



March 5, 2014

Simmons Lettre, Board Chair
Capital City Public Charter School-Middle School
100 Peabody Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011

Dear Ms. Lettre:

The Public Charter School Board (“PCSB”) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews (“QSR”) 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 QSR during the 2013-14 school year for the following reason:

- School eligible to petition for 15-year Charter Renewal during the 2014-15 school year

Qualitative Site Review Report

A QSR team conducted on-site review visits of Capital City PCS-middle school between January 13-24, 2014. 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. To ascertain this, 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 in order to observe the school’s governance as it relates to fulfilling its mission, and charter goals.

Enclosed is the team’s report. You will find that the Qualitative Site Review Report is focused 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 Capital City PCS-middle school. Thank you for your continued cooperation as PCSB makes every effort to ensure that Capital City PCS-middle school is in compliance with its charter.

Sincerely,

Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: School Leader

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Capital City Public Charter School's Middle School campus ("Cap City PCS – Middle") serves fifth through eighth grade students as part of a pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade network. The school serves 983 students LEA-wide and 326 students in the middle school. The DC Public Charter School Board ("PCSB") conducted a Qualitative Site Review ("QSR") at Capital City PCS – Middle School in January 2014 because Capital City PCS is eligible for 15-year Charter Renewal during the 2014-15 school year.

PCSB conducted observations during a two-week window, from January 13 through January 24, 2014. Observers visited the school on multiple days throughout the two-week window and saw classes in the morning and the afternoon. A team of three PCSB staff members (including PCSB's Special Education Specialist) and one consultant conducted observations of 20 classrooms, including classrooms where more than one teacher was present. The spirit of the QSR process is to observe the educational experience for all students, inclusive of students with disabilities, at a particular school. The results of this QSR reflect what the QSR team observed in all learning environments within your school, including the six special education teachers observed in the inclusion setting. In some instances, the review team may have observed a teacher twice. In addition to these classroom visits, PCSB also attended a Board of Trustees meeting, on January 28, 2014, to observe the school's governance as it relates to fulfilling its mission and charter goals.

The QSR team used Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* rubric for all classroom evaluations. On average, 80% of the observations received a rating of proficient or exemplary in the Classroom Environment domain with all elements scoring between 75% and 85% proficient and above. Overall, teachers and students were respectful to each other and teachers held high expectations for all students. Teachers also have implemented consistent routines and procedures to minimize the loss of instructional time.

On average, 75% of the observations received a rating of proficient or exemplary for the Instructional Delivery domain. All elements within this domain scored 85% proficient and above except Using Assessment in Instruction, where only 65% of observations scored proficient or exemplary. In the higher-scoring elements teachers communicated effectively, asked challenging questions, and engaged students through the content and learning tasks. In a few classrooms teachers gave global feedback that did not specifically help students improve the quality of their work. These generally strong results are consistent to what would be expected of a school going into its 15th year of operation. Given the recent expansion of Cap City PCS, these results are encouraging.

CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS, AND BOARD GOVERNANCE

This table summarizes Capital City 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 Capital City Public Charter School is to graduate a diverse group of young adults who are self-directed, intellectually engaged, and possess a strong sense of personal and civic responsibility. Our students will complete a rigorous academic program that emphasizes both independent and collaborative learning within an inclusive, democratic community.</p> | <p>The QSR team observed evidence of Cap City PCS--Middle meeting its mission to graduate a diverse group of young adults who are self-directed, intellectually engaged, and possess a strong sense of personal and civic responsibility. Students worked on a rigorous academic program that emphasizes both independent and collaborative learning within an inclusive, democratic community.</p> <p>Overall, teachers offered students many choices in assignments and engaged students in critical thinking. Teachers modeled tasks, received feedback from students, and had students give feedback to each other. In several classrooms the QSR review team observed students providing feedback to one another and teachers challenging students to students to think critically and creatively. For example, the learning target for one classroom stated, “I can brainstorm ideas for a creative narrative poem using Art for details and expression” and in science, the teacher challenged students to explain how a balanced ecosystem can become unbalanced and the impact of change.</p> <p>The QSR team saw evidence of expeditionary learning in each grade level. A plethora of posters and charts lined the hallways detailing the expeditions and the subjects associated with each.</p> |

| Mission and Goals | Evidence |
|---|--|
| | <p>The QSR team also saw posters depicting students’ efforts to develop a strong sense of personal and civic responsibility, such as one about showing compassion and another about a food drive. A learning target in the music class stated, “I can contribute as a positive member of a team.”</p> <p>The team observed much evidence that the school has developed a culture of trust among students. Students pass in hallways independently without being in lines or needing specific guidance from teachers. A coat rack in the main lobby contains items for the lost and found and students are expected to be honest in retrieving their belongings. Students are permitted to leave the classroom without adult supervision, signing in and out independently.</p> <p>The QSR team did not observe direct evidence of an inclusive democratic community.</p> |
| <p>1. Students will become competent, independent readers.</p> | <p>The QSR review team saw evidence that students are competent, independent readers. When teachers asked students to read material aloud, they did so with ease. Posters, expeditionary portfolios, mantras, activities and other information posted on walls encouraged students to read independently. School-wide activities included Word of the Week Chart posted in the wall in the hall and Mystery Word Puzzle folders posted in the hallways, where students can take a worksheet and solve the mystery. Teachers encouraged students to borrow books from the Book Nook is in the hall and the team saw several students sitting on the floor in the hall reading books.</p> |
| <p>2. Students will become effective oral and written communicators</p> | <p>The review team saw students using graphic organizers and Promethean boards. In most classrooms, students participated in discussions with the entire class and with partners, following posted</p> |

| Mission and Goals | Evidence |
|---|--|
| | discussion norms. In a social studies class, students developed research papers following predetermined steps. |
| 3. Students will be able to reason mathematically and effectively present their thinking to others. | In several math classes, the QSR review team observed teachers asking students to explain how they arrived at their answers. In one classroom, the teacher asked students for multiple solution pathways. In all classrooms, teachers asked students to share aloud their thinking and processes for solving equations. In one instance, when the student's answer was incorrect, another student said, "I can help you with that." Students' math work was posted in the halls throughout the middle school area. |
| 4. To promote critical thinking, high-quality original work, and the acquisition of skills necessary for transition to college or career. | In several classrooms students engaged in a feedback critique processes designed to help students develop quality work aligned to the learning targets. Students reflected on prior knowledge of themes in Harlem Renaissance poetry and compared and contrasted these themes with themes from modern day music. In one social studies class students completed steps in the draft the final research project. "All Star" work is posted in the hallways. . Additionally, each classroom is named after a university or college. |
| 5. To establish a tone of anxious expectation, decency, and trust among students, staff, and families. | <p>The review team saw evidence of decency and trust among students in several classes. In one classroom, the norms for providing written feedback included being "Specific, Kind, Helpful." The team observed students openly and nicely talking to and working with teachers and each other, showing that that there was an underlying trust and report among all staff and students.</p> <p>There are several places in the main lobby that address</p> |

| Mission and Goals | Evidence |
|--|---|
| | parents/families, for example the Family Computer Station, the Family Information Board, and the Family Campaign Tree. |
| 6. To create meaningful student leadership opportunities and a student body authentically engaged in school governance | The QSR team neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this goal. |
| 7. To encourage responsibility, respect, compassion, service, and appreciation of diversity in all school community members | Students interacted with their peers respectfully and student-made and bought posters about community service, compassion, the school's values, and a 6 th grade food drive littered the hallway walls. An element of the current 6 th grade Humanities Learning Expedition was "values". |
| 8. To implement learning expeditions -- in-depth investigations of a theme or topic that engage students through authentic research, projects, fieldwork and service, and that are interdisciplinary to the maximum extent possible. | The school designed expeditionary projects for each grade level in the middle school. The QSR review team saw evidence of learning expeditions in classrooms and in the hallways. Eighth graders completed an expedition entitled "Super-Sized or Civilized" in Science and Humanities and went to the art museum as part of the expedition. The sixth grade expedition focused on culture and community of students' families and of the school. Spanish for non-native English speakers connected to the healthy-living expedition. |
| 9. To personalize teaching and learning through small class sizes, advisory, and flexibility in scheduling and course formats. | The largest class the QRS team visited had eighteen students. According to the master schedule, students participate in advisories, (Crews) each morning. Additionally, the special education teacher said to one of the reviewers that math and science teachers have flexibility in what they choose to focus on for the first part of the class. |

| Mission and Goals | Evidence |
|---|---|
| <p>10. To utilize the CES philosophy of student-as-worker, teacher-as-coach as the core of instructional practice.</p> | <p>The QSR team observed evidence of student-as-worker and teacher-as-coach. Teachers modeled the assignment and then circulated around the classroom to monitor and help individual students or students working in groups. Teachers often initiated the conversation and then encouraged students to think about how they arrived at solutions.</p> |
| <p>11. To assess learning through portfolios, exhibitions of work, and student performance of authentic tasks.</p> | <p>The QSR team observed that the hallways and classroom walls contained a myriad of student work, including class assignments and projects, and the progression of student performance. Students also shared their portfolios with other students in Crew class. (This activity was supposed to be with an outside audience of adults, but because of the snow day, this was unable to occur.) One board posted in the hallway detailed different steps students took to learn about their culture and community, showing students' work at each step of the assignment.</p> |
| <p>12. Capital City will be a learning community for teachers as well as students. Teachers will receive the training and support they need to successfully implement the educational program and best support individual students.</p> | <p>In one science class, the teacher intern led the instruction with the master teacher and special education teacher assisting. The master teacher offered support when needed during the lesson. The master schedule indicated that the school has several teacher interns. The review team did not have the opportunity to observe the Instructional Coach in the middle school.</p> |
| <p>Board Governance</p> | <p>On January 28, 2014, a PCSB staff member visited the Capital City PCS Board of Trustees meeting. Approximately eleven board members were present, plus at least one on a conference call line, constituting a quorum.</p> |

| Mission and Goals | Evidence |
|-------------------|--|
| | <p>The Executive Director and principals discussed the school’s data dashboard, which includes interim assessment data for reading, writing, and math; high school performance on the PSAT, SAT, and ACT; and in-seat attendance. They indicated that the overall lesson learned from the dashboard is that the school is better preparing students for literacy assessments than math assessments. In response to the board’s question about actionable findings, the school administrators indicated that they were conducting student-specific interventions, but the Board acknowledged that any improvements would not happen overnight, despite the school’s urgency around effective teaching. They also discussed a recent collaboration between the school’s data team and FOCUS, which found that Capital City PCS’s math assessments were well-aligned to the DC CAS. Overall, the board indicated that the dashboards are easy to understand.</p> <p>The board also discussed the school’s strategic plan, which they plan to backwards-map from the five-year targets using the PMF. The board encouraged the administrators to let them know if they needed resource reallocation. Charter Board Partners assisted in creating a new template for the strategic plan. The board discussed each goal, including the capital campaign, the facilities plan, debt refinancing, and risk assessment. Regarding the governance goals, the board requested feedback on the Head of School evaluation and mentioned a future discussion around succession planning. Overall, the board indicated that their five-year goals are very ambitions and that they’re making progress on pieces of the goals.</p> |

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS¹

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the Classroom Environments elements of the rubric during the unannounced visits. The label definitions for classroom observations of "limited", "satisfactory", "proficient", and "exemplary" are those from the Danielson framework. PCSB considers any rating below "proficient" to be under the standard of quality expected of DC charter schools. On average, 80% of classrooms received a rating of proficient or exemplary for the Classroom Environment domain.

| Class Environment | Evidence Observed | School Wide Rating | |
|---|--|--------------------|-----|
| Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport | <p>Eighty percent of observations scored proficient or exemplary in Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport. In these classrooms teachers and students were uniformly respectful with one another. Teachers spoke to students in a positive voice. Teachers were tactful and positive in giving feedback to students, even when making corrections. In one classroom, the teacher referred to her students in terms of endearment, such as "sweetie." Teachers reinforced positive behaviors by waiting for all students to become silent with one teacher whispering to the students, "If you can hear me, touch your nose." After all of the students responded, the teacher smiled and said, "Thank you, you are a great class." While the students worked on their assignments, teachers consistently knelt down on the floor besides the student to assist them.</p> <p>The review team rated 20% of the classrooms below proficient. In two classrooms some of the students were disrespectful during class time. These students routinely talked while their peers answered questions or explained their work. The teachers asked the classes on a whole to stop talking and listen to their classmates, but the students did not stop talking. In another classroom a student shouted answers over other students purposefully. The teacher asked the student to stop shouting out the answers and treat his classmates with more respect, but the student continued.</p> | Limited | 0% |
| | | Satisfactory | 20% |
| | | Proficient | 60% |
| | | Exemplary | 20% |

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

| Class Environment | Evidence Observed | School Wide Rating | |
|--|--|--------------------|-----|
| Establishing a Culture for Learning | <p>Observers rated 85% of the observations as proficient or exemplary in Establishing a Culture for Learning. Teachers generally maintained high expectations for students. In some classrooms teachers continually told the students to “try to do your best”. In other classes teachers modeled the process to solve the problem to enable students to be successful. In one class the teacher said, “Let’s do this together so I know you will understand how to get the correct answer.” Teachers used manipulatives, such as popsicle sticks, as ways to ensure student success. Every classroom displayed examples of high quality work. In one classroom, the teacher communicated the importance of learning and encouraged students to respond in more comprehensive ways that reflected their knowledge and experiences. She responded to their answers by saying, “Tell me more” and “How do you know?”</p> <p>The review team rated 25% of the observations below proficient. In one classroom with two teachers neither teacher attempted to help students understand why their answers were incorrect. One teacher stated that the answer was wrong and moved on. The other teacher told the student the correct answer without explaining it. In one classroom the teacher’s energy toward the work was neutral. The Do Now extended for over 35 minutes of class time. The teacher made no effort to have the students finish the assignment so that the class work could begin. Most of the students talked and socialized during class time.</p> | Limited | 0% |
| | | Satisfactory | 25% |
| | | Proficient | 60% |
| | | Exemplary | 15% |
| Managing Classroom Procedures | <p>The review team rated 75% of observations as proficient or exemplary in Managing Classroom Procedures. Transitions between activities were smooth with little loss of instructional time. Routines and procedures were consistent in most classrooms resulting in smooth operations and an efficient use of time. Students moved from working individually to pairing with a partner or working in groups. In several classrooms students assumed the initiative to get materials and distribute them to classmates. In some classrooms students were allowed to get materials that they needed without asking the teacher. In most classrooms,</p> | Limited | 5% |
| | | Satisfactory | 20% |

| Class Environment | Evidence Observed | School Wide Rating | |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------|-----|
| | <p>teachers established timing devices and attention signals such as mantras and claps to transition from one activity to the other. Some teachers also used the devices to regain order in the classes. In several classes, the teacher gave the Do Now to the students in the hall before students entered the class. This practice enabled students to begin the assignments immediately, without losing any instructional time.</p> <p>The review team rated 25% of the classroom observations as below proficient. In these classrooms, teachers generally had to remind students multiple times to follow directions and stay on task.</p> | Proficient | 60% |
| Managing Student Behavior | <p>The review team rated 75% of observations as proficient or exemplary in Managing Student Behavior. Minor infractions were generally dealt with immediately and with respect. In one classroom, the teacher stood beside the student's desk and tapped on the desk with a pencil to refocus the student. In another classroom, the teacher put her hand on the student's shoulder. Teachers reinforced on-task behavior through praise. Most teachers had a quiet signal or mantra to redirect students. Several teachers had behavior chart posters clearly visible for the classes. The teachers put names on the charts as warnings for inappropriate behavior.</p> <p>The review team rated 25% of the observations as below proficient. In these classrooms the students were sent out of the class into the hall for a short period of time where they were unsupervised resulting in two students running up and down the hall until the teacher finally came out to speak to them. Teachers in these classrooms did not articulate behavior expectations and had no clear or consistent system for tracking or following up with students exhibiting inappropriate behavior. In one classroom, several students were out of their seats walking around the room chanting "TGIF!" without any reflection from the teacher.</p> | Limited | 5% |
| | | Satisfactory | 20% |
| | | Proficient | 45% |
| | | Exemplary | 30% |

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

This rubric summarizes the school’s performance on the Instructional Delivery elements of the rubric during the unannounced visits. The label definitions for classroom observations of "limited", "satisfactory", "proficient" and "exemplary" are those from the Danielson framework. PCSB considers any rating below "proficient" to be under the standard of quality expected of DC charter schools. On average, 80% of classrooms received a rating of proficient or exemplary for the Instructional Delivery domain.

| Instructional Delivery | Evidence Observed | School Wide Rating | |
|---|--|--------------------|-----|
| <p>Communicating with Students</p> | <p>The review team rated 85% of observations as proficient or exemplary in Communicating with Students. In most classrooms teachers gave clear directions and explained content in an organized fashion. In two classrooms the teacher introduced a worksheet that incorporated students’ prior knowledge through a guided practice activity. In one classroom the teacher clarified the learning target by pointing out that some students were skipping an important step, which could result in the draft not flowing properly. In most classes the teachers clearly stated the day’s learning targets and connected them to previous assignments. In math classes the teachers clearly scaffolded their explanations of the content and used appropriate vocabulary for the lesson.</p> <p>The review team rated 15% of the classroom observations as below proficient. In these classes students did not respond or focus on the teacher’s questions or directions.</p> | Limited | 0% |
| | | Satisfactory | 15% |
| | | Proficient | 70% |
| | | Exemplary | 15% |
| <p>Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</p> | <p>The review team rated 85% of observations as proficient or exemplary in Using Discussion and Questioning Techniques. Teachers demonstrated a range of abilities in the use of questioning techniques; allowing students to</p> | Limited | 0% |

| Instructional Delivery | Evidence Observed | School Wide Rating | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------|-----|
| | <p>continue discussions. For example, one student asked, “Would killer bees have the same effect on the environment as the deer?” This opened the door for a lively discussion within the class. In these classes teachers challenged students’ thinking by asking higher cognitive questions such as, “How do you know that?” “Explain your answer.” “Why do you say that?”</p> <p>The review team rated 15% of the classroom observations as below proficient. In some classrooms student involvement in the lessons was limited to individual or choral responses to teachers’ questions. One teacher tried to ask open-ended questions but when the students’ responses were limited, the teacher said, “I will call on you if you can’t answer.” In some classes the teachers allowed for student-to-student discourse and many of the students used this time for socializing instead of focusing on the lesson.</p> | Satisfactory | 15% |
| Engaging Students in Learning | <p>The review team rated 75% of observations as proficient or exemplary in Engaging Students in Learning. Overall, the activities given to the students were aligned with the goals of the lessons. Teachers modeled what students were supposed to do with clear oral and written communication. The team also observed the teachers incorporating guided practice throughout the instructional activities in most classes. In one class a small group of students worked with the teacher using charts and computers. In some classes students were divided into differentiated groups for students to practice various remedial activities or worksheets.</p> <p>The review team rated 25% of the observations as below proficient. Student engagement was low in these classes. For example, only when the teacher stood close by the students did they engage in the lesson and as soon as the teacher moved away from a group, students began to socialize again. In</p> | Limited | 0% |
| | | Satisfactory | 25% |
| | | Proficient | 55% |

| Instructional Delivery | Evidence Observed | School Wide Rating | |
|--|--|--------------------|-----|
| | <p>another class the teacher could not motivate the students to answer questions, becoming noticeably frustrated. In another class the teacher worked with a few students at a time, ignoring those who were socializing.</p> | Exemplary | 20% |
| Using Assessment in Instruction | <p>The review team rated 65% of observations as proficient or exemplary in “Using Assessment In Instruction”. Teachers paid close attention to students’ understanding of the material. Teachers circulated the classrooms to monitor and gauge if the students understood the learning tasks and offered feedback. Teachers continually asked questions to check for understanding. In several classrooms, feedback and revision was part of the lesson. Students were paired with partners to receive feedback for the assignment.</p> | Limited | 5% |
| | | Satisfactory | 30% |
| | <p>The review team rated 35% of the observations as below proficient. In one classroom the teacher did not give any indication of criteria for success or feedback to the students beyond saying “good” or “that’s not correct.” In one class two teachers did not circulate within the room to assess student understanding or offer feedback, rarely moving from the front of the room. In several classes activity completion was the singular check for students’ understanding of the lesson.</p> | Proficient | 50% |
| | | Exemplary | 15% |

APPENDIX I: CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT OBSERVATION RUBRIC

| Class Environment | Limited | Satisfactory | Proficient | Exemplary |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| 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: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY OBSERVATION RUBRIC

| Instructional Delivery | Limited | Satisfactory | Proficient | Exemplary |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| 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. |

| Instructional Delivery | Limited | Satisfactory | Proficient | Exemplary |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| 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. |