made connections to previous lessons, and used academic vocabulary noted from word walls embedded in lessons. The co-teaching structure facilitated small group instruction, a productive learning culture, and collaboration around the diverse needs of the students. However, the review team observed some co-taught lessons where one teacher was missing or disengaged. Further, core content was missing from the instruction in all observations. In a few classrooms, the lesson consisted entirely of the teacher lecturing.

Approximately half of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques. Teachers used a variety of questioning techniques, including open-ended questions and 5 W questions, and probing statements. However, the team observed some classrooms that did not use higher-level critical thinking questions to foster problem solving skills for reading and math.

About eighty percent of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Engaging Students in Learning. Observers noted teachers using verbal reminders, proximity to students to keep them focused during lessons, and multi-modality lessons (clapping, chanting, gesturing, etc.). In some classrooms, students used the Smartboards along with teachers during lessons. Teachers spoke with enthusiasm when introducing ideas or new topics, while also maintaining consistent systems so students knew what to expect. Observers did note a lack of variety in student assignments with the majority of outputs consisting of workbooks and worksheets in almost all observed classrooms.

Three-quarters of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Using Assessment in Instruction. Observers saw some evidence of assessment during small and large group lessons through hand-signals, completion of graphic organizers, and question and answer sessions. However, although feedback was solicited from students through question and answers, not all teachers followed-up and provided feedback in ways that would cultivate higher order thinking.

Approximately sixty percent of teachers scored proficient or exemplary on Demonstrating Flexibility. Observers saw teachers persisting with students that did not know the answer on a number of occasions. Some teachers made connections to previous lessons or relatable topics. In two or three observations, the observer noted minor lesson adjustments being made and creative centers used to support flexibility in the lessons. Because not all classrooms had schedules posted, it was difficult for the observers to determine if the observed lessons were in fact aligned to the schedule for the day.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the elements of the rubric related to meeting the needs of all learners.

All Learners' Needs	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
The school has strategies in place to meet the needs of students at risk of academic failure.	The school has implemented a limited number of programs to help students who are struggling academically to meet school goals. Resources for such programs are marginal; or the programs experience low participation given the students' needs.	The school has implemented programs and provided adequate resources to help students who are struggling academically to meet school goals. Based on individual needs, student participation is moderate.	The school has implemented special programs and provided significant resources to help students who are struggling academically to meet school goals. Based on individual needs, student participation is moderate to high.	The school has implemented research- based and/or special programs and provided a full complement of resources to help students who are struggling academically to meet school goals. Based on individual needs, student participation is high.
The school has strategies in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners ("ELLs").	The school has a program in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners who enroll at the school. In order to comply with federal regulations, however, the program could benefit from increased staffing, improved staff qualifications and/or additional resources.	The school has a program in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners who enroll at the school. The services are in keeping with federal regulations, which include sufficient staffing with requisite training and resources.	The school has a successful program in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners who enroll at the school. The services are in keeping with federal standards for sufficient staffing with requisite training, qualifications and resources.	The school has a successful program(s) in place to meet the needs of any English Language Learners who enroll at the school. The services are in keeping with, and in some ways, exceed federal standards for staffing with requisite training, qualifications and resources.

Meeting the Needs of All Learners Summary

Focus groups and classroom observations indicate that the school has made provisions for their struggling learners and students with disabilities. One of the members of the leadership team at the school has the sole responsibility in monitoring instructional delivery for struggling learners and special education students. The administration focus group described data as the "main driver in how teachers plan their instruction." The Response-To-Intervention (RTI) process was described as helping Student Support Team (SST) members and staff better understand the diverse needs of their students, as well as how to identify students that may require additional intervention and support. The school primarily uses an inclusion model to serve special needs students, who may be co-taught by special education teachers and paraprofessionals. The school team observed special education instructors delivering pull-out services to specific students in a small group and one-on-one format. Observers reported seeing special education instructors using a variety of manipulatives, graphic organizers, and differentiated learning techniques (e.g. sentence starters, extended time, audio headphones, etc.) to support the needs of these learners. However, through focus groups and observation

of resource rooms, the QSR team learned that a full continuum of services was not available for those students who may require full-time pull-out support. At this time, the school reported no enrolled students requiring this level of support. The observers were unable to assess the area of collaboration between special and general education teachers in delivering services to this population. The school team did mention that they have a Saturday Academy, but there was no evidence observed or discussed about an after-school or summer programs available to support these students at this time.

There are currently no English Language Learners ("ELLs") enrolled at the school, thus the school's performance on this criterion was not assessed.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the Professional Development elements of the rubric during the scheduled and unscheduled classroom observations and as discussed during the focus groups with administrators, faculty and staff.

Professional Development	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
Time is made available throughout the year.	The school offers very few professional development days throughout the school year, and teachers indicate that they do not have enough time for ongoing professional development and planning.	The school offers several professional development activities throughout the school year, although teachers indicate they could use more time for planning.	The school day and the annual calendar reflect a strong focus on professional development and planning. Most teachers agree that they are given sufficient time for professional development and planning.	The school day and the annual calendar reflect a high priority given to professional development and planning. All teachers agree that they are given sufficient time for a variety of professional development opportunities and planning.
Extra support is in place for novice teachers.	The school offers limited formal or informal support and guidance for novice teachers. These teachers do not think that the support is adequate.	The school offers formal or informal support and guidance to novice teachers. These teachers think that the support is adequate.	The school has implemented a support system that is effective in meeting the needs of novice teachers.	The school has implemented a highly structured support system that is highly effective in meeting the needs of novice teachers.

Professional Development Summary

The school presented the observation team with a comprehensive professional development calendar mapping out five areas of focus for the 2012-13 school year: data/planning, instruction, culture, common core, and teambuilding. Focus group discussions and the calendar indicate that teachers regularly receive professional development through monthly data planning meetings, Kickboard Training, and lesson planning sessions on the Common Core State Standards. Common planning time for literacy and math, along with observation and feedback sessions with coaches and mentors, helps foster and support teacher collaboration. Co-teaching partners and grade level teams also meet on regular basis to plan instruction for students. Content area coordinators review weekly lesson plans and provide written feedback to the teams; teacher focus groups described the Grade Level Chairs (GLC) institutes over the summer for grade level chairs to map out year-long unit plans. The QSR team did not learn how the leadership team monitors instruction on an ongoing basis, though coaches collaborate with teachers and administration regularly. The review team did not observe or discuss with focus groups whether teachers are required to develop individualized professional development plans or action plans for the year.

The teacher focus group discussed that all new teachers attend a "teacher college" in the summer prior to their first year where they create a one-year growth plan. They also receive additional support from instructional coaches throughout the first year.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the School Climate elements of the rubric during the scheduled and unscheduled classroom observations and as discussed during the focus groups with students, faculty, and staff.

School Climate	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
The school is a safe and orderly learning environment.	The school's discipline policies and practices are not well-articulated or understood by most of the staff, students and parents. Such policies and practices are partially implemented due to the lack of clarity or understanding and, as a result, the learning environment provides limited safety and order.	The school's discipline policies and practices are adequately articulated and understood by the administration and by most of the staff, students and parents. Such policies and practices may not be fully implemented, due to a lack of clarity or understanding. The learning environment, however, is relatively safe and orderly.	The school's discipline policies and practices are clearly articulated and understood by the administration, staff, students and parents. Such policies and practices are consistently implemented, providing for a safe and orderly learning environment.	The school's discipline policies and practices are clearly articulated and understood by the administration, staff, students and parents. Such policies and practices are fully implemented by students and staff, providing for a consistently safe and orderly learning environment.

School Climate Summary

Based on the evidence that the QSR team gathered, the school provides a safe and orderly learning environment for its students. Visitors are required to sign in at the front desk and key cards are needed to move between the levels. Student focus group participants shared very positive comments about the school, indicating that they felt safe in the school and were learning. When asked what they liked best about the school, they all had very specific answers related to subjects and special events. All students and staff in the school were aware of the school's discipline policies and could recite them when prompted by the QSR team. It was evident there was strong collaboration among teachers as they described how teachers at the school support each other across grade-levels. Administration focus group discussion also revealed that the focus on achieving the school's mission has helped to benefit the staff and students in maintaining an orderly and focused learning environment.