October 29, 2015

Chinesom Ejiasa, Board Chair
Washington Latin Public Charter School – Upper School
5200 2nd Street NW
Washington, DC 20011

Dear Mr. Ejiasa:

The Public Charter School Board (PCSB) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews to gather and document evidence to support school oversight. According to the School Reform Act § 38-1802.11, 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 Qualitative Site Review during the 2015-16 school year for the following reason:

- School eligible for 10-year Charter Review during 2015-16 school year

Qualitative Site Review Report
A Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Washington Latin Public Charter School – High School between September 28 and October 9, 2015. Enclosed is the team's report. You will find that the Qualitative Site Review Report focuses primarily on the following areas: charter mission and goals, classroom environments, and instructional delivery.

We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that you and your staff gave the monitoring team in conducting the Qualitative Site Review at Washington Latin Public Charter School – Upper School.

Sincerely,

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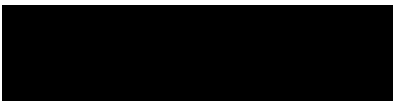
Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: School Leader

Qualitative Site Review Report

Date: October 29, 2015
Campus Name: Washington Latin Public Charter School – Upper School
Ward: 4
Grade levels in school year 2015-16: 9-12
Enrollment in school year 2015-16: 319
Reason for visit: 10-year review
Two-week window: September 28 – October 9, 2015
Number of observations: 30

Summary
The mission of Washington Latin Public Charter School – Upper School (Washington Latin PCS – US) is as follows: Washington Latin Public Charter School provides a challenging, classical education that is accessible to students throughout the District of Columbia. The school offers a robust curriculum outside of the core subjects: students had access to a variety of high-level language classes, art, music, and extracurricular clubs such as Anime, poetry, and philosophy.

The QSR team scored 86% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the Classroom Environment domain. Students were well behaved and respectful of their teachers and peers. In one observation students completed a gallery walk in the hallway without disrupting other classes. In most observations there was little or no need for teacher intervention in student behavior, and when teachers did intervene, it was quiet and non-disruptive, often using physical proximity or brief cues. The QSR team noted student behavior in a few observations that was vastly different from the otherwise high standard for excellent and often student-driven behavior management in the majority of observations.

The QSR team scored 81% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain. In many observations students had the opportunity and ability to drive their learning through in-depth, thoughtful discussions. Teachers used effective instructional strategies for differentiation including: scaffolding challenging content; use of overhead projectors and videos for visual supports; repetition of directions and information; breaking down long-term assignments into smaller, more manageable chunks; and use of software such as Noodle Tools and Google Drives for completion of long-term research and writing assignments. In some observations, however, there was little differentiation: all students worked on the same content, completed the same assignments and used the same processes for learning.

Prior to the two-week window, Washington Latin PCS – US provided answers to specific questions posed by PCSB regarding the provision of instruction to students with disabilities in the Special Education Questionnaire. Responses from the questionnaire indicated that special education services are provided using a full-inclusion model, where special-education teachers push into general education classroom settings to support general education teachers, and to provide students with Individualized Education

Program (IEPs) required instructional/testing accommodations, special education services and supplemental supports. The Special Education Consultant who served on the team observed services being provided using an inclusion model, where both a general education and special education teacher collaborated to provide instruction and academic supports to students with and without disabilities. Classes were taught using a Team Teaching model. With this model both educators in the classroom shared the instructional role and provided comparable instruction and support to all of the students in their classes. The special education teachers did not limit their support and services to students receiving special education services, rather they were observed providing instruction, feedback and support to all of the students in their class (both those with and without IEPs). In the co-taught classrooms instruction and support took the form of one-on-one, small group, and whole group activities.

CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

This table summarizes Washington Latin Public Charter School'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: Washington Latin Public Charter School provides a challenging, classical education that is accessible to students throughout the District of Columbia.	The QSR team saw evidence that the school is fulfilling its mission. The academic program was rigorous: the QSR team observed several Advanced Placement classes; students demonstrated higher-order thinking skills including synthesis, evaluation, and analysis; and 86% of observations were rated distinguished or proficient or Distinguished in the Instruction domain.

The QSR team also observed some examples of in-depth engagement with a classical education. In one observation students were studying *The Odyssey*; in another, students held a complex conversation on theories of government; in a third, students learned about the Roman Emperor Otto I. As evidenced by the class listing, students are also offered a wide variety of foreign languages, including Chinese, Latin, French and Arabic.

The hallways are also devoted to a classical education, with carefully chosen quotes from classic authors. These are sprinkled throughout the building. |
| Goals: | |
| PMF Goal #1: Student Progress – Academic Improvement over time

Effective instruction supporting student academic progress and achievement in reading and math. | The quality of Classroom Environment and Instruction across the school are strong evidence of achievement of this goal: in both domains, the QSR team scored more than 80% of classrooms as distinguished or proficient. Most classrooms operated effectively with established routines and |

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	engaging lessons that resulted in students on-task and respecting one-another and the teachers. Observers noted students participating in thoughtful discussions, engaging with the learning activities, and guiding their own learning through choice activities.
PMF Goal #2: Student Achievement – Meeting or exceeding academic standards *Moving students to advanced levels of proficiency in reading and math* PMF Goal # 3: Gateway – Outcomes in key subjects that predict future educational success *Outcomes aligned to College and Career Readiness*	English language arts and math classes offered content that was on or above grade level. The quality of teaching and learning was very high in most classes. Students engaged in tasks that required higher order thinking skills including synthesis, evaluation, and analysis with enthusiasm and energy. In math labs in particular, students seemed to have the opportunity to work at their own pace. In the limited examples of weak classroom or behavior management, learning was not disrupted but may have been delayed.
PMF Goal #4: Leading Indicators – Predictors of future student progress and achievement *Culture of learning and support in the classrooms*	The classroom and school culture was consistently positive and committed to learning during the QSR team's observations. Students were respectful and on-task. Students and teachers demonstrated genuine enthusiasm for the content and learning, demonstrated through expressive body language, enthusiastic tones of voice, and comments such as, "It doesn't matter if you are wrong. You are brave, which is just as important."
Governance	A PCSB staff member attended the Washington Latin PCS Board of Trustees meeting on August 26, 2015. A quorum was present. One member attended via video conference call. The board discussed developing an expansion plan, committee membership, discipline data, aligning board and staff goals, a financial update,

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	and an academic update. The search committee gave an update regarding the search for a new head of school. Finally the board heard a presentation of the accreditation report.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT[1]

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 86% 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 90% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this domain. Teachers and students used words like "thank you" and "good job." In one observation, a student checked to make sure their peers had opportunities to share before they spoke again. Students demonstrated genuine concern for one another. One student took the initiative to get a tissue for another student.	Distinguished	21%
		Proficient	69%
	The QSR team rated 10% of the observations as basic in this component. In a few observations there were cases of students demonstrating disrespect for the teacher, such as continuing to talk out of turn even after being instructed to stop.	Basic	10%
	The QSR team rated none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The QSR team scored 83% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Students expressed genuine enthusiasm and urgency around learning. Students encouraged one another to take intellectual risks and stayed engaged with the content until they were satisfied that they had fulfilled the questions asked of them.	Distinguished	43%
		Proficient	40%

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

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team rated 17% of the observations as basic in Establishing a Culture for Learning. In some observation students had their heads down on their desks or teachers did not communicate the importance of the content or activities.	Basic	17%
	The QSR team rated none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team scored 87% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Teachers managed classrooms smoothly. Teachers relied on students to support the efficient operations of the class, such as by collecting homework assignments or by beginning Do Now/warm-up activities upon entering the classroom without being prompted. Transitions between activities were effective with little or no lost instructional time. Students who completed activities early began reading independently without being prompted.	Distinguished	20%
		Proficient	67%
	The QSR team scored 13% of the observations as basic. In these observations there was little evidence of established procedures. In one instance students took out the prior night's homework, but it was never collected or reviewed.	Basic	13%
	The QSR team rated 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 83% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Students managed their own behavior and gently reminded others about proper behavior. One student asked others not to laugh during a song because they were being recorded. In some observations teachers managed behavior through proximity (e.g., standing next to a student with his head on the table) without words or interruptions of classroom activities.	Distinguished	30%
		Proficient	53%
	The QSR team scored 17% of the observations as basic. In these observations students repeatedly did not comply with instructions, such as to remove jackets or hoods, or to stop talking out of turn and off topic. In a few observations teachers repeatedly hushed students without consistent effect.	Basic	17%
	The QSR team rated none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	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 81% of classrooms as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Instruction domain.

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Communicating with Students	The QSR team scored 90% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Teachers communicated effectively with clear directions and purpose for the lesson. Teachers and students referenced prior lessons and situated the day's lesson within broader learning, such as "We're going to finish [the topic we've been discussing] today, which means the questions are going to be a little bit more aggressive." Teachers also provided students with reference guides for completing activities. In a few observations teachers warned students to be particularly careful around areas that might be confusing, such as the difference between speed and velocity or saying, "This is going to mess with your heads a little bit."	Distinguished	14%
		Proficient	76%
	The QSR team scored 10% of the observations as basic. In these observations assignments were confusing as evidenced by students asking teachers to repeat directions multiple times after the activity had begun. In very rare cases teachers made content errors and were corrected by students.	Basic	10%
	The QSR team rated none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques	The QSR team scored 68% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Teachers used high-order thinking questioning and discussion techniques. Questions required deeper thought, such as "Why is it disgraceful?" or "What does he want to come out of his speech?" Students were often the main drivers of class discussions. In one observation the teacher only spoke to ask clarifying questions or dig for more evidence. One student asked the teacher "How?" and the teacher asked "How?" back to the ⌐.	Distinguished	18%
		Proficient	50%
	The QSR team scored 29% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations discussions were much more limited. Teachers focused on having students recall information, such as defining the format for citations or naming the author of a work. Questions tended to be rapid fire and all posed by the teacher. Not all students participated in discussions in these classrooms.	Basic	29%
	The QSR team rated less than 10% of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	4%
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team rated 83% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Students worked on activities aligned with the lesson objectives. Students were given multiple ways to access materials, such as watching a video and reading a printed transcript of a speech. Pacing was appropriate to allow for intellectual engagement and students were able to	Distinguished	21%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	work at their pace, moving on to new assignments when ready. There were multiple groupings of students within some classrooms, such as half the students participating in a Socratic seminar and the other half taking notes and drawing inferences. In some observations students were able to drive the content of the discussion through their questioning and inferences, leading to very high engagement and enthusiasm for the content.	Proficient	62%
	The QSR team scored 17% of the observations as basic. In these observations students had only one way to complete the activities or learn the content, such as by completing a worksheet. Few students were intellectually engaged and others tended to talk off-topic or work on homework for other classes.	Basic	17%
	The QSR team rated none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Assessment in Instruction	The QSR team scored 83% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Teachers constantly assessed student learning through multiple methods, including direct questioning, circulating to review work, and engaging with small group and large group discussions. In one observation a teacher asked students to remind her of the expectations for journals.	Distinguished	21%
		Proficient	62%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 14% of the observations as basic. Assessment was either not done or done primarily through group questioning, without opportunities to gauge individual students' grasp of the materials.	Basic	14%
	The QSR team rated less than 10% of the observations as unsatisfactory 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.

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	Students are intellectually engaged only partially, resulting from activities or materials or uneven quality, inconsistent	Students are intellectually engaged throughout the lesson, with appropriate activities and materials,	Students are highly engaged throughout the lesson and make material contribution to the representation of

Instruction	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	materials, poor representations of content, or lack of lesson structure.	representation of content or uneven structure of pacing.	instructive representations of content, and suitable structure and pacing of the lesson.	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.