



June 29, 2015

Joel Goering, Board Chair
Briya Public Charter School
2333 Ontario Road, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Mr. Goering:

The DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews to gather and document evidence to support school oversight. According to the School Reform Act § 38-1802.11, PCSB shall monitor the progress of each school in meeting the goals and student academic achievement expectations specified in the school's charter. Your school was selected to undergo a Qualitative Site Review during the 2014-15 school year for the following reason:

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

Qualitative Site Review Report

A Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Briya Public Charter School between May 18 and May 29, 2015. The purpose of the site review is for PCSB to gauge the extent to which the school's goals and student academic achievement expectations were evident in the everyday operations of the public charter school. PCSB staff and consultants evaluated your classroom teaching by using an abridged version of the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* observation rubric. We also visited a board meeting.

You will find that the enclosed Qualitative Site Review Report focuses primarily on the following areas: charter mission and goals, the classroom environment, and instruction.

We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that the staff gave the monitoring team in conducting the Qualitative Site Review at Briya Public Charter School.

Sincerely,



Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: School Leader

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Briya Public Charter School (Briya PCS) is an adult education and early childhood school serving 347 adults and 43 pre-kindergarten (PK)-3/PK4 students in three campuses across the city. Adults attend English language, computer skills, parenting, National External Diploma Program preparation and civics classes. The adults have children who are simultaneously enrolled in Briya's early childhood program, which is not a charter school, or one of its PK3 and PK4 charter school campuses. Briya currently has campuses located at Bancroft Elementary School and the Mary's Center on Georgia Avenue. Briya also has a facility on Ontario Road. The DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) conducted a Qualitative Site Review (QSR) in May 2015 because Briya PCS is eligible for 10-year Charter Review during the 2015-16 school year.

The QSR team conducted observations over the course of a two-week window, from May 18 through May 29, 2015. A team of one PCSB staff member and three consultants conducted 18 observations. A member of the PCSB staff also attended a Board of Trustees meeting on May 13, 2015. The QSR team used Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* Rubric throughout the observations and observed classrooms in mornings and afternoons. In some instances a QSR team may have observed a teacher twice. The QSR team also collected evidence regarding the school's stated mission and goals.

The QSR team scored an overwhelming 99% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the Classroom Environment domain. The classroom environments were respectful and the teachers and students were respectful to all members of the community. The teachers had high expectations for students and the students were committed to doing excellent work throughout all of the classroom observations. The routines and procedures in place were managed effortlessly and there was little to no instructional time wasted during any classroom observation. Student behavior was generally appropriate school wide and teachers using a kind and respectful tone to deal with any misbehavior.

The QSR team scored 85% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain. Nearly all of the classroom instruction was clearly presented and the students appeared to fully engaged. The teachers anticipated student misunderstandings and incorporated lessons on vocabulary as needed. Teachers did not make content errors and often created activities aligned to students' cultures and interests. In a small number of observations questioning and student discussion were primarily low-level and feedback from the teacher was general and not specific.

Prior to the two-week window, Briya PCS provided answers to specific questions posed by PCSB regarding the provision of instruction to students with disabilities in the Special Education Questionnaire. In several classrooms there were general and special education teachers in place to support all students. In two observations teachers used the team teaching model to deliver instruction. In another observation the "one teach, one assist" model was used during circle time. Teachers also used the "parallel teaching model" while students worked in small groups. The teachers used a variety of learning modalities to address the needs of their students.

CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

This table summarizes Briya PCS’s goals and academic achievement expectations as detailed in its charter and subsequent Accountability Plans, and the evidence that the Qualitative Site Review (QSR) team observed of the school meeting those goals during the Qualitative Site Visit.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
<p>Mission: The mission of Briya PCS is to provide a high quality education for adults and children that empowers families through a culturally sensitive family literacy model. The school offers six levels of family literacy classes including adult and early childhood education and Child Development Associate classes. Required components of adult facility literacy classes include English as a Second Language (ESL), computer, parenting classes, and Parent and Child Time (PACT) together.</p>	<p>High quality education for adults and children</p> <p>The school’s mission was evident in every observation. The classrooms at every facility were filled with pictures of families and student work. The school was warm and welcoming and everyone was treated with respect and dignity. Teachers used common strategies for delivering instruction, as evidenced through their lesson delivery and the actual lesson plans. There was an intentional focus on encouraging the development of students’ verbal skills through explicit vocabulary instruction.</p> <p>Adult Education Classes</p> <p>Each campus has weekly Parent and Child Time (PACT) classes and story time for families to engage in reading together. During this time families often completed the family journal reading rubrics tracking reading strategies used. This rubric is used school wide. There are six levels of basic, intermediate, and advanced literacy classes available for adult students to take. The students are assigned to classes based on their Educational Functioning Level (EFL) on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) exam. The teachers used a variety of ESL strategies, such as using visuals to represent vocabulary terms, focusing on students’ prior knowledge and cooperative learning. The teachers also used graphic organizers to help students learn and organize information. The school offers daily classes for students to earn a Childhood Development Associate</p>

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	(CDA) or Medical Assistant (MA) certificate. During the observation of the CDA class, students used study materials from the Council for Professional Recognition in the classroom to begin the preparation for the Early Childhood Studies Review certification exam. The Georgia Avenue campus is co-located and partners with Mary's Center for wraparound services in health and other family support services.
<p>Literacy: At least 75% of Pre-Kindergarten students will meet or exceed growth expectations from the fall to the spring administration of the GOLD literacy assessment.</p>	<p>Teachers taught a variety of thematic units in the early childhood classrooms. There were several units of study on display, including transportation, the human body, and balls. Language development was embedded into choice time, circle time, and small group work. The teachers also used games, songs, and questions to introduce new material to students.</p>
<p>Math: At least 75% of Pre-Kindergarten students will meet or exceed growth expectations from the fall to the spring administration of the GOLD math assessment.</p>	<p>In each of the early childhood observations teachers infused math concepts and skill development. Some examples observed included counting, identifying patterns, and classification. Students voted and worked with the teacher to create graphs and charts of the class results. The teachers also used a variety of manipulatives to reinforce key concepts with students.</p>
<p>Social Emotional: At least 75% of Pre-Kindergarten students will meet or exceed growth expectations from the fall to the spring administration of the GOLD social emotional learning assessment.</p>	<p>Classrooms were warm and cozy and decorated with displays of large pictures of each student and their parent, student drawings and writing samples, as well as class rules and center identification. There were interest centers displaying student work as well as bulletin boards with student generated writing in the classrooms and the hallways. Each classroom had rules posted accompanied by corresponding pictures. The teachers encouraged students to use their manners and</p>

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	modeled how to work cooperatively with one another. The teachers often referred to students as their friends.
Leading Indicator: 80% of parents of pre-kindergarteners enrolled for the full academic year will attend at least one individual or group parent conference.	The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to parent conferences.
Student Progress: 50% of ESL/Family Literacy students who post-test will attain an Educational Functioning level that is one or more EFLs higher than the pre-test level on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System exam.	CASAS standards were referenced in the teacher lesson plans. Students are organized in their literacy classes based on their CASAS scores. Students are regularly tested to determine if they progress on this exam.
<p>College and Career Readiness: 40% of adult students who are in the labor force but enter the program without a job will either a) obtain a job after exiting the program or b) obtain a job while they are enrolled in the program and still hold a job during the first quarter of exit from the program or c) enroll in a postsecondary educational, occupational skills training program, or an apprenticeship training program.</p> <p>55% of learners who either a) enter the program with a job, or b) obtain a job after exit, will remain employed in the third quarter after program exit or enroll in a postsecondary educational, occupational skills training program, or an apprenticeship-training program.</p>	During one of the math classes, the teacher reviewed the information provided within a pay stub with constant references to students' current and future employment. The school currently offers Medical Assistant (MA) and CDA skills training programs for their students. These classes are offered multiple times per week. Please refer to evidence from the mission statement related to this goal.
Leading Indicator: In-seat attendance rate at or above 65%.	Class attendance appeared to be more than 65% during the observation window. At times adult students arrived late to class, but the classes were generally full with few empty seats. An official

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	attendance rate will be available after attendance data is validated in August 2015.
70% of parents enrolled in the ESL/Family Literacy Program for at least six months will score 5 or above on the Family Reading Journal Rubric.	The QSR team observed parents and children reading, learning together, and completing their reading journals in the classroom during the weekly story time.
50% of Child Development Associate students who take the Early Childhood Studies Review certification exam will pass the certification exam.	Students used materials from the Council for Professional Recognition in the classroom to begin preparation for the Early Childhood Studies Review certification exam.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT¹

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 99% of observations as “distinguished” or “proficient” for the Classroom Environment domain.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
<p>Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</p>	<p>The QSR team rated 100% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport. The teachers and students had warm, positive relationships throughout the observations. Early Childhood teachers often engaged in small talk with parents as they dropped their students off in the morning. The PK students and adult students displayed respectful, considerate, and positive behaviors in the classrooms.</p>	Distinguished	22%
	<p>The QSR team rated none of the observations as basic or unsatisfactory in this component.</p>	Proficient	78%
		Basic	0%
	Unsatisfactory	0%	
<p>Establishing a Culture for Learning</p>	<p>The QSR team rated 100% of the observations as proficient in the component of Establishing a Culture for Learning. All students were cognitively engaged throughout the observations. The teachers expressed confidence in student abilities and recognized student success often. Student work was displayed throughout early childhood and adult education classrooms. The teachers conveyed a passion for their students and for their content. The adult learners felt comfortable asking questions if they were incorrect and took pride in their work.</p>	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	100%

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

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team rated none of the observations as basic or unsatisfactory in this component.	Basic	0%
		Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team rated 100% of the observations as proficient in the component of Managing Classroom Procedures. Effective routines supported little to no loss of instructional time. Routines and procedures were in place school wide. In some observations the early childhood students helped with cleaning up and serving as helpers with teacher intervention and support. Daily schedules were often posted in the classrooms with words and pictures. The teachers often used songs, chants, bells or timers to signal when it was time to transition between activities.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	100%
	The QSR team rated none of the observations as basic or unsatisfactory in this component.	Basic	0%
		Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Student Behavior	The QSR team rated 95% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Managing Student Behavior. Standards of conduct were posted in each classroom. Student behavior was generally appropriate school wide. In one of the observations, a student was asked to refer to the chart and review each rule with the class. Teachers used reminders, active monitoring and proximity to address misbehaviors. Student misbehavior was age-appropriate and addressed effectively by teachers as needed.	Distinguished	6%
		Proficient	89%
	The QSR team rated less than 10% of the observations as basic and none as unsatisfactory in this component.	Basic	6%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
		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 85% of observations as “distinguished” or “proficient” for the Instruction domain.

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Communicating with Students	The QSR team rated 89% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Communicating with Students. There were several instances where teachers pointed out areas that might be possibly misunderstood, sometimes requesting that students help other students in the process of understanding and explaining the concepts. The teachers usually had the lesson topics posted on the board and communicated objectives orally with students. The teachers provided explanations of vocabulary throughout the lessons where appropriate.	Distinguished	11%
		Proficient	78%
	The QSR team rated 11% of the observations as basic and none as unsatisfactory in this component. In some observations the purpose of lesson activities was not clear to students, leaving them with questions about the learning task.	Basic	11%
		Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques	The QSR team rated 73% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques. In the majority of the observations, teachers used questions to	Distinguished	6%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	introduce the lesson and to get students engaged in solving an issue. Teachers also used questioning during whole-group and individual activities. There were several opportunities, particularly in the adult education classes, of the teachers using cooperative learning to promote student discussion. Students often had to do role-plays using new vocabulary words or to share why they agreed or disagreed with a peers answer.	Proficient	67%
	The QSR team rated 28% of the observations as basic and none as unsatisfactory in this component. In some observations teachers primarily asked low-level questions to students. There were also observations where there was limited questioning or discussions among students. During one observation the teacher did not provide adequate wait time and often answered their own questions without giving students enough time to respond.	Basic	28%
		Unsatisfactory	0%
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team rated 95% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Engaging Students in Learning. The teachers varied student groupings and provided students with some choice in how they completed learning tasks. The topics for discussions in the adult education classes were of high interest to the students and often involved the students, their families or their cultures. In one observation, students wrote and read about values of their own country and compared them to American values. The students shared and laughed with the class as they discussed similarities and differences among their cultures.	Distinguished	6%
		Proficient	89%
	The QSR team rated less than 10% of the observations as basic and none as unsatisfactory in this component.	Basic	6%
		Unsatisfactory	0%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Using Assessment in Instruction	The QSR team rated 83% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in the component of Using Assessment in Instruction. Teachers consistently monitored students' work. During one observation students provided feedback to their peers on their work. The teachers provided specific feedback to students when they asked for help or while they circulated the class to review student performance.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	83%
	The QSR team rated 17% of the observations as basic and none as unsatisfactory in this component. In some observations feedback to students was general and not specific or the teacher requested global indications of student understanding. During one observation the teacher only called on students to answer questions if their hands were raised. There were several students who did not respond and it was unclear if they understood the material.	Basic	17%
		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.

The Classroom Environment	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Managing Student Behavior	Student behavior is poor, with no clear expectations, no monitoring of student behavior, and inappropriate response to student misbehavior.	Teacher makes an effort to establish standards of conduct for students, monitor student behavior, and respond to student misbehavior, but these efforts are not always successful.	Teacher is aware of student behavior, has established clear standards of conduct, and responds to student misbehavior in ways that are appropriate and respectful of the students.	Student behavior is entirely appropriate, with evidence of student participation in setting expectations and monitoring behavior. Teacher's monitoring of student behavior is subtle and preventive, and teachers' response to student misbehavior is sensitive to individual student needs.

APPENDIX II: INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Instruction	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Communicating with Students	Teacher’s oral and written communication contains errors or is unclear or inappropriate to students. Teacher’s purpose in a lesson or unit is unclear to students. Teacher’s explanation of the content is unclear or confusing or uses inappropriate language.	Teacher’s oral and written communication contains no errors, but may not be completely appropriate or may require further explanations to avoid confusion. Teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose, with limited success. Teacher’s explanation of the content is uneven; some is done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.	Teacher communicates clearly and accurately to students both orally and in writing. Teacher’s purpose for the lesson or unit is clear, including where it is 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.

Instruction	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
<p>Using Assessment in Instruction</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>