

February 24, 2015

Mr. Donald Hense, Board Chair Friendship PCS – Woodridge Elementary 120 Q Street NE Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Hense:

The DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews to gather and document evidence to support school oversight. According to the 2014 Memorandum of Understanding that 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, 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). Friendship PCS – Woodridge Elementary School Campus was designated as Focus by Office of the State Superintendent of Education for the performance of your African American male students on the math portion of the 2014 DC CAS.

Please see the following link for information about the requirements for exiting Focus status: http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/release content/attachments/OSS http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/release http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/release http://osse.dc.gov/sites/osse/release http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/release http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/release http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/release http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/release <a href="http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/gov/sites/go

A Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Friendship PCS between December 8 and December 19, 2014. 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 both classrooms and a board meeting against these goals. This evaluation was informed by using an abridged version of the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* observation rubric. PCSB also attended a scheduled day on December 10, 2014 to observe how the school's Focus intervention strategies are being implemented in classrooms.

Enclosed is the team's report. We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that you and your staff gave the monitoring team in conducting the Qualitative Site Review and ESEA monitoring.

Sincerely,

Naomi DeVeaux Deputy Director

Enclosures cc: School Leader

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Friendship PCS – Woodridge Elementary serves 285 students in prekindergarten 3 (PK3) through grade 3 in Ward 5. The DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) conducted a Qualitative Site Review (QSR) and Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) monitoring visit in December 2014 because Friendship PCS – Woodridge Elementary is designated as Focus by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) for the performance of your African American male students on the math portion of the 2014 DC CAS.

The QSR team conducted observations over the course of a two-week window from December 8 through December 19, 2014. A team of two PCSB staff members and one consultant conducted observations of 15 classrooms. A QSR team member attended a scheduled day, set by the school, to collect evidence related to the school's Focus strategies, including utilization of formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction and extended learning time aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). A PCSB staff member also attended a Board of Trustees meeting on December 4, 2014.

The QSR team used Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* Rubric throughout the observations and observed classrooms in mornings and afternoons. In some instances a QSR team may have observed a teacher twice. The QSR team also collected evidence regarding the school's stated mission and goals.

The QSR team scored 80% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the Classroom Environment domain. Classrooms were generally friendly and productive. Well-established classroom procedures maximized instructional time in almost every observation. Teachers gave students positive recognition for their academic work and appropriate behavior. The QSR team scored 78% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain. Most teachers presented clear instruction and engaged students in a variety of learning tasks. Teachers asked open-ended questions and encouraged students to respond to one another in many observations. These overall results are strong.

The majority of evidence collected during the scheduled day centered on the school's effective implementation of the school's Focus strategies. Overall the QSR team observed solid evidence of the school implementing formative assessment and data analysis strategy. The team did not, however, see strong evidence of the extended learning time strategy. While the QSR team saw some elements of the strategy being implemented, other elements, such as the Compass Learning Odyssey, were not observed or referenced on the scheduled day or during the unannounced window.

CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

This table summarizes Friendship PCS's goals and academic achievement expectations as detailed in its charter and subsequent Accountability Plans, and the evidence that the Qualitative Site Review (QSR) team observed of the school meeting those goals during the Qualitative Site Visit.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
Mission: The mission of Friendship Public Charter School is to provide a world-class education that motivates students to achieve high academic standards, enjoy learning, and develop as ethical, literate, well-rounded, and self-sufficient citizens who contribute actively to their communities.	The QSR team observed evidence that Friendship PCS – Woodridge Elementary is fulfilling its mission. Provide a world-class education that motivates students to achieve high academic standards and enjoy learning Teachers held students to high academic standards in the majority of observations. Students were engaged with the learning activities and they eagerly participated in lessons. Teachers in two observations praised students for taking academic risks such as sharing their work on the board or trying something that they had not yet been taught. Develop [students] as ethical, literate, well-rounded, and self-sufficient citizens Teachers and students were generally caring and polite toward one another. Students had opportunities to take specials courses from foreign language to visual arts. Students practiced singing for an upcoming holiday program. Teachers in many observations gave students tasks to contribute to the classroom's functioning, such as collecting papers or turning off/on the light switch.
PMF Goal #1: Student Progress – Academic Improvement over time Effective instruction supporting student academic progress and achievement in reading and math.	The QSR team observed effective instruction in the majority of classrooms. As further detailed in the Instruction section of the Danielson Framework, 78% of the observations scored proficient or distinguished in instruction. Teachers asked questions that required

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	students to use higher order thinking skills and students engaged with the learning tasks.
PMF Goal #2: Student Achievement – Meeting or exceeding academic standards Moving students to advanced levels of proficiency in reading and math.	Approximately half of observations included students working in small groups. In those observations students worked on different tasks in their groups. Teachers provided differentiated instruction to small groups of students. One teacher employed scaffolding and wait time to guide students through reading a book. A few teachers used higher order questioning as a check for student understanding.
PMF Goal # 3: Gateway – Outcomes in key subjects that predict future educational success Promotion of reading proficiency by third grade.	There are systems in place to support reading proficiency by third grade. The school's master schedule has an intervention block (Eagle Power Hour) for grades one through three in addition to small group instruction during the literacy classes. Literacy instruction included different instructional techniques such as teacher questioning and choral reading.
PMF Goal #4: Leading Indicators – Predictors of future student progress and achievement Culture of learning and support in the classrooms.	Classrooms generally had positive academic cultures. Students worked on intellectual tasks and teachers supported the learning. In the PK classes teachers' aides assisted students while they worked in small groups. Special education teachers and aides also supported students in the elementary grades. While the QSR team did not observe consistent use of school-wide incentives, many teachers had their own systems in place.
Governance:	A PCSB staff member attended the Friendship PCS Board of Trustees meeting on December 4, 2014. A quorum was present. Some members attended via conference call. After a closed executive

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	session, the board discussed nominations of new board members. The
	school performance committee asked questions about the academic
	improvement plan. Board members expressed the importance of
	meeting the goal related to students finishing college. The board also
	discussed new analyses of Tier 1 charter schools in Washington, DC
	and how Friendship compares to these schools. One member gave a
	financial update. Finally, the board heard a presentation of the
	accreditation report to end the meeting.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT¹

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 80% of the observations as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Classroom Environment domain.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide R	ating
Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport The QSR team rated 73% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport. The majority of interactions between teachers and students were positive and respectful. Teachers in these observations used friendly tones when		Distinguished	20%
	interacting with students and modeled saying, "Please," and "Thank you." In one observation a teacher gave students stickers for listening attentively to their classmates. Another teacher gave a student wishes to feel better when the student had to go home sick.	ively to	53%
	Teachers in the 27% of the observations rated basic responded to students with impatience or condescension. In one observation the teacher called on a student to answer a question and announced to the whole class that the student	Basic	27%
did not know the answer because the student was not following along. Students in another observation behaved rudely toward the teacher, ignoring directions or resuming poor behaviors as soon as the teacher turned away.		Unsatisfactory	0%
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The QSR team rated 87% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Establishing a Culture for Learning. In these observations teachers showed enthusiasm for their subjects and encouraged by doing things such as praising student for their hard work and thinking. One teacher	Distinguished	7%

¹ Teachers may be observed more than once by different review team members.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide R	Rating
	conducted one-on-one conferences with students and shared what content each student had mastered. Students in another observation gave classmates spirit fingers to cheer on a student who was struggling with an answer.	Proficient	80%
	In the 13% of the observations rated basic, students did not appear invested in doing their best work and teachers did not convey the importance of what the class was learning. Students copied the teacher's exemplar rather than coming	Basic	13%
up with their own ideas in order to complete the assignment quickly. Another teacher did not discuss the value of the lesson and made no attempt to recognize students' efforts in their work.		Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team rated 80% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Managing Classroom Procedures. These classrooms had well-established routines and procedures that students were familiar with so little to no instructional time was lost. Students knew the expectations for cleaning up and transitioning and generally followed the teachers' instructions	Distinguished	7%
	immediately. One teacher effectively multi-tasked by handing out tile manipulatives for the lesson while asking quick review questions. In another observation students transitioned smoothly from the warm-up to the lesson without prompting from the teacher.	Proficient	73%
	The QSR teamed scored 20% of the observations as basic. Teachers and students lost instructional time due to poorly implemented routines and procedures. One classroom had an established procedure of students using a	Basic	20%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide R	Rating
	hand signal to sharpen a pencil; however, the signal was not used consistently resulting in time spent on sharpening pencils at inappropriate times. In another observation instructional time was lost as the teacher reminded students of basic classroom expectations, such as raising their hands rather than calling out.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Student Behavior			0%
	student walked away from her seat during the lesson. Another was proactively calling attention to students who were behaving appropriately. Teachers used a variety of strategies to manage behavior including using proximity, passing out stickers, and praising students.	Proficient	80%
	In the 20% of the observations rated basic, teacher redirections were largely ineffective. Students in one observation were talking over the teacher's	Basic	20%
	instruction and the teacher yelled, "Friends!" several times over the class without any change in students' behavior. Two classrooms had behavior charts posted, but teachers did not use the charts consistently.	Unsatisfactory	0%

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 78% of the observations as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Instruction domain.

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide R	ating
Communicating with Students	Students proficient in the component of Communicating with Students. Teachers indicated the purpose of the lesson and placed what students were learning		7%
	in a broader context. Several teachers gave clear, precise directions and students completed class activities with little to no clarification questions on what to do. One teacher linked the lesson to students' lives and another gave students strategies for what to do if they got stuck.	Proficient	80%
	Teachers in the 13% of the observations rated basic gave unclear directions to students. In one classroom the teacher's directions were so	Basic	13%
	poor that students did the activity incorrectly. The teacher in another observation spent much of the class period clarifying the directions for the activity with individual students because the initial instruction was not clear.		0%
Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques	The QSR team rated 73% of the observations as proficient in the component of Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques. Teachers in these observations used a variety of questions ranging from	Distinguished	0%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide F	Rating
	recall to synthesis. Several teachers pushed students to build on classmates' responses to questions. One teacher asked open-ended questions that required students to elaborate on the thinking behind their answers. In another observation a teacher invited students to respond directly to each other and encouraged them to use complete sentences in their responses.	Proficient	73%
	The QSR team scored 27% of the observations as basic or unsatisfactory. In these observations teachers asked low level questions and did not engage students in any discussion about the material. Teachers in two observations did not create opportunities for students to discuss concepts	Basic	20%
	with each other. Another teacher asked questions that were leading and frequently answered the questions without student input. In one instance the teacher said, "That sounds like it would be very painful. How do you think he felt? He would feel a lot of pain."	Unsatisfactory	7%
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team rated 80% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Engaging Students in Learning. Students in these observations were intellectually engaged with the learning tasks and had opportunities to approach the material in different ways. Several observations included students working in small groups where students learned by reading, working with classmates, and working with a teacher.	Distinguished	7%
	One teacher alternated between quiet, independent activities and active tasks throughout the lesson. Students had the opportunity to choose their activity or center in a few observations. Another teacher allowed students to use different approaches to model division problems with manipulatives. In most observations students worked productively even when they were not working directly with a teacher.	Proficient	73%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide R	Rating
	The QSR team scored 20% of the observations as basic. Students disengaged from learning due to a lack of direction or not enough work for them to do. Students in one classroom stopped engaging in the lesson		20%
	because they had to sit on the carpet while they waited for classmates to finish before moving on to the next part of the lesson. The learning tasks in another observation required minimal thinking on the part of the students because they could copy the teacher's example.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Assessment in Instruction	The QSR team rated 73% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Using Assessment in Instruction. Teachers integrated checks for understanding into the lesson and gave students immediate feedback in these observations. One teacher had a detailed		7%
	rubric posted for students to reference as they worked. Other teachers used a mix of global checks for understanding such as thumbs up/down and specific feedback to students in small groups about how to improve their work. Students monitored their own learning in one observation persisting until they could sound out the word that fit the story.	Proficient	66%
Teachers in the 27% of the observations rated basic did not make it clear how students would be assessed and did not give students specific feedback. One teacher only used whole class checks for understanding of the content by having the class answer in unison whether a text was fiction		Basic	27%
	on-fiction. Another teacher only assessed the understanding of lents called on to give answers to questions. In one observation a her attempted to adjust the lesson but was unsuccessful in getting the lents' attention to determine which students would benefit from rehing.	Unsatisfactory	0%

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.

The Classroom Environment	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
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.

Instruction	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
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.

SCHOOL INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES

The following table summarizes Friendship PCS – Woodridge Elementary strategies and evidence collected by PCSB for the purposes of the 2012 ESEA Flexibility Waiver. PCSB observed the school implementing those strategies during both the scheduled day on December 5 and the observation window from December 8 through December 19, 2014.

PCSB leaves it to the discretion of school leadership to determine the best use of time during the scheduled day of observations for the purposes of Focus intervention strategies. Therefore it may not be possible to observe certain strategies chosen by the school. In cases where PCSB did not have the opportunity to observe the strategy, we will use the following statement: "While this strategy may be in place, PCSB neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this strategy." Different language is used to indicate poor implementation of a given strategy.

Strategy Described In Intervention Plan	School's Description of Strategy on the Ground	Evidence
Use assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction.	 At the third grade level: Teachers will use data from informal assessments daily (e.g. exit tickets) to check for student understanding, modify instructional strategies, and form small groups. Teachers engage in weekly collaborative planning meetings to use data from the formative assessments (e.g. exit tickets, biweekly assessments) to share best practices and instructional strategies to improve student achievement. Teachers will participate in monthly school-based data talks that include analysis of biweekly assessments to identify skills that require additional support. This data also is used to regroup students for differentiated 	During the monthly data talk on December 5, 2014, teachers met as a staff to discuss methods for differentiation during instructional time. A Friendship Community Office support person led the training, which included feedback and ideas from the staff on how to apply a rubric related to differentiation. Teachers broke into small groups to discuss the rubric and worked together to differentiate a lesson plan. After the small group work, the full staff met again to discuss grading differentiated lessons. The staff spent time reviewing school data. The principal displayed the school's PMF scorecard and went through areas of growth for each level. Later during the data talk, staff members broke into grade levels to review data and re-

instruction and re-teaching of skills not teach lesson plans. The third and fourth grade teams discussed how the lessons they mastered. designed and implemented are working for • Teachers will participate in ongoing 6 week their students. One teacher presented a lesson data cycles at the LEA level that include and examples of graded student work to show analysis of interim assessment data to identify how she was using the students' performance skills that have been mastered and those that to inform her teaching. The groups reviewed need to be retaught. the materials and gave feedback. • These data are used to inform professional The QSR team observed two classes using development and determine teacher support. exit tickets during the unannounced window. At the third grade level: Extend learning time before, during and after During the unannounced two-week window, school that is aligned to CCSS. third grade students worked in small groups • Students will receive 1 hour of during centers in a reading class. The teacher individualized small group intervention per provided individualized instruction to day on a bi-weekly basis during Eagle Power students in her group. In the third grade math Hour. This intervention is in addition to small observations, however, all instruction was group instruction that takes place in Math whole class. daily. The QSR team did not observe any third • Students will utilize Compass Learning grade classes using or referencing Compass Odyssey individual learning paths at least 2 Learning Odyssey. hours a week (1 hour math/1 hour ELA), as recommended by the Compass Learning The QSR team did not see any evidence of program. the homework club or hear any reference • At risk students in third grade will be made to it in any observations. encouraged to attend homework club (facilitated by school staff) and after school The principal led students in reciting

tutoring as facilitated by classroom teachers.

• Parents of at-risk students in third grade developed a goal for student use of Compass multiples of numbers. Third grade students also recited math facts (i.e., multiples of

Learning at home as part of the Quarterly Learning Contract.

- Students in Friendship Cares (After Care) will use Compass Learning daily.
- Math instruction is reinforced during noninstructional periods (e.g., rolling numbers at the end of lunch).
- The Reading Specialist works with advanced third grade students to enhance their understanding of complex word problems in preparation for PARCC.

three) while waiting for their turn to practice for the holiday program in the gymnasium.

The QSR team did not directly observe third grade students working with the Reading Specialist in any observations. Students in one third grade observation were pulled out of a literacy class for additional support.