DC PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

May 25, 2017

Dr. Deneen Long-White
Washington Mathematics Science Technology PCS
1920 Bladensburg Road NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Dr. Long-White:

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 Washington Mathematics Science Technology PCS between March 6, 2017 and March 17, 2017. 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 Mathematics Science Technology PCS.

Sincerely,

Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: Dr. N'Deye Diagne

Qualitative Site Review Report

Date: May 25, 2017

Campus Information
Campus Name: Washington Mathematics Science Technology Public Charter School
Ward: 5
Grade levels: 9-12

Qualitative Site Review Information
Reason for visit: School eligible to for 20-year Charter Review during 2017-18 school year
Two-week window: March 6, 2017 - March 17, 2017
QSR team members: 2 DC PCSB staff, 3 consultants including a Special Education Specialist
Number of observations: 25
Total enrollment: 297
Students with Disabilities enrollment: 66
English Language Learners enrollment: <10
In-seat attendance on the days the QSR team conducted observations:
Visit 1: March 7, 2017- 80.5%
Visit 2: March 8, 2017- 73.7%
Visit 3: March 10, 2017- 72.4%
Visit 4: March 17, 2017- 78.8%

Summary

The mission of Washington Mathematics Science and Technology Public Charter High School (WMST PCS) is to offer a rigorous education that integrates mathematics and science instruction with technology resulting in highly self-motivated students.

WMST PCS is a welcoming school. School staff greeted the QSR team and offered to assist with directions as the team navigated the building. Students and teachers with a few exceptions had positive rapports and most students demonstrated a willingness to complete learning tasks and to follow directions.

However several aspects of our QSR were troubling. DC PCSB did not see evidence that all students are held to high academic standards and attendance was consistently poor. The level of rigor in many classrooms was low and students were inconsistently held accountable for school-wide expectations such as tardiness, use of cell phones in classrooms or removal of their jackets. Behavior in the halls was not entirely appropriate. While many teachers stood in their doorways during transitions there are long stretches of hallway with no classrooms and little monitoring. Some students in the hall were on phones, yelling profanity, play fighting and wandering around extremely tardy with no apparent consequence or tracking system.

As noted in the report below, the ratings of the Danielson domains are low for a school approaching their 20th year of operation. As described in detail in this report, the QSR team observed a disturbing number of poorly taught classes. And it is worth noting that not a single observation in any domain or component was rated as "distinguished." Moreover, there is little evidence that the school is implementing its special education

program with fidelity. Finally, in contrast with the general level of respect and rapport observed, a teacher in one observation told a student with a thick accent to speak English when she said her answer so everyone could understand her. The class and the teacher then laughed at the student after she responded to the teachers' question.

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 57% of observations proficient and 0% as distinguished in the Classroom Environment domain as compared to 80% proficient and distinguished for this domain in the April 2013 report. The highest rated component was *Creating a Relationship of Respect and Rapport with 71%* of observations rated as proficient. The QSR team agreed that there is generally a high-level of respect and care demonstrated between teachers and students. The lowest rated component was *Establishing a Culture for Learning* with just 35% of observations rated as proficient. In a few observations teachers conveyed high expectations for students and students demonstrated a commitment to high-quality work. In most observations, however, students could disengage from the learning for extended periods of time and there was no sense of urgency to complete learning tasks. The QSR team noted that in several observations overhead lights were off and most classrooms do not have windows making the learning environment dark.

The QSR team scored 40% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain down from 70% for this domain in the April 2013 report. The highest rated component was *Using Assessment in Instruction* with 52% scored as proficient. In these observations teachers circulated during work time offering individualized help to students. Students in a few observations made immediate adjustments to improve class work based on teacher feedback. The lowest rated component was *Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques* with 30% of observations rated as proficient. In a few observations students participated in unstructured on-task discussions responding directly to each other and building off each other's responses. However in nearly three-fourths of observations teachers did not pose questions that would generate student thinking.

Governance

A DC PCSB staff member observed the WMST PCS Board of Trustees meeting on March 22, 2017. A quorum was present. The Board Chair gave an update about retaining legal services to support the school's potential property acquisition. The Head of School announced that a current senior won first place in the National Cherry Blossom Youth Art Contest and the school's robotics team won the 2017 Chesapeake District Northern Maryland Rookie Inspiration Award. The Board recognized several students who won awards at the DC STEM Fair. The Head of School announced a new open hours initiative to meet with students weekly and parents bi-monthly. The Board discussed potentially moving to a year-round schedule to help motivate students who are behind academically. The Board also discussed offering Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes such as cosmetology and Microsoft Word in the evenings.

Specialized Instruction for Students with Disabilities

Prior to the two-week window, WMST PCS responded to a DC PCSB questionnaire regarding the provision of instruction to students with disabilities. The reviewer who conducted special education-specific observations noted some evidence that the school is implementing its special education program with fidelity.

- The school stated that special education teachers provide targeted support to students in their general education settings and in the special education resource room. Observers saw teachers re-phrase instructions, provide graphic organizers and highlighters, and modify assignment lengths in both settings.

- The resource room served as a "support station" for students with disabilities to receive one-on-one assistance to complete academic tasks. In one instance the observers saw assignments that provided students with choice in how they demonstrated their learning. Students chose between making a PowerPoint presentation or writing a magazine article.

- The school described the resource room as a safe and supportive learning environment. The special education specialist on the QSR team noted that teachers supported students in the resource room. In one observation one student logged onto the Achieve 3000 Reading software program to enhance comprehension skills while another student received tips in preparation for a paid internship interview the next day.

- The school described variety of methods used to gauge student learning, including Do Nows, exit tickets, oral questioning, anecdotal records, portfolios, student's presentations, essay writing, and after school tutoring. DC PCSB saw little evidence that all teachers effectively gauged student understanding. In some observations teachers used exit tickets, although questions were generally broad such as "What did you learn today?" or "What was your favorite activity today?" The QSR team saw frequent use of oral questioning with mixed levels of participation.

- Although support was available from the special educator in some observations, general educators generally did not provide modifications. DC PCSB did not observe the use of interactive lessons or visual aids as suggested in the questionnaire.

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 charter review or charter renewal process, DC PCSB staff will use quantitative data to assess whether the school met those goals.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
Mission: To offer a rigorous education that integrates mathematics and science instruction with technology resulting in highly self-motivated students.	The QSR team observed weak evidence that the Washington Mathematics Science and Technology PCS is meeting its stated mission. In most classrooms the level of rigor was low and students did not demonstrate self-motivation. However in a few classes related to the math, science and technology component of the mission students and teachers worked together on engaging grade-appropriate tasks. Students enroll in theme-based classes such as 3D animation, Java, pre-calculus, robotics, and AP science courses. Students in an Aero Science class (exclusively for ROTC students) used airport models to learn the concept of scale. Students had just visited an Air Force base for a flying lesson. In one robotics class students worked on creating diagrams and designing PowerPoint presentations. Students asked tough questions and spent 100% of the observation cognitively challenged. In another observation students used graphing calculators to find the determinant of matrices. In a few of the mission specific courses (math, science or technology) teachers demonstrated high energy and students demonstrated motivation and curiosity by asking thoughtful and relevant questions; however the teachers did not use these questions to facilitate deep thinking or discussion.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	The QSR team did not observe regular integration of technology into the core-content areas. In two observations teachers attempted to use technology (once as an interactive White Board during direct instruction and once a laptop for each student) however the technology was broken and the teachers had to adjust their instruction. In one class the teacher used the "Close Reading" curriculum with the students. She used audio and the whiteboard to share new vocabulary and to highlight certain parts of the text for the class however the students did not use any technology themselves. Overall instruction in many classes was not rigorous, and students did not appear highly self-motivated. Many of the assignments were low-level. In one observation the teacher said, "List facts in the article. Turn them into questions. Answer the questions. For example: 'The father is from California.' Turn that into, 'Where is the father from?' The answer is, 'The father is from California.'" In an information technology class, there was one student present who worked alone defining vocabulary words.
Goals:	
PMF Indicator #1: Student Progress – Academic improvement over time *Effective instruction supporting student academic progress in reading.* PMF Indicator #2: Student Achievement – Meeting or exceeding academic standards *Moving students to proficient and advanced levels in reading.*	Overall the QSR team did not see consistently strong literacy instruction. In a few observations teachers utilized effective teaching strategies and engaged students in grade-appropriate content and learning activities. In one observation students started to do a close reading of a story. The teacher attempted to activate prior knowledge and pre-teach new vocabulary ("poignant" and "vignette") but only a few students participated. The teacher worked with each of the five students in the class giving individual help and feedback. However students did not

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	complete the work and were, therefore, not assessed. In another observation students read *Macbeth*. The teacher asked comprehension questions and insisted that each student explain their answer and site evidence. Only students who volunteered participated leaving many students sitting passively. In one class students worked on independent essays with little guidance from the teacher. In other literacy courses the QSR team observed little instruction and academic tasks did not challenge students. In one observation students participated in a discussion about a documentary and an article opposing the documentary. Students were highly engaged in the discussion and nearly all students had an opportunity to discuss their opinion and ideas. However the discussion lacked structure. Students could speak while their peers were speaking and students did not demonstrate ways to effectively disagree without yelling at each. In one upper level English course, students completed learning tasks that were not age-appropriate. Students were instructed to "build a fence as it is depicted in the book," using pipe cleaners and popsicle sticks. The only questions asked of students related to the play were: "What year was August Wilson born" and "What year did August Wilson succumb?" Students asked, "What kind of fence?" Or "What do you want us to do?" but the teacher never clarified and no one completed the work. In another upper-level English course students completed a handout on which they were to identify parts of speech. Many students asked what an adjective/adverb/noun were.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
PMF Indicator #1: Student Progress – Academic improvement over time *Effective instruction supporting student academic progress in math.* PMF Indicator #2: Student Achievement – Meeting or exceeding academic standards *Moving students to proficient and advanced levels in math.*	The QSR team observed some strong math instruction with high levels of student engagement. In one observation the teacher taught a mini-lesson on finding the products of binomials by using the foil method, the distributive property and special products. Students then worked independently and remained engaged throughout the observation. In another lesson student engagement was initially mixed during a lesson on matrices and determinants. During the mini-lesson some students followed along and took notes. However all students were excited when the teacher distributed graphing calculators actively engaged in the remainder of the lesson. In other observations the level or rigor and engagement were low. In one observation a teacher wrote five formulas on the board and students plugged numbers into the formulas with no further thought or inquiry. When students had questions, the teacher pointed to the board and said, "Just plug numbers into the formulas." In Geometry, the teacher asked students to take a formula with three variables, plug in for two variables, and solve for the third. They did not discuss where the formula came from or why/how it is used and the teacher did not model how to complete the task.
PMF Indicator # 3: Gateway – Outcomes aligned to college and career Readiness	The QSR team did not look for specific data related to high school graduation rates but observed little evidence related to college and career readiness. As related to college readiness, the team did not observe any discussion or preparation for SAT/ACT or PSAT apart from one AVID class. In this observation the teacher reviewed common prefixes such as con-, tri-, and uni- in a lesson on

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	vocabulary. Additionally students went on a virtual tour of a college campus and shared what they liked about that college. In the hallway the QSR team observed a bulletin board with photos of high school graduation from the previous year. As related to career readiness, in a Computer science class students worked on Microsoft certification. The teacher pushed students to keep working hard and focus so that they could pass their Microsoft Word Certification. He encouraged all the students and gave praise when they completed a portion successfully.
PMF Indicator #4: School Environment – Predictors of future student progress and achievement	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. On each day of observations, the school had attendance rates below 82%, which is the floor of the Performance Management Framework. In-seat attendance on the days the QSR team conducted observations: Visit 1: March 7, 2017- 80.5% Visit 2: March 8, 2017- 73.7% Visit 3: March 10, 2017- 72.4% Visit 4: March 17, 2017- 78.8% In addition to the low attendance rates, students frequently entered class late with no consequence.
Mission-Specific Goal #1: WMST students will exceed the state proficiency average on the state biology assessment.	The QSR team observed one biology class. The instruction in this class was weak. The objective was for students to describe the structure of DNA and explain how the structure of DNA allows for the transfer of genetic information. The students focused on pulling apart a model of DNA that was taped together as well as a review of base pairing rules. The teachers' explanations were difficult to follow and students often

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	put their heads down and sighed in frustration during the observation.
Mission-Specific Goal #2 – 95% of seniors receive a passing grade on their culminating thesis paper by August 1st of their senior year.	In one history class students worked on writing a paper. Students worked independently and remained focused for an extended period of work time. The teacher did not give students feedback as they worked. In another class the teacher returned work to the students. The essays were marked with specific feedback and the teacher reviewed her remarks with each student individually. DC PCSB will review data from the school to assess this goal for the review.
Mission-Specific Goal #3: During the first 5-year period, at least 40% of the students taking Project Lead the Way courses will score 5 or higher on the end of course exam and for at least two of these five years, at least 45% will score 5 or higher on the end of course exam.	DC PCSB will review data from the school to assess this goal for the review.
Mission-Specific Goal #4 In the second 5-year period, at least 45% of students will score 5 or higher on the end of course exam and for at least two of these five years, at least 50% will score 5 or higher on the end of course exam.	DC PCSB will review data from the school to assess this goal for the review.
Mission-Specific Goal #5 In the third 5-year period, at least 50% of students taking PLTW courses will score 5 or higher on the end of course exam in 3 out of five years and for at least two of	DC PCSB will review data from the school to assess this goal for the review.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
these five years, at least 55% will score 5 or higher on the end of course exam.	

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 57% of classrooms as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Classroom Environment domain.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport	The QSR team scored 71% of the observations as proficient in this component. Students and teacher interactions in these observations were warm, polite and mutually respectful. In several classes teachers greeted students by name at the door as they entered the classroom. In one observation the teacher told a student, "We missed you when you were absent" as she arrived to class. In another the teacher gently put a hand on the back of a student with his head down and said, "Are you ok? Are you good?" The student smiled, sat up and continued to work. Teachers in these observations connected with individual students. Teachers made calls home to parents, prepped a student for a job interview and offered after-school tutorial services. In one observation a student said, "I am going to run for mayor. I will be Marion Barry of NE DC." The teacher responded with, "You will be a great mayor." Students in these observations demonstrated respect and care for each other. One student said to another, "Do me a favor- do you see any sawdust on me?" The student replied, "Just a little lint." Another student helped his peer fix his tie before inspection saying, "Your tie is crooked. Don't worry, I got you." In one observation students respectfully disagreed with each other during a discussion about current political news.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	71%

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

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 25% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations interactions were generally free from conflict however personal interactions did not always demonstrate warm or caring relationships. In one classroom a teacher repeatedly pronounced a students' name incorrectly. In a few observations students were rude and disrespectful towards their peers, using profanity or not helping them when they asked for assistance. In one observation a student said to another student, "It is already sharp, big head." The other student replied, "I will f*** you up." Teachers in these observations did not address rude student behaviors. Student body language frequently suggested disinterest in what the teacher had to say; students slouched in seats, had heads down, or turned their backs to the teacher.	Basic	25%
	The QSR team rated less than 10% of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	4%
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The QSR team scored just 36% of the observations as proficient in this component and none as distinguished. In these classrooms teachers recognized student effort saying things like, "Good job" or "I like the effort you showed today." In one observation the teacher said to the whole class, "Awesome, yes! The key idea is that he is captured but not killed. You guys get this and my other class had a hard time." In these classrooms teachers	Distinguished	0%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	insisted that everyone participate in the lessons and students in turn put forth quality work effort. Students demonstrated curiosity and interest in their learning. In one observation a student asked, "Do you think more people will pay attention to the midterm elections now that Trump is in office?" The teacher smiled and said, "You are asking all the right questions." Teachers in these observations suggested ideas to promote student success, such as giving an address and hours for a learning community service event or attending after school tutoring to make up class work.	Proficient	36%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 57% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations there was minimal effort and little evident commitment to the learning program. In one observation a teacher stated that he wished it was Friday and complained with students that they did not have the day off for Woman's Day. In other observations there was neither urgency nor expectations for work products. One teacher repeatedly asked students how many more days they needed to work on their papers, but did not ever assign a deadline. In another class the students asked if they were being graded on an assignment, because if they weren't they didn't want to complete it. Teachers in many of these observations sat at their desks for the entire observation. Some teachers were more concerned with work completion than quality. In one observation a student asked, "What are we doing?" The teacher responded, "Am I talking in Chinese? Just pull up your article, write a few notes, and then we are done for today." In another observation the teacher demonstrated little interest in the content. She stated, "Any questions so far? Am I going to fast? I am trying to shorten this all up." She did not know how or try to pronounce proper nouns that were essential to the content and raced through the direct instruction skipping portions of the content that she "forgot to write in her own notes." There was little evidence that teachers in these classrooms recognized or praised student effort.	Basic	57%
	The QSR team rated less than 10% of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	9%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team scored 55% of the observations as proficient in this component and none as distinguished. In these observations teachers maximized instructional time with smooth transitions and established routines. Teachers in these observations had clear systems for handing out and collecting materials. In a few observations students efficiently retrieved computers and chargers as other students entered the classroom and collected materials before moving to their seats. In one classroom the teacher passed papers to the front of the rows and students passed papers back to the rest of the class without wasting time. Students quickly transitioned between learning tasks and teachers used timers to remind students how much time they had on certain tasks. In most of these observations students completed do now tasks while teachers took attendance, handed back student work or checked homework.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	55%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 47% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations instructional time was lost due to inconsistent implementation or rack of established routines. In some of these observations students did not have easy access to materials related to the learning tasks. Students in one classroom didn't have access to a graphing calculator and had to share with a peer because they were not charged. In other observations students entered class late disrupting instruction as teachers paused to give them materials. In a few observations significant time was lost as teachers performed routine tasks. In one observation the first 30 minutes of the observation was used for inspection of student uniforms. In another a teacher spent five minutes taking attendance in the middle of class –leaving students who needed help idle. In multiple observations teachers repeatedly asked students how much time was left in class.	Basic	45%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Student Behavior	The QSR team scored 55% of the observations as proficient, and none as distinguished in this component. In these observations there were few instances of misbehavior and when necessary teachers used reminders or subtle glances to redirect students. One teacher reminded students, "Do not call out, just raise your hand" when they began to yell out answers to questions. Another teacher effectively used a silent glance to a student	Distinguished	0%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	who was out of his seat. He immediately returned to his seat with no disruption to the class. In a few classrooms teachers prompted students to put cell phones away and they complied immediately. Teachers used proximity in a few classes to redirect students. In one observation the teacher circulated and addressed misbehavior quickly, quietly, and effectively with quiet reminders or gentle pats on the back. Students in these observations responded positively to teacher redirections and generally did not repeat misbehaviors.	Proficient	67%
	The QSR team scored 33% of the observations as basic in this component. Student behavior in these observations interfered with the learning process. In some classes students used their phones, profanity or did not follow the teacher's instructions. In one classroom the teacher pleaded multiple times with a student to remove her jacket. The student never did so and the teacher moved on. In other classrooms students used their phones throughout the class period with no teacher response. Students entered many classes very late without any consequence. In one observation a student entered the classroom several minutes late cursing loudly without any redirection. In another observation a student entered late and stood by the door texting. The teacher asked the student to put his phone away however he ignored the request for a few minutes to finish what he was doing. She did not attempt to redirect again and he lost significant learning time. Students in one classroom cursed loudly and threw things at each other when the teacher left the classroom for several minutes.	Basic	33%
	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 40% of classrooms as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Instruction domain.

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
Communicating with Students	The QSR team scored 43% of the observations as proficient in this component and none as distinguished. In these observations teacher explanations of content and delivery of instructions were clear and error free. Students in these observations quickly started classwork when instructed with little need for teachers to clarify directions. Teachers communicated what students would be learning and a few teachers modeled what they expected students to do. In one observation the teacher clearly explained the learning objective: "In understanding these dictatorships, we're looking at how they came to power, how they maintained power, and what were the goals of their policies." In another classroom the teacher clearly stated the learning objective: "SWBAT: analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone in Macbeth" then effectively summarized the previous days reading before moving on to a new part of Macbeth. Students used Cornell notes in one class as they followed along with a mini-lesson and copied down problem examples as the teacher modeled on the board.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	43%

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 35% of the observations as basic in this component. In these observations teachers posted learning objectives but rarely referenced the objectives or connected them to learning activities or agenda items. Teacher's content delivery was unclear and easily could lead to student misconceptions. In one observation the teacher defined the death with dignity law as, "a law that says you can kill yourself if you want to." Additionally students were told, "We don't fight wars in our land. In other lands kids go to war and not to school" without any context for the statement or further explanation. In a few observations the teacher's notes were difficult to read on the board. When these teachers explained the content, it was mostly a monologue and students did not participate. In one observation a teacher used a video to introduce the topic of scale but some students had already seen it in this class. "You already showed us this," students said. The teacher responded, "Yes, but two of you were absent." One teacher failed to take advantage of opportunities to explain to students how to solve problems; rather the teacher told students what to write as answers.	Basic	35%

	The QSR team rated 22% of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component. In these observations there were no clear learning objectives, students demonstrated confusion, and teachers made content errors during instruction. In one observation the learning tasks did not connect to the stated objective and students did not know what they were to do. The objective stated: "Students will read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences, synthesize and interpret words and phrases in the text." During class time students completed a handout circling parts of speech and then were directed to build fences with Popsicle sticks and pipe cleaners in groups. However there was confusion as students asked, "so what do I do" or "what kind of fence." The teacher stated, "Build a fence like the one in the story, Fences." No one completed the task. In another observation the teacher's line of questioning utterly confused students. The teacher repeatedly asked students, "What is my next question going to be?" Students responded, "Didn't you just ask a question" or "Do you want us to write the questions down?" In one classroom students did not understand how to complete their classwork independently. The teacher had to reteach the lesson to each individual student multiple times before they could work independently. Observers recorded multiple content errors. One teacher told students that the Crusades "were a series of battles over land. They fought for Venice which is in Spain." In another observation the teacher told students that they could not be arrested for the same crime twice because of "due process" and "If a police officer pulls you over for not wearing a seatbelt, but the officer was behind you, they can't charge you with that because of Habeas Corpus."	Unsatisfactory	22%

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques	The QSR team scored just 31% of the observations as proficient in this component and none as distinguished. Teachers asked questions with multiple correct answers designed to promote student thinking and prodded students to think more deeply. In one observation the teacher engaged in risk/reward analysis with students in open-ended conversation about authoritarianism. The teacher posed open-ended questions such as, "Is it worth just validating yourself to have your rewards taken away?" and "Why might someone in the press be biased? How does money influence the press?" Students had a lively discussion in one classroom about an article and documentary. While the discussion was unstructured the teacher and students asked great questions of each other such as, "What's your theory about this" or "What's the focus of this man's argument" or "Do you think criminals should be rehabilitated?" In another class the teacher asked students to clarify and explain their thinking. Students in this class went back to the text and cited evidence to support their answers.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	31%

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 52% of observations as basic in this component. Questioning in these classes did not allow for students to build off each other's responses or engage in deep discussions. In these observations most teachers asked questions with a single correct answer such as "What is Avogadro's number" or "Which operation should I use to solve this" or "What answer did you get?" After reading the play *Fences*, a teacher asked the students multiple-choice questions: "When was the author born? When did he succumb? What else did he write?" There was not any opportunity for discussion about student comprehension. A few teachers did ask engaging and open-ended questions such as, "How would you set up the equation to determine the size of that main runway?" but then did not allow students time to respond or process. In one observation the teacher asked students to think about a scale to use for an airport, but then told them "I used 40 feet and that's what we are going to use" without giving students a chance to answer first. Student participation was low in many of these observations. After a short lesson on vocabulary a teacher asked a series of questions about the prefix. Two out of eight students participated by answering questions. In a few observations the teachers asked open-ended procedural questions but none related to content.	Basic	52%

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 17% of observations as unsatisfactory in this component. Some teachers did not ask any questions over the course of the 30 to 40 minute observations. In one observation students could not answer the teacher's questions because the questions were rapid fire and the there was no wait time for students.	Unsatisfactory	17%
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team scored just 31% of observations as proficient in this component and none as distinguished. Students in these observations participated in various instructional groups. They worked independently, in small groups and as a whole class. In some classes students demonstrated high-levels of engagement working diligently without losing focus. In one observation the teacher engaged a student in a simulated interview in preparation for writing a magazine article. In another observation students actively worked on essays throughout the class period without the need for teacher intervention. In another observations students had choice in how they completed projects and the teacher had students share how they solved problems differently from other classmates.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	31%

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 52% of observations as basic in this component. In a few observations students demonstrated interest in the subject matter and willingness to work but encountered lack of structure, ineffective pacing, and little choice in student work. During a discussion on the role of the House of Representatives some students eagerly shared thoughts and ideas about the role of government. However there was no structure to the discussion and many students were able to sit quietly with heads down. In another observation of student discussion considerable amounts of off-topic student talk led to distracted students. There was no attempt by the teacher to encourage students to remain on task. A lesson in one class had an engaging objective however the pace was slow. After 30 minutes of class students had not completed anything except for uniform inspection. Student eventually put their heads down. Out of 5 students, only 3 actively participated by the end. In many observations the learning tasks were very basic with low levels of rigor. The teacher told students in one class to translate 10 words from Spanish to English. The students worked on this for over 20 minutes and only a few students completed the task.	Basic	52%
	The QSR team scored 13% of observations as unsatisfactory in this component. Students were braiding hair, sleeping, talking, playing on their phones, and in a few classes no students were observed completing any work. In one observation the teacher left the classroom for several minutes to go make photocopies while students sat without any work.	Unsatisfactory	13%

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
Using Assessment in Instruction	The QSR team scored 52% of observations as proficient in this component and none as distinguished. Teachers in these observations addressed student misconceptions in a timely manner and gave specific feedback to students. In several classrooms teachers circulated the room during student work time stopping to work with individual students. A teacher in one observation circulated to each student asking probing questions about the setting of the story they read independently. In another observation students used a Microsoft Word certification program that monitored their progress and constantly assessed the students. Teachers gathered evidence of individual student misunderstanding throughout the lesson by questioning students. Two teachers paused frequently during a read aloud to ask students comprehension questions. Teachers called on students randomly and students who demonstrated confusion had their misconceptions addressed on the spot. Teachers in a few observations assigned exit tickets.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	52%

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 26% of observations as basic in this component. In these observations it was not clear that students understood how they were assessed for their learning and teachers primarily used global checks for understanding. In one observation the teacher asked specific questions to solicit understanding such as "What are the traits of fascism and communism," and it turned into a free-form discussion that was engaging but off-topic at times. In many observations there was little evidence of how students were assessed as no work was collected or completed and most students did not participate. In another observation the teacher reviewed students' warm-up assignment but simply returned their papers saying, "You have some work to do" without telling them how to address their mistakes or what they were. In another class the teacher asked if everyone understood and replied, "good" before moving on to the next part of the lesson. Only a few had responded to the question however the teacher moved on. In one observation the students were upset that the teacher had not graded any of their work. The teacher did not leave her desk during the observation but did ask occasional questions related to a prefix vocabulary lesson. Only students who volunteered were called on.	Basic	26%

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team rated a high 22% of observations as unsatisfactory in this component. In these observations there was no evidence that teachers assessed learning. Students in these classrooms did not complete any classwork and teachers did not probe students. In two observations exit tickets asked students to "say what you liked today" or "write what we did today" and did not address any content. In another observation the teacher stated, "Alright, everyone got that?" but he didn't wait for responses. He then said, "Yeah, it's a simple straightforward algorithm." No students participated in answering the question and there was no remediation.	Unsatisfactory	22%

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 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.
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.