DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

December 17, 2014

Dr. Rhonda Wells-Wilbon, Board Chair
Richard Wright School for Journalism and Media Arts Public Charter School
770 M Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Dr. Wells-Wilbon:

The DC 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 2014-15 school year for the following reasons:

- School eligible for 5-year Charter Review during 2015-16 school year
- School designated as Focus by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education

PCSB attended a scheduled day on October 16 to observe how the school's Focus intervention strategies are being implemented in classrooms. 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). Your school was school is designated as Focus by Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

> 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/OSSE_Revisions%20-%20Executive%20Summary%20-%20All%20Principles%20-%205%2017%2012%20FINAL.pdf

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 at Richard Wright School for Journalism and Media Arts Public Charter School.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: School Leaders

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Richard Wright School for Journalism and Media Arts Public Charter School (Richard Wright PCS) serves 304 in grades 8 through 12 in Ward 6. The DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) conducted a Qualitative Site Review (QSR) and ESEA monitoring in October 2014 because Richard Wright PCS is eligible for 5-year Charter Review during 2015-16 school year. The school was identified as a Focus school in Fall 2013 based on the relative underperformance on the DC CAS of its Economically Disadvantaged and African American student subgroups. PCSB monitored the school through QSRs in Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 and again in fall 2014, in year two of focus status. The school will be eligible to exit focus status at the end of its second year.

The QSR team conducted observations over the course of a two-week window, from October 6 through October 17, 2014. A team of three PCSB staff members (including PCSB's Special Education Specialist) and one consultant conducted observations of 20 classrooms. A QSR team member attended a scheduled day, set by the school, to collect evidence related to the school's Focus strategies, including: professional development, increasing the development of literacy skills, enhancing the home-school connection, co-teaching in math, and differentiation in the classroom. A PCSB staff member also attended a Board of Trustees meeting.

Prior to the site review, PCSB met with Richard Wright PCS to identify specific instructional strategies used to improve the performance of students with disabilities, which included the use of technology like interactive whiteboards and notebooks to provide access to instruction through different media, course texts and leveled readers to differentiate material, and co-teaching in ELA and math to provide more individualized instruction to students. The reviewer, who conducted special education-specific observations, noted the following: general educators used visual/written and oral modalities of instruction, via media such as interactive whiteboards and PowerPoint presentations; differentiated instruction; ELA instruction included course texts along with strategies to help students chunk text into smaller, easier-to-understand parts; and students had the opportunity to express learning in multiple ways, through writing short answers, answering the teachers' questions orally, or developing a dialogue showing comprehension of the story characters. However, there was a general as absence of multiple modalities of instruction in all observed classrooms, which left some students unable to demonstrate their full understanding of lessons. Further, in a larger general education setting with inclusionary support, the teachers were observed conducting universal checks for understanding of students, which were not consistent and frequent enough to gauge the understanding of all students with disabilities within the classroom.

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 scored 63% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the Classroom Environment domain. The highest rated component within the Classroom Environment domain was Managing Classroom Procedures, with 70% of classrooms observed rated as proficient or above and well-established routines and smooth transitions during lessons. The lowest rated component within the Classroom Environment domain was Establishing a Culture for Learning, with 55% of classrooms observed rated as proficient or above. Most teachers had

a clear lesson structure, starting with a REACH activity intended to engage students. Teachers used timers and countdowns to signal transitions to other activities.

The QSR team scored 59% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain. The highest rated component within this domain was Communicating with Students, with 75% of classrooms observed rated as proficient or above. About 50% of classrooms observed in the other elements within this domain were rated as proficient or above. Explanations of content were clear, and teachers generally invited student participation in content explanations. In most classrooms, teachers had the objectives displayed with statements related to what students would be able to do at the end of the lesson. During the spring 2014 QSR visit; observers scored 52% of the classrooms as proficient or exemplary in this domain. This improvement shows that school leadership continues to focus on instruction to improve academic outcomes for students.

The majority of evidence collected during the scheduled day centered on the school's effective implementation of strategies to improve literacy skills, increase the differentiation in classrooms, and provide professional development to teachers. Observers generally saw an improvement in the implementation of Focus strategies, particularly in the implementation of strategies to improve literacy skills and the use of assessments to improve instruction. Other Focus strategies, such as co-teaching in ELA and math, had similar levels of implementation since the spring 2014 site review.

CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

This table summarizes Richard Wright 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 Richard Wright Public Charter School for Journalism and Media Arts is to transform students in grades 8-12 into well-versed media contributors by providing a student- centered environment that connects them to the classics and modern languages and a curriculum focused on strong writing skills and vocabulary.	During the scheduled day and the two-week observation window, the QSR team observed some strategies for developing students as **well-versed media contributors.** Instructional tasks, particularly REACH activities, required short responses. Students practiced as consumers of news by summarizing news articles in their Journalism class. Courses beyond English Language Arts (ELA) focused on developing reading skills, as described further in the *School Support and Intervention Strategies* section of this report, Strategy #3. In a US History Class, the teacher introduced a project whereby students had to create a video that presented the three branches of government. Although most students in classrooms were engaged in the content, observers saw inconsistent evidence of a **student-centered environment;** the majority of instruction was whole-group and teacher directed. Additional evidence related to the instructional environment may be found in the *Framework for Teaching* section of this report, particularly the *Instructional Delivery* component of *Engaging Students in Instruction.* Observers saw students **connect to the classics** through their Latin language courses. In both classes, students first had to write sentences in Latin, with teachers checked on the correct use of grammar before translating sentences from Latin to English. Teachers worked with students, who struggled with the material. In English classes, students

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	connected to classics through their reading of *The Scarlet Letter*. Students acted out the different chapters of the book as they prepared for a Friday quiz and had an active discussion about their perspective on the main character, using rich and imaginative vocabulary. The QSR team saw various ways in which the school **connected students to modern language (English) through writing skills and vocabulary.** Observers saw vocabulary development across content areas, with learning tasks that required students to work together to make meaning out of nonfiction text and identify challenging terms, apply vocabulary from their own reading to new situations, and break down words to understand how prefixes change meaning. For additional information around the development of writing skills, please see the *School Improvement and Support Strategies* section of this report, Strategy #3.
Goals:	
Please note that the school was in the process of revising its goals at the time of its QSR. In cases where current goals were similar to revised goals, PCSB staff combined them to simplify evidence collection and reporting.	
Current Goal: *RWPCS students will meet or exceed state requirements for Proficiency in Math and Reading by 5 percent.* **Proposed Goal:** **PMF Goal #1: Student Progress – Academic improvement over time** *Effective instruction supporting student academic progress and achievement in reading and math.*	For strategies related to the school's Focus plan, please see the *School Intervention and Support* section of this report. In English Language Arts classes students read from stories as teachers asked comprehension questions, created dialogues based on characters from a previously-read text, enhanced their vocabulary, broke down words to understand the meaning of prefixes, filled out graphic organizers about stories to enhance understanding, and analyzed characters and acted out scenes from a classic novel. Similarly, the QSR team saw a range of instructional activities in math classes. In a Geometry class, students and teachers reviewed

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	formulas for a test and the teacher asked students to practice by applying the appropriate formula to various problems. In a Pre-Calculus course, students reviewed conditional statements, created their own conditional statements, and wrote out the contrapositive, the converse, and the inverse. In Algebra 1, students discussed common ratios and common differences as well as geometric and arithmetic sequences. During the scheduled day in a Geometry class, students demonstrated their understanding of geometric terms (line, line segment, ray, etc.) in small groups by making a visual of these terms with their own bodies. In Math Enrichment during the scheduled day, students worked on inverse operations and solved inequalities on the board. For additional information related to the quality of instruction, please refer to the elements of the *Instructional Delivery* domain of the Framework for Teaching section of this report.
Current Goal: *RWPCS students will meet or exceed grade-level requirements in reading.* **Proposed Goal:** **PMF Goal #2: Student Achievement – Meeting or exceeding academic standards** *Moving students to advanced levels of proficiency in reading and math*	The QSR team observed various instances of differentiation in reading to help students meet or exceed grade-level requirements. Teachers used graphic organizers to help students establish the structure of text in a literature textbook. Students summarized stories in their own ways and created dialogues based on a story they had read. Teachers established background knowledge of the Great Depression by asking students their impressions of pictures from that time period before discussing the time period for *The Grapes of Wrath.* Teachers also differentiated learning products in a class where students had to act out chapters of *The Scarlet Letter* to help prepare them for Friday's quiz Differentiation was less prevalent in math classes. Students generally completed the same worksheets or math problems, though

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	differentiation in process happened as students put their work on the board and other students commented on their methodology and checked their work. There was some co-teaching in math, with one teacher providing the instruction and another teacher checking in on student work. **Assessment** was global in both reading and math. Teachers asked students to volunteer to respond to comprehension questions and to write out math problems on the board. Observers saw some use of Exit Tickets, but not consistently across classrooms. For strategies related to the school's Focus plan, please see the *School Intervention and Support* section of this report. For additional information related to **differentiation** and **assessment**, please see the *Framework for Teaching* section of this report, specifically the *Instructional Delivery* components of *Engaging Students in Instruction* and *Using Assessment in Instruction.*
Current Goal: *RWPCS students will have 90 percent annual promotion rate*	The QSR team neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this goal.
Current Goal: *RWCPCS students will have 100 percent college acceptance rate.*	The QSR team neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this goal.
Current Goal: *RWPCS students will have 80 percent passing rate on the DC Benchmark Assessment System (DC BAS), DC Comprehensive*	The QSR team neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this goal.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
Assessment System (DC CAS), Scantron Performance Test Series and Princeton Review Assessments.	
Current Goal: **RWPCS teachers will exemplify mission of the school**	Please see evidence related to the school Mission, above.
Current Goal: **RWPCS teachers will demonstrate culturally responsive instruction.** **Proposed Goal:** **PMF Goal #4: Leading Indicators – Predictors of future student progress and achievement** *Culture of learning and support in the classrooms*	For evidence related to this goal, please see the *Framework for Teaching* section of this report, particularly the *Classroom Environment* components of *Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport* and *Establishing a Culture for Learning*
Proposed Goal: **PMF Goal #3: Gateway – Outcomes in key subjects that predict future educational success** *Promotion of reading proficiency by third grade and math proficiency by eighth grade*	The QSR team neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this goal.
Governance:	A member of the PCSB staff attended the Richard Wright PCS Board Meeting on October 11, 2014. Four board members attended by phone and eight board members were present. The Board Chair led

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	the meeting. The CEO, Dr. Marco Clark, gave a Performance Report Overview, sharing that though DC CAS scores in reading and math are weak, Richard Wright PCS students outperform the ANet network. Richard Wright PCS has also begun Saturday School, starting with the eighth grade. Other topics covered by the meeting included: community service projects, clubs, and fundraising. The Fiscal Manager gave a presentation on the school budget. The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

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 63% of observations 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 60% of observations as proficient or distinguished in Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport. Teacher-student interactions were warm and caring, demonstrating mutual respect. Teachers encouraged students tackling challenging work, telling them "it's ok!" when they stumbled over words and encouraging students not to be ashamed to come for extra help after school. Teachers praised students and gave them high fives when they got answers correct. Students demonstrated respect for teachers as they came quietly into the classrooms and started their REACH activities and generally refrained from off-task behavior and side conversations. Teachers created respectful environments in classrooms by demanding with success that students pay attention to each other.	Distinguished	5%
		Proficient	55%
	The QSR team scored 40% of observations as basic and none as unsatisfactory. Observers witnessed teachers responding to disrespectful behavior without getting the results they wanted, as when some students would comply by quieting down and others did not change their off-task behavior. Students in some classrooms demonstrated disrespect to teachers as teachers had to repeatedly ask the students to pick their heads up off of tables or continued to talk over the teachers directions. Some teachers demonstrated exasperation with students, as one teacher who told a student that he was "going too far" when he asked for further clarification on the learning task.	Basic	40%
		Unsatisfactory	0%

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

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The QSR team scored 55% of observations as proficient or distinguished in Establishing a Culture for Learning. Classroom interactions supported learning and hard work. Teachers praised students for high quality work, saying "Good job!" and that students were "on fire!" Teachers demonstrated high expectations by saying, "I want 100% for your homework!" and by telling students the criteria for high quality work. Students put forth good effort to complete high quality work, persisting in situations where the work was challenging. Students demonstrated pride in their work by enthusiastically contributing, telling the class their sentences with new vocabulary words, acting out scenes from a book, and sharing responses to pictures related to the time period of a novel.	Distinguished	10%
		Proficient	45%
	The QSR team scored 45% of observations as basic and none as unsatisfactory. Some teachers never mentioned the importance of the academic content. Some students exhibited little pride in their work, as teachers attempted to get students on-task with little impact or change in the students' behavior. Teachers in some classrooms conveyed high expectations for only a select group of students without encouraging all students to fully participate in the lesson, allowing some students to stay unengaged with their heads on their desks.	Basic	45%
		Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team scored 70% of observations as proficient in Managing Classroom Procedures. In most classrooms, there was little loss of instructional time due to effective classroom routines and procedures. Most classrooms included a clear structure, with a REACH activity, share out, direct instruction, and guided practice. Teachers used timers and countdowns	Distinguished	0%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	to signal to students the time left for certain activities. Teachers had established clear procedures for checking homework, as students knew to take it out as soon as they entered the classrooms and started their REACH activities. Students efficiently broke into groups when the teachers asked, without incident or loss of instruction time.	Proficient	70%
	The QSR team scored 30% of observations as basic or unsatisfactory. In some classrooms, routines and procedures were only partially effective, leading to a loss of instructional time. Material distribution and the collection of homework and class assignments seemed chaotic, as students yelled over the teachers' directions in some classrooms. In a small number of classrooms, teachers did not have the materials they needed at the beginning of the class, and left during the class to get additional copies, losing out on some instructional time as students were not productively engaged during their absence.	Basic	25%
		Unsatisfactory	5%
Managing Student Behavior	The QSR team scored 65% of observations as proficient or distinguished in Managing Student Behavior. In the majority of classrooms, the implementation of standards of conduct was consistent and effective across these classrooms. Student behavior was generally appropriate across classrooms, with students responding quickly to teachers' calls to get back on task or demonstrating no inappropriate behavior at all. In some classrooms, students redirected each other, telling classmates to "stop laughing!" while the teacher was talking. Teachers monitored student behavior in subtle ways, using proximity or simply by saying a student's name.	Distinguished	15%
		Proficient	50%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 35% of observations as basic and none as unsatisfactory. In a few classrooms, it was unclear if standards of conduct had been established, as students repeatedly talked over the teacher, and talk was not consistently related to academics. Teachers did not consistently follow through with consequences for off-task behavior, as in one classroom where the teacher reprimanded a student for asking too many questions and ignored students in the same classroom for keeping their heads on their desks.	Basic	35%
		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 59% of observations as "proficient" and none as "distinguished" for the Instruction domain.

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Communicating with Students	The QSR team scored 75% of observations as proficient and none as distinguished in Communicating with Students. In most classrooms, the teachers' explanations of content were well scaffolded and clear. Teachers invited student participation in content explanations, as they asked questions to advance the content and built upon student responses. Teachers clarified the purpose of lessons through written and oral directions including PowerPoint presentations.	Distinguished	0%
	Many teachers displayed the objectives of the lesson, along with statements related to what students would be able to do at the end of the lesson. At the end of lessons, some teachers asked students to read the objective and give a thumbs up or thumbs down as to whether or not they thought the class reached the objective. Teachers used rich vocabulary, suited to the lesson and age of the students. Teachers also extended students' vocabulary by asking them to use words in sentence during musical chairs, write sentences with new words, or define words in their own way.	Proficient	75%
	The QSR team scored 25% of observations as basic. In some classrooms, the teachers' attempt to explain the instructional purpose had inconsistent success or directions for learning tasks were unclear. Teachers had to give directions a few times and students seemed confused in a few classrooms. This was evident by students not engaging in the learning task, not responding when the teacher asked, "Does everyone know what to do?"	Basic	25%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	and continuing to ask questions about what to do well after the teacher handed out their worksheets. In a small number of classrooms, explanations of content consisted only of a monologue with little to no indication that students were following along.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques	The QSR team scored 55% of observations as proficient and none distinguished in Using Questioning/ Prompts and Discussion Techniques. In over half of the classrooms observed, teachers successfully engaged students in the discussion to ensure most if not all students participated. Students had opportunities to build off each other's responses as teachers asked them to react to classmates' impression of pictures of the Great Depression, explain whether they agreed or disagreed with a student's explanation of vocabulary words, and asked students to confirm a response to a math problem by explaining methodology. Teachers often asked a mix of low and higher-level questions to first establish background knowledge and then push students to consider content on a deeper level. Teachers called on most students during lessons, even those that did not initially volunteer.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	55%
	The QSR team scored 45% of observations as basic or unsatisfactory. In just under half of the classrooms observed, the teachers' attempts to engage all students in discussion had uneven results. In some classrooms student engagement was low, with limited attempts by the teachers to	Basic	30%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	engage all students as students had their heads on their desks, sat silently while not engaging in the learning task, or continued to chat with friends. Some teachers asked only low-level questions along a single path of inquiry, with pre-determined answers like a specific date, numeric response, or definition. In a small number of classrooms, teachers invited no student discussion at all with content explanations consisting only of a monologue.	Unsatisfactory	15%
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team scored 55% of observations as proficient and none distinguished in Engaging students in learning. In the majority of these classrooms, the learning activities were aligned with the instructional purpose and students were intellectually engaged. Teachers used a range of strategies and materials to engage students, including graphic organizers, literature books, PowerPoint presentations connected to content and oral discussion. Teachers used different groupings to maximize learning, such as turn-and-talk in pairs, table groups to discuss a non-fiction text, and medium-size (five to six students) groups to act out particular math terms with their bodies. In most classrooms, pacing was appropriate to allow for student engagement, starting with a REACH activity and share out, followed by direct instruction, guided practice, and individual work.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	55%
	The QSR team scored 45% of observations as basic or unsatisfactory. In these classrooms students remained unengaged with heads on desks or no	Basic	40%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	response to any questions without intervention from the teacher. Engagement remained passive in some classrooms where students had to learn only protocols or procedures. Students performed only rote tasks in some classrooms, copying definitions, translating sentences, and simply copying notes from the board with no discussion.	Unsatisfactory	5%
Using Assessment in Instruction	The QSR team scored 50% of observations as proficient and none distinguished in Using Assessment in Instruction. In these classrooms, teachers used informal assessments regularly to monitor progress of learning. In some classrooms, students corrected each other's REACH activities and speed work in math. Teachers walked around classrooms as students completed individual work or group work, providing timely feedback and scaffolding with further explanation where necessary. Teachers frequently ask questions throughout classes to gauge student understanding in informal ways. Teachers made efforts to ensure all students understand as they ask students to answer questions (even those who did not initially volunteer), check each student's individual homework, and check student's short responses.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	50%
	The QSR team scored 50% of observations as basic or unsatisfactory. In a couple of classrooms, there was no assessment of learning, as the teacher asked students if they understood and there was no response and no further action from the teacher. Some teachers used Exit Tickets to consolidate learning and other teachers did not use Exit Tickets at all, or	Basic	45%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	any other method to gauge if the class met the lesson objective. Feedback to students was not uniformly specific, with teachers missing opportunities to provide explanations about why they got an answer incorrect or how the students' definition did not quite match the correct definition of a given word. Other classrooms observed used only global assessment with students providing answers in unison, giving teachers little to no indication that all students were learning.	Unsatisfactory	5%

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 Richard Wright Public Charter School for Journalism and Media Arts' 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 October 16, 2014 and the observation window from to October 6 to October 17, 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
1. Increasing professional development around teacher collaboration.	▪ PCSB should see some similar branding across classrooms. For example, all classes have a focus on REACH. This is an engagement strategy into the lesson that leads into each lesson. This is built around teacher collaboration. Ex. If we're doing English and the class is working on interpretations, PCSB may see the strategy in other classes. You should see collaboration across strategies. ▪ PD has also focused on Team Teaching: Math, ex. PCSB will see the general math teacher and another math teacher that would be in the classroom to help small groups, or provide an extra explanation around content. If students are doing equations, a different teacher may be working with a group that needs	Throughout classroom observations on the scheduled day and during the two week window, the QSR team saw the consistent use of **REACH** strategies. Students entered classrooms efficiently, read the REACH on the board, and began to write. On the scheduled day, teachers asked students to make connections between history and art, interpret quotes, and compare different mathematical figures during the REACH activity to get the students engaged and prepared for the day's lessons. During the scheduled day and the two-week observation window, the QSR team saw some **team teaching** in math classrooms and in a couple of English Language Arts (ELA) classrooms. The predominant model was "one teach, one assist," with one teacher presenting instruction while the other teacher walked

	remediation. Team teaching occurs mainly in ELA and math.	around the room to ensure students were on task, give students further clarity on the directions for the learning task, and help students come to the correct response. Observers did not see both teachers actively presenting instruction (to either the entire class or to small groups within a class) in any classroom. During the scheduled day, the PCSB staff member observed a **debrief session between the instructional coach and a new teacher**. The instructional coach asked the teacher for impressions of how the lesson went, thought process behind choosing instructional activities, and how these supported the objective. The instructional coach ended by offering suggestions for how the teacher could have increased the instructional rigor of the lesson and strategies she could apply to future lessons.
2. Increased differentiation in classrooms	▪ Team teaching involves multiple adults in the classroom, checking in and providing feedback to individual students. ▪ Teachers differentiate instruction by creating action plans based on data to reteach where necessary. Action plans are done with ANet, focusing on math and reading. PCSB should see customized instruction.	Please see Strategy #1 for evidence related to **team teaching.** During the scheduled day, a PCSB observer sat in on a session between school leadership (including the ELA and math department heads) and an **ANet** coach. The purpose of the session was to review the school's first set of interim data for ELA and math, and for the coach to support school leadership in their

		preparation for the staff data meeting, scheduled for the following day. The coach brought leadership to the ELA data pages, and asked leadership to identify positive and negative trends, and weak and strong standards. The coach indicated that leadership should go through this same process with teachers. The coach walked leadership through an item analysis they would use with teachers, reading the passage and answering the questions students would answer, identifying possible misconceptions that would lead students to incorrect answers. He explained that this would be the same general process for math, and ended by answering leadership's questions. During the unscheduled observation window, the QSR team observed strategies to support all learners including flexible grouping/pairings, sentence starters in ELA courses, and PowerPoint presentations for students to follow along with during lessons. For additional evidence related to **differentiation,** please see the *Framework for Teaching* section of the report, specifically the *Classroom Instruction* component of *Engaging Students in Learning.*
3. More time spent focusing on developing literacy skills	Richard Wright PCS has hired two additional reading teachers in order to teach a reading fundamentals class for 8th graders.	During the two-week observation window, a PCSB observer saw a **Reading Fundamentals** class. Students read a story

	▪ School leadership has focused on teaching reading skills across the curriculum, beyond just ELA. Explicit reading skills should be taught in both Science and Social Studies. ▪ Richard Wright PCS uses the program Testourkids.com. PCSB should see students in the lab in the library. Some of the students are brought out of reading. Some of the students are brought out of English. This determination is made by the reading coordinator. All of the 8th graders do Reading Fundamentals and Testourkids.com. A portion of the tenth graders are brought out of the English to do testourkids.com.	about the Great Fire in Chicago. Students enhanced their vocabulary and developed writing skills through the task of creating a dialogue between the two fire firefighter featured in the story using the vocabulary of the day. A special education teacher supported the general education teacher in this classroom to scaffold instruction. Both teachers asked comprehension questions throughout the class to gauge student understand. The QSR team saw a **focus on reading and writing skills in courses beyond ELA** during both the scheduled day and the two-week observation window. Most REACH activities required short constructed responses, giving students practice writing. In Biology and Journalism, students had to read a part of a text and work with a partner to summarize and identify key terms and read a news event and summarize. In journalism and social studies, teachers focused on vocabulary development.
4. Frequent use of assessment to continually check student progress and to continue targeting instruction.	Richard Wright uses a wide range of assessments to benchmark students throughout the year. These include ANet (four before DC CAS) and Discovery Ed. As a result, instruction should be highly differentiated.	For information related to the use of **ANet** assessments, please see Strategy #2. For additional information related to the use of assessment in instruction, please see the *Framework for Teaching* section of this report, specifically the *Instructional Delivery*

		component of *Using Assessment in Instruction.*
5. Co-teaching in math	Co-teaching in math provides the opportunity for students to receive more differentiated support and feedback from teachers.	For information related to **co-teaching**, please see Strategy #1.
6. Increases in instructional time with the use of technology	Students have the opportunity for more instructional time using online programs. Richard Wright PCS has a library where students can access online programs, going through various modules in Learning Lab. Students have additional instructional time during Saturday school. Saturday school is mandatory for 8th and 10th graders. Ninth graders are filtered in according to need. There is also additional instructional time after school, when teachers coach class and study groups.	While increases in instructional time with the use of technology may be in place, PCSB neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this strategy.
7. Increase home-school connection	Through an emphasis on homework and accountability for completing homework, teachers are constantly giving students feedback to make the connection between what they do in school and what they do at home. Because students have to turn in their homework at the beginning of the day, school leadership is able to connect with parents in situations where students are not completing homework.	During the scheduled day, a PCSB observer had the opportunity to see the **homework intake process** at the beginning of the school day. Teachers set up desks at student entrances to "check students in" and collect their homework. Doing so gave teachers an opportunity to greet the students, gauge how the students are doing, and provide an additional level of accountability for student's homework completion. The school leader

		explained that teachers call home when students miss assignments. The school leadership also described home visits that staff participated in at the beginning of the year. Staff visited many of the student's homes to connect with parents. They will continue to do this throughout the school year. During the scheduled day, the PCSB observer witnessed **Family Matters,** which is a short time at the beginning of the school day where students come together as a family with school leadership after breakfast. They say the pledge, listen to announcements, hear shout outs for students, sing patriotic songs, and transition to class.