



January 12, 2017

Donald Hense, Board Chair
Friendship Public Charter School – Woodridge Middle
2959 Carlton Avenue NE
Washington, DC 20018

Dear Mr. Hense:

The DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews to gather and document evidence to support school oversight. According to the School Reform Act § 38-1802.11, DC 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 2016-17 school year for the following reason:

- School eligible for 20-year Charter Review during 2017-18 school year

Qualitative Site Review Report

A Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Friendship Public Charter School – Woodridge Middle between November 7, 2016 through December 2, 2016. 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 Friendship Public Charter School – Woodridge Middle.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Naomi DeVeaux.

Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: School Leader

Qualitative Site Review Report

Date: January 12, 2017

Campus Information

Campus Name: Friendship Public Charter School – Woodridge Middle

Ward: 5

Grade levels: 4-8

Qualitative Site Review Information

Reason for visit: School eligible for 20-year Charter Review during 2017-18 school year

Observation window: November 7, 2016 – December 2, 2016

QSR team members: Two DC PCSB staff members including a SPED specialist and two consultants including an ELL specialist

Number of observations: 15

Total enrollment: 199

Students with Disabilities enrollment: 31

English Language Learners enrollment: <10

In-seat attendance on the days the QSR team conducted observations:

Visit 1: November 8, 2016 – 99.4%

Visit 2: November 10, 2016 – 90.3%

Visit 3: November 14, 2016 – 94.9%

Visit 4: November 29, 2016 – 95.9%

Summary

The mission of the 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.

Friendship PCS – Woodridge Middle provides a safe learning environment for students. Most teachers demonstrated respectful encouraging behavior, praising students and thanking them for their hard work. Most of the students were also respectful in their interactions with each other and their teachers.

During the QSR two-week window, the team used the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to examine classroom environments and instructional delivery (see Appendix I). The QSR team scored 78% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Classroom Environment domain. The highest rated components in this domain were *Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport* and *Establishing a Culture for Learning* with 87% of observations rated proficient or distinguished. The students exhibited respect for their teachers and interactions between among students were generally polite. The teachers communicated high expectations for learning for all students. The lowest rated component in this domain was *Managing Classroom Procedures* with 67% of observations rated as proficient or distinguished. In some observations instructional time was lost due to ineffective classroom routines and procedures.

The QSR team scored 60% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain. The highest rated component in this domain was *Communicating with Students* with 80% of observations receiving a rating of proficient or distinguished. In these observations the instructional purpose of the lesson was made clear to students. The lowest rated component in this domain was *Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques* with 40% of observations receiving a rating of proficient or distinguished. In many observations questioning did not promote student thinking or illuminate whether students were understanding the content.

DC PCSB had to overcome many logistical obstacles to conduct the reviews across the Friendship PCS organization. DC PCSB meets with each school prior to the QSR to explain the QSR process. During this time Friendship PCS asked DC PCSB to change many of the observation windows. DC PCSB changed the dates and Friendship PCS agreed to the dates of the new observation windows.

Friendship PCS was late in getting the requested documents to DC PCSB including: schedules, room numbers, goals charts, board meeting minutes etc. In many cases the schedules were incorrect and had to be resubmitted to DC PCSB. Friendship PCS scheduled testing during every QSR window. DC PCSB had to extend the review windows for multiple schools in order to collect data.

Governance

DC PCSB reviewed Friendship PCS' October board meeting minutes. A quorum was present. The Finance Committee approved the LEA's clean audit and discussed the net income and enrollment trends. The School Performance Committee reviewed academic data from each campus. The Board discussed the LEA's upcoming charter review.

Specialized Instruction for Students with Disabilities

Prior to the two-week window, Friendship PCS – Woodridge Middle provided answers to specific questions posed by DC PCSB regarding the provision of instruction to Students with Disabilities. A Special Education specialist looked for evidence of the school's articulated program. The reviewer noted some evidence of the school's planned programming for students with disabilities.

The school reported in its Special Education Questionnaire that general education teachers use resources, such as IEPs at a Glance, assistive technology toolkits and the Wilson Just Words program to support the learning of its students with disabilities. The reviewer did not observe use of these additional resources during independent practice.

- The school stated that general educators and special educators regularly plan together 1) to ensure learning objectives and instructional strategies are clear, and 2) so special education teachers can incorporate the co-planning elements in their push-in and pull-out sessions. The QSR team saw co-teaching however, one of the teachers arrived after the start of the period and had no interactions with the general education teacher during the observation. The teacher did not facilitate any component of the lesson.

- The school also explained that teachers differentiate instruction by scaffolding questions, using computer-based learning tools, and offering guided reading instruction. Observers saw evidence of differentiation in two of the three classes observed. One teacher scaffolded instruction and the other teacher introduced a new text to their students by assessing prior knowledge before practicing guided reading with a lower level text.

Specialized Instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs)

Prior to the two-week window, Friendship PCS – Woodridge MS provided answers to specific questions posed by DC PCSB regarding the provision of instruction to English Language Learners. An ELL specialist looked for evidence of the school’s articulated program.:

- The school offers ELL services using a pull-out, push-in model. Out of the two middle school ELL observations conducted, one was of a pull-out session with one 6th grader and one 8th grader of similar language level, and the other was of a push in session with a 4th grade class during guided reading.
- Per the schedule provided by the school most students only receive one 40-minute session of ELL services per week. The ELL teacher’s schedule consists of two active days of ELL sessions split between elementary and middle school students with one ELL session averaging around 40 min. on Tuesday and the second day, Thursday, is used to revisit one 6th grade student for one session of one hour and one 40 - minute session for make ups or extra time.
- In the ELL questionnaire, the school indicated that the ELL Coordinator would check for understanding both formally and informally by communicating with each student, asking strategic questions, and monitoring their work. This was evident in the observed pull out lesson with two emergent ELL students. The lesson was implemented in Spanish and English with most student responses given in Spanish. The ELL teacher prompted students in a vocabulary activity that used language level appropriate materials. The teacher used modeling and appropriate wait time, as well as strategic questioning to scaffold student learning. The teacher adjusted her language depending on the students’ responses, interjecting words in Spanish and using hand gestures, mimicking, and examples.
- In the questionnaire, the school indicated that the general educators are intentional about providing specific accommodations and modifications for ELL students so that English Language Learners can participate just as much as their classmates and so that all students can access the curriculum and learning. During the push in lesson observed the ELL Teacher pushed into a 4th grade class where she supported one ELL student. The ELL teacher read with the student, asking clarifying questions, and pointing out important passages. The general educator called on all the students in the classroom, including the ELL student, offering appropriate wait time, and scaffolding in the form of context clues and peer assistance, which allowed all the students to participate in the lesson. The general educator also wrote instructions down for students who struggled listening and following along.

CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

This table summarizes qualitative evidence related to the goals and academic achievement expectations as detailed in the school’s charter and subsequent charter amendments. Some charter goals can only be measured quantitatively. The Qualitative Site Review (QSR) team recorded evidence of what the school is doing on the ground to meet these quantitative goals. During the 5-year charter review, 10-year charter review, or 15-year charter renewal process, DC PCSB staff will use quantitative data to assess whether the school met those goals.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
<p>Mission:</p> <p>The mission of Friendship Public Charter School – Woodridge Middle 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.</p>	<p>There is evidence that Friendship PCS– Woodridge Middle is meeting its mission. Teachers and students were respectful of one another. Most students were engaged and eager to learn. The physical space included many postings on the walls demonstrating high-level student work and postings that displayed information about potential colleges.</p> <p>The school has a warm, caring environment. The ten tenets of the scholars: principled, communicator, risk-taker, caring, thinker, open-minded, inquirer, reflective, balanced, knowledgeable are posted throughout the building. There are world map murals throughout the building with information about world cultures and celebrations. Bulletin boards and posters have examples of student work, test scores and social-emotional development guides and exemplars.</p>
Goals:	

Mission and Goals	Evidence
<p>PMF Indicator #1: Student Progress – Academic Improvement over time</p> <p>PMF Indicator #2: Student Achievement – Meeting or exceeding academic standards</p>	<p>The QSR team observed effective instruction in math and ELA classes. The team also saw evidence of differentiation in both subjects.</p> <p>In the math classes students worked on grade-level appropriate assignments. Teachers encouraged students to check their math work and describe how they solved problems.</p> <p>In ELA classes teachers used guided reading and close reading strategies to help students understand the text. In a few of the ELA classes teachers used higher-order questioning and ensured that students could cite evidence from the text when providing their answers.</p>
<p>PMF Indicator # 3: Gateway – Outcomes in key subjects that predict future educational success</p>	<p>Student engagement in all math observations was high. Students asked questions and completed assignments with limited prompting from the teacher. Students worked on prerequisite skills before approaching more difficult material.</p>
<p>PMF Indicator #4: School Environment – Predictors of future student progress and achievement</p>	<p>DC PCSB measures attendance to evaluate the climate of a school. DC PCSB believes that if students are not in school, they lose opportunities for learning.</p> <p>In-seat attendance¹ on the days the QSR team conducted observations:</p> <p>Visit 1: November 8, 2016 – 99.4%</p> <p>Visit 2: November 10, 2016 – 90.3%</p> <p>Visit 3: November 14, 2016 – 94.9%</p> <p>Visit 4: November 29, 2016 – 95.9%</p>

¹This data has not been validated by the school. DC PCSB pulled the data in December 2016.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT²

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 78% 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 87% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Interactions between students and teachers were respectful and polite. In one observation the students passed around a get-well card for an absent student. In another observation the teacher asked about a student’s home country. Several teachers commented on student work saying “Good job” or sharing a student’s answer with the class. In most observations there were no instances of disrespect or student misbehavior.	Distinguished	7%
		Proficient	80%
	The QSR team rated less than 10% of the observations as basic in this component.	Basic	7%
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The QSR team scored 87% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. The teachers conveyed positive messages about hard work and student success. In one observation the teacher shared, “If it takes you more than twenty minutes, but you are showing your work, that is ok. Good mathematicians show all of their work.” When	Distinguished	7%

² Teachers may be observed more than once by different review team members.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	one class earned a two-minute break most of the students continued to work through the break. Another teacher told a student, "great job... I know that was hard to read."	Proficient	80%
	The QSR team scored 13% of the observations as basic in this component. In one observation the teacher never commented on the students work effort or quality. Some students complied with the teacher requests while other socialized during the entire observation. The teacher's energy and pace was neutral. During another point in the lesson the teacher sat down and carried on a long conversation with an administrator that entered the classroom leaving the class unattended.	Basic	13%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team scored 67% of the observations as proficient in this component. In many observations the routines functioned smoothly. The teachers had established attention signals and hand signals for procedures such as using the restroom and pencil sharpener, asking a question, and getting tissues. Students moved quickly between stations in many observations. Teachers also used timing devices to signal students to change tasks.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	67%
	The QSR team scored 33% of the observations as basic in this component. In one observation the teacher ended class 10 minutes early. In another observation the teacher spent several minutes of class time searching for a student's presentation while the rest of the class sat idle.	Basic	33%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Student Behavior	The QSR team scored 73% of the observations as proficient in this component. In several observations student behavior was entirely appropriate or the teacher successfully managed minor incidents. In one observation the teacher asked students to reflect on their behavior at the end of the lesson asking questions such as "How did we speak to other" and "How well did we participate?"	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	73%
	The QSR team scored 27% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations the teacher had difficulty managing student behavior. Students frequently socialized and were off-task. One teacher clapped to regain the students' attention, but the students did not change their behavior.	Basic	27%
	The QSR team scored 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 60% of classrooms as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Instruction domain.

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
		Rating	Percentage
Communicating with Students	The QSR team scored 80% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. In these observations the teachers clearly stated the lesson objectives. The teachers modeled the learning activities and pre-taught vocabulary to help students understand the text. One teacher used a lively voice to grab student's attention while reading a story about life on Mars. The students did their best to imitate the teacher's style of reading.	Distinguished	13%
		Proficient	67%
	The QSR team scored 20% of the observations as basic in this component. In one observation the teacher said that the goal of the class was for students to complete a worksheet and did not communicate a learning objective to the students. In another observation the teacher made a minor content error. One teacher did not use age-appropriate vocabulary telling the students that the activity would be finished when the "big hand gets on the nine."	Basic	20%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Questioning/Prompts	The QSR team scored 47% of the observations as proficient in this	Distinguished	0%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
and Discussion Techniques	component. In one observation the teacher encouraged students who had not raised their hands to participate in the conversation. Several classes used turn and talk to discuss what they were reading in the text. In several observations students used sign language to show that they agreed with their peers. In other observations students built on their classmates' answers when responding to questions. The teachers asked thought-provoking questions and encouraged students to cite evidence from the text when providing answers.	Proficient	47%
	The QSR team scored 53% of the observations as basic in this component. Some teachers asked several questions to students, but most of them seemed to lead students along a single path of inquiry. In these classes the teacher predominantly asked low-level questions such as "what part of speech is that?" or "how do you spell this?" Some of the teachers asked higher-level questions but didn't give students enough time to answer before they answered themselves.	Basic	53%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team scored 60% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. In many observations students were intellectually engaged throughout the entire lesson. Students read, followed along with the lessons and asked questions. In one observations	Distinguished	7%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	<p>teachers asked students to choose a science project and the materials needed to complete the research of their topic. In these observations pacing was appropriate and teachers provided students with supplementary activities if they finished early.</p>	Proficient	53%
	<p>The QSR team scored 40% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations students were off task and did not complete the assignments. In one observation the teacher sat in the front of the classroom and did not engage with any of the students. In another class students were given choice in their class project, but the pace of the lesson dragged on due to the teachers' unpreparedness.</p>	Basic	40%
	<p>The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.</p>	Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Assessment in Instruction	<p>The QSR team scored 54% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. In these observations teachers used questioning to monitor student learning and understanding. Teachers circulated the room looking at student work and corrected students as they read. In some classes the students snapped to show that they agreed or disagreed with an answer to a problem.</p>	Distinguished	7%
		Proficient	47%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	<p>The QSR team scored 46% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations the feedback to students was not specific. Students gave answers that were incorrect and the teacher did little to address the misunderstandings. In one observation the teacher used whole group checks for understanding and very few students responded to the teachers inquiry about whether they mastered the content.</p>	Basic	46%
	<p>The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.</p>	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.
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 situated 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 many 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.
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.