



February 5, 2016

Donald Hense
Board Chair, Friendship Public Charter School
120 Q Street NE, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Hense,

The DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) conducts Strategies Visits to gather and document evidence to support school oversight of schools that are identified as Focus or Priority by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). According to the 2014 Memorandum of Understanding that DC PCSB has with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) around implementation of the 2012 Waiver to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, DC PCSB must "ensure that public charter schools identified as Focus or Priority are providing interventions and supports to students and their teachers consistent with that school's Intervention and Support Plan" (p.5). Your high school was designated as Focus by OSSE in school year 2014-15 based on state test results from school year 2012-13 for the performance of students with disabilities in reading.

DC PCSB conducted its third Strategies Visit in two years from November 12 to November 20, 2015. The purpose of the visits is to observe how the school's Focus intervention strategies are being implemented. The visit included a scheduled visit and two unscheduled visits.

The Strategies Visit report is attached. We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that the staff gave the monitoring team.

Sincerely,


Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures

cc: Ms. Patricia Brantley, Ms. Kimberly Campbell, and Mr. Dwan Jordon

Strategies Visit Report

Date: February 5, 2016

Campus Name: Friendship Public Charter School – Collegiate Academy (Friendship PCS- Collegiate)

Ward: 7

Grade levels: 9-12

Enrollment: 811

Previous ESEA monitoring visits: January 2015 (full Qualitative Site Review with Strategies Visit), April 2015 (Strategies Visit)

Subgroup: Reading - students with disabilities

Two-week window: November 9 – November 20, 2015

Scheduled days: November 12, 2015

SCHOOL INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES

The following table summarizes Friendship Public Charter School—Collegiate Academy’s (Friendship PCS—Collegiate) strategies and evidence collected by DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) for the purposes of the 2012 ESEA Flexibility Waiver. DC PCSB observed the school implementing those strategies during both the scheduled day on November 12, 2015 and the observation window from November 9 to November 20, 2015, in which unscheduled visits took place.

Friendship PCS – Collegiate was first identified by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) as a Focus school in fall of 2014 based on the performance of their students with disabilities on the reading portion of the state assessment in school year 2012-13. Please note that OSSE was delayed one year in its identification of the school as a Focus school and DC PCSB began monitoring the school in school year 2014-15. The school will remain under Focus status until it meets the exit criteria, established by OSSE. The state switched to a new assessment in school year 2014-15, causing its original exit criteria to no longer be applicable. This resulted in no schools being eligible to exit in school year 2014-15, regardless of improvements captured in Strategies Visits and performance on the state assessment. Therefore Friendship PCS – Collegiate is considered to be in its second year of Focus Strategies monitoring despite having been identified based on data from three years ago.

DC PCSB monitored the school two times in school year 2014-15. To see the previous monitoring visits, go [here \(access key: ESSA\)](#). The first visit in January of 2015 was a full Qualitative Site Review (QSR) where the QSR team collected evidence related to the

school’s mission and goals, and conducted classroom observations and reported evidence aligned to the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* in addition to collecting evidence of the school’s implementation of its Focus strategies. DC PCSB conducts full QSRs with a Strategies Visit component related to a school’s Focus identification in the first half of the first year of identification to gather baseline data related to the school’s overall instructional program and the school’s implementation of Focus strategies. Subsequent visits do not contain QSRs and are limited to just observing Focus strategies. The results of the Strategies Visits are used to collect interim evidence that the school is implementing the strategies identified in its Focus plan (see table below). To exit Focus status, however, the school will need to meet the exit criteria, established by OSSE. With the change in state assessment, OSSE has yet to establish exit criteria.

DC PCSB leaves it to the discretion of school leadership to determine the best use of time during the scheduled day of observations of Strategies Visits and gathers evidence from “snapshots” of a school day taken during the unscheduled visits. Therefore DC PCSB may not observe all Focus strategies. Cases where DC PCSB did not observe a strategy are indicated in the report. It is DC PCSB’s current policy to not ask school leadership to identify individual students who have disabilities. During the scheduled day DC PCSB asked Friendship PCS--Collegiate to indicate which classrooms and/or events demonstrate the strongest evidence that the school is implementing its Focus strategies to support its students with disabilities.

Overall DC PCSB saw moderate implementation of strategies to support students with disabilities in reading. DC PCSB saw strong implementation of the school’s use of formative assessments through data cycle discussions and monthly professional learning community work, but saw little differentiation in classrooms and no small group work (beyond an intervention class with under ten students) in English Language Arts classes. Observers noted challenges with classroom management which impeded instructional delivery in some classes.

Strategy Described in School Improvement Plan	School’s Description of Strategy on the Ground	Evidence

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<p>Use formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction</p>	<p>Teachers participate in ongoing 6 week data cycles that include analysis and re teaching of interim data.</p> <p>Teachers receive weekly observation and feedback sessions from the Instructional Leadership team.</p> <p>Monthly Professional Learning Community work related to strategies that will improve student achievement that take place in lateral teams. Using data analysis to form small groups for guided reading in reading intervention courses.</p>	<p>DC PCSB saw strong implementation of the use of formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction during the scheduled day, where DC PCSB attended a "data day" as part of the school's six- week data cycle. On the "data day" teachers and administrators came together to discuss the results of an interim assessment. During a ninth grade planning session, teachers reviewed the interim assessment with the help of an administrator and discussed the standards associated with questions, noting the percent of students who answered the question correctly. The group discussed which standards to prioritize based both on the percent of students who missed those standards and on the relative importance of a particular standard.</p> <p>During the data discussion, teachers created reteach plans based on student challenges. Intervention teachers worked in groups using the Results Meeting Protocol where they went through the objective, what has worked, challenges, brainstorm, and consensus. One group discussed how students struggle with identifying the main idea and evidence to support the main idea. The group discussed ways to address this challenge and create more buy-in for the intervention program. They reviewed next steps in improving students' ability to identify the main idea, including modeling annotation, providing an annotation key, prompting students for one-sentence summaries, and asking students to complete graphic organizers. Lastly the group worked on reteach plans to implement the strategies above in instruction.</p>

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		<p>DC PCSB saw school leadership observing teachers but did not witness feedback sessions between school leadership and teachers. We will observe this in the spring.</p> <p>DC PCSB observed a monthly professional learning community meeting about the academic and non-academic performance of special education students on the scheduled day. Participants included special education coordinators, teachers and the school principal. The group discussed data demonstrating improvements in special education service delivery and increased time using the intervention systems Read 180 and System 44, Individualized Education Program (IEP) timeliness, reasons for untimely IEPs, and confirmed that all late IEPs had been remedied. The group noted a downward trend in the number of suspensions of special education students attributing this to improved wrap-around services and school-based efforts (like greater effort on the part of teachers to support students) to keep students in school. The principal then led a discussion about the special education students' academic performance, asking teachers what patterns they observed in the students who are failing courses. The group discussed grades where most special education students are. The group highlighted the need for increased time using interventions, and presented an Intervention Accountability spreadsheet used to track class use of interventions, noting that some teachers need to increase usage with students. For additional information related to interventions</p>

Strategy Described in School Improvement Plan	School's Description of Strategy on the Ground	Evidence
		<p>and planning, please see the strategy below, <i>Extend learning time before, during and after school that is aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS)</i>.</p> <p>DC PCSB's observation of small groups was limited to one reading intervention class that had fewer than ten students, though the intervention was not delivered effectively. The teacher drilled the class with questions in a rapid manner, causing confusion for many students as they struggled to keep up with the questions and requiring them to repeatedly ask the teacher for clarification on which number they were on. In the other classes observed, DC PCSB saw no small group work within a larger class and limited differentiation.</p>
<p>Extend learning time before, during and after school that is aligned to Common Core State Standard.</p>	<p>Students performing below grade level receive various interventions throughout the day through reading and/or math labs. The following interventions are provided: Achieve 3000 - Reading intervention for students scoring 3 grade levels</p>	<p>DC PCSB did not see computer-based reading interventions take place despite observing multiple English Language Arts classes listed on the master schedule as including students with disabilities and will observe this during the spring visit.</p> <p>As described above in the strategy <i>Use formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction</i>, DC PCSB observed strong evidence of teachers planning interventions. However the one intervention class that DC PCSB observed seemed ineffective, as described in the strategy above <i>Use</i></p>

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	<p>below their current grade.</p> <p>Wilson Reading – Intervention for students who are at or below the 5th grade level. (New students have been added and students regrouped based on MAP performance and No Nonsense Reading Assessment).</p> <p>Read 180 (new) - Students who score 2 or more grade levels below for 9th and 10th graders.</p>	<p><i>formative assessment design and data analysis to improve and differentiate instruction.</i></p>