DC
PUBLIC
CHARTER
SCHOOL
BOARD

May 12, 2016

Patricia Sosa, Board Chair
Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School
1100 Harvard Street NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Ms. Sosa:

The District of Columbia 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, 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 2015-16 school year for the following reason:

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

Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School (Carlos Rosario PCS) gave DC PCSB permission to conduct the Qualitative Site Review a year in advance.

Qualitative Site Review Report
A Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Carlos Rosario PCS between March 7 and March 18, 2016. Enclosed is the team's report. You will find that the Qualitative Site Review Report focuses primarily on the following areas: charter mission and goals, classroom environments, and instructional delivery.

We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that you and your staff gave the monitoring team in conducting the Qualitative Site Review at Carlos Rosario PCS.

Sincerely,

Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: Allison Kokkoros

Qualitative Site Review Report

Date: May 12, 2016
Campus Name: Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School
Ward: 1
Grade levels: Adult Education: ages 16 and older
Total Enrollment: 2011
English Language Learners enrollment: 122
Reason for visit: School eligible for 20-year Charter Review during 2017-18 school year
Two-week window: March 7 – 18, 2016
Number of observations: 30

Summary
Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School (Carlos Rosario PCS) provides an education to immigrant adults, preparing them to become invested, productive citizens and members of American society. To this end all classrooms focus on embedding English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction within the curriculum. The school's mission also states that it intends to foster a safe and compassionate learning environment. All members of the Qualitative Site Review (QSR) team noted the positive and respectful interactions throughout the school and among all members of the school community.

Carlos Rosario PCS offers a variety of classes including ESL instruction, Adult Basic Education (ABE) and career training in the culinary, health, and information technology fields. The school also offers classes preparing students for the United States Citizenship test and preparing students for the General Education Development (GED) exam in English and in Spanish. The QSR team observed many of these course offerings during the two-week window and saw consistently strong instruction and student engagement across all programs.

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 94% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Classroom Environment domain. In the components of "Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport" and "Managing Student Behavior," nearly all observations scored proficient or distinguished, which is highly commendable. This indicates that the vast majority of interactions between students and teachers were highly respectful, students were celebrated as individuals, and student behavior was appropriate. The QSR team scored 79% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain. The "Using Assessment in Instruction" was the highest scoring component in this domain. Teachers monitored student learning and provided specific feedback to students.

Summary of Instruction for English Language Learners
Carlos Rosario PCS has an instructional model that is designed exclusively for English Language Learners (ELLs) in the form of foundational instruction for adult immigrants.

The school seeks to prepare students for career training in English, computer skills, culinary arts, and the GED credential in English and in Spanish.

The ESL teachers had positive respectful rapport with their students, encouraging students to attend and arrive on time to class. The teachers had materials and activities that were appropriate for each language level. The students worked in groups in many observations and the lessons offered a wide variety of class interactions, such as small group, partner, individual, and whole group work. The language expression was varied as well, with teachers offering students the opportunity to work on their writing, speaking and listening skills in English. During both the morning and afternoon sessions, there was a school-wide twenty-minute Drop Everything and Read period. Additionally, there was a book fair station set up for the students to choose books to read.

The ESL teachers used appropriate techniques such as repetition, correct speech, and restating or rephrasing to support language acquisition. The teachers were active in assessing student understanding through the use of teacher questioning and checking student work during independent work time; although, some of these checks for understanding only gauged the understanding of a few students. In one class the teacher offered written feedback on student work which the students were able to use immediately to improve their writing. Teachers asked questions aligned to learning objectives and students actively participated in answering questions.

CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

This table summarizes the school'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
Mission: Our mission is to provide education that prepares the diverse adult immigrant population of Washington, DC to become invested, productive citizens and members of American society who give back to family and community. The School accomplishes this through excellence in teaching and learning in partnership with the community by fostering a safe and compassionate learning environment.	The QSR team saw strong evidence that Carlos Rosario PCS is meeting its mission. The overall tone of the school conveyed respect for learning and a seriousness about the content. A wide variety of countries and languages were represented at the school. Students worked comfortably with each other and with the staff. The teachers and students at the school appeared to be dedicated to learning. The positive relationships between the students and the teachers encouraged students to participate and practice their English. The students were eager to participate in classes. The teachers were professional and encouraging. The language lessons were focused on specific language objectives that were met through a variety of whole group, small group and individual settings with opportunities for students to engage in reading, writing, listening and speaking.
Goals: 60% of pre- and post-testing Spanish and English ABE program students will make one or more NRS-EFL gains by the end of the program year.	Teachers posted instructional objectives in the majority of classrooms and reviewed them at the beginning of the lesson. The QSR team observed a wide array of instructional materials including textbooks, reading materials for range of levels, teacher-made materials, and technology, including SPARK 3000.
70% of pre and post testing English language learners will make one or more	ESL observations incorporated language appropriate activities, materials, and

Mission and Goals	Evidence
NRS-EFL gains by the end of the program year.	content. There were opportunities for small group work, whole class instruction, and independent work time. Teachers used students' native languages at times as a tool to increase understanding and transfer knowledge for those learning English. Class instruction and materials were appropriate for students' learning levels in the level 100, 200, and 300 classes that the QSR team observed.
65% of GED test-takers will pass the official GED exam by the end of the program year.	The QSR team observed a strong focus on the requirements to successfully pass the GED exam. Teachers posted requirements for passing the GED in classrooms, hallways, and bulletin board displays. Hallway displays included pictures of students at different levels and recognition of their accomplishments. Teachers frequently referred to the importance of what the students were learning and how it is related to questions asked on the GED exam. In one observation the teacher showed students how to use a calculator to problem-solve and discussed how each section of the GED is timed. Students responded to questions orally and showed their understanding on the board and in writing. Teachers assessed student learning through exit tickets and classroom assessments, and some teachers made reference to students tracking their own reading level progress using SPARK 3000.
70% of students will pass industry certification tests.	A QSR team member observed students in a culinary arts class learning to debone a chicken leg. At the start of the lesson, the teacher reviewed food handling procedures. Students successfully answered questions about how to handle different kinds of meats and vegetables

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	safely. During the observation students worked in small groups to follow a recipe and applied culinary techniques learned in the class. The QSR team did not have the opportunity to observe the medical assistant or information technology certification courses during this two-week period.
Exiting students will enter the workforce, retain employment, or enter into post-secondary education (specific metrics to be agreed upon for SY 2014-15)	In a hallway at the Sonia Gutierrez facility, the QSR team saw a display of students' goals for employment after completing their courses at Carlos Rosario PCS. Additionally there was a display in the main lobby of school alumni demonstrating how their current careers aligned to their training at Carlos Rosario International PCS. At the Harvard Street facility, the QSR team saw a bulletin board titled, "Employment Team Documented Placement" that shows 15 direct and assisted placements, 12 job referrals/follow-ups and 38 resumes completed. Other data posted showed the percentage of students who obtained employment. The school also employs counselors to work with students on life skills.
69% in-seat attendance	The QSR team noted many students were tardy at the start of class and after breaks. Teachers encouraged students to arrive on time with one teacher noting, "Class starts at 9:00, not 9:22." Another teacher had the last five students that arrived stay after to help clean and organize the room after the end of class. A couple of teachers had prominent displays of students with perfect attendance. Some teachers had students sign in when entering.

Mission and Goals	Evidence
60% retention rate	The QSR team's classroom observations did not provide any evidence related to this goal.
85% of Citizenship students will pass the naturalization exam.	The QSR team observed information about the United States displayed in some classrooms, such as maps of the 50 states and a poster of past United States presidents.
75% of ESL students will pass the CR Technology Test.	Integrated technology was a focus in many observations. In one literacy class students completed independent keyboard exercises for 15 minutes before the formal instruction. Students in other observations used the laptops to locate information, highlight text, and respond to questions. The Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) lab displayed digital literacy outcomes. A teacher and an assistant engaged the learners in locating tools, elements and features of a Microsoft window. Students worked with partners to document the functions of basic tools and explore the home tab. In a technology class observation, students used technology tools to design a website for their dream business. The CALL instructors worked with the content in English and supported the learning by using Spanish and Amharic.
Governance:	A DC PCSB staff member joined Carlos Rosario International PCS's Board of Trustees meeting in person on March 9, 2016. A quorum was present. Three staff members including the CFO, General Counsel and Executive Assistant were also present. The meeting agenda included approval of the past meeting's minutes,

Mission and Goals	Evidence
	the 2015 Financial Auditor Report, a CEO report and a CFO report. A representative from the school's auditor, Rubino and Company, helped the Board conduct a deep dive into the audit (there were no material findings).

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 94% of the observations as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Classroom Environment domain.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport	The QSR team scored 97% of the observations as either distinguished or proficient in this component. Warmth, respect, and care characterized the interactions between nearly all staff and students. Teachers praised effort, though several students seemed cautious about taking intellectual risks. The QSR team observed few to no incidents of disrespectful behavior. In the majority of observations, teachers used student names and circulated around the room during group, partner, or independent work time to check in on individuals. In one observed discussion, students were able to respectfully disagree with each other. The teacher facilitated and modeled understanding different perspectives.	Distinguished	13%
	In one distinguished observation, students clapped enthusiastically for others' participation without prompting. In another distinguished observation, the teacher demonstrated caring for the students and asked about their family members and lives outside of the school. One teacher knew that a student's car had broken down in recent weeks and asked whether the student was able to drive again.	Proficient	84%
	The QSR team rated less than 10% of observations as basic in this component.	Basic	3%

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[1] Different review team members may observe teachers more than once.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The QSR team scored 93% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Teachers communicated high expectations and insisted on precise use of language. Encouragement from peers and teachers reinforced the importance of learning. In one observation four students received certificates for arriving on time during the past month. The teacher in another observation had a chart with stars for student participation and attendance that resulted in a monthly prize. Students were invested in the quality of their work, often consulting with peers on questions and to check their work. In some distinguished observations, students assisted each other in understanding the content. This sometimes included using students' native languages to explain concepts or content to each other.	Distinguished	17%
	Teachers communicated a passion for the subject and for the accomplishment of each learner. In one distinguished observation, when students struggled, the teacher used questioning to place responsibility for learning back on students, "As you read that paragraph, try and think about what it means first and then if you still have trouble, I can help you with it."	Proficient	76%
	The QSR team scored less than 10% of observations as basic in this component.	Basic	7%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team scored 90% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. When students entered most classrooms, they signed in and logged into their computers or gathered other materials with little direction from the teacher. The students were positively engaged throughout most of the observations whether in small group conversations, whole class discussion or independent work. There were few transitions observed, but those that were observed were seamless and did not take away from instructional time. In one distinguished observation students took ownership of their environment and contributed to the smooth functioning of routines. They rearranged the furniture prior to the beginning of class so that groups could start work immediately upon arrival.	Distinguished	10%
		Proficient	80%
	The QSR team scored less than 10% of observations as basic in this component.	Basic	7%
	The QSR team scored less than 10% of observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	3%
Managing Student Behavior	The QSR team scored 97% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. In almost all observations student behavior was on-task, respectful and entirely appropriate. In the few instances that called for redirection, teachers addressed side conversations with subtle gestures, proximity, or quiet words to specific students. The atmosphere of the school was generally business-like and productive. Standards of conduct were clear and observed by everyone.	Distinguished	30%
		Proficient	67%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored less than 10% of the observations as basic in this component.	Basic	3%
	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 79% of the observations as "distinguished" or "proficient" for the Instruction domain.

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
Communicating with Students	The QSR team scored 77% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. In many observations learning objectives were posted and/or communicated to students. The QSR team did not see any content errors. The teachers used visuals and technology to ensure that students were clear about the course material. The teachers used age-appropriate language and vocabulary when addressing the adult students. Vocabulary was explicitly taught as well as incorporated into the classroom experiences seamlessly.	Distinguished	7%
	In the distinguished observations the teachers used metaphors to bring the content to life and they anticipated possible misconceptions. In other observations students presented and explained the content to their classmates in both English and native languages.	Proficient	70%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	The QSR team scored 23% of observations as basic in this component. In these observations students needed to ask clarifying questions about the task or waited until the teacher gave additional instructions to begin working. In one classroom the teacher attempted to clarify the learning task after initial confusion but the teacher's attempt was met with partial success due to the sole focus on the correct answer and not conceptual understanding. In another classroom the teacher confused the phrase "in front of" with "facing" during a modeling activity and the teacher did not make the lesson objectives clear.	Basic	23%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques	The QSR team scored 72% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. Teachers often asked questions in whole group and small group settings to prompt discussions and extend thinking. Although some questions had a single correct answer, teachers challenged the learners to engage in discussions within their groups. Several teachers used open-ended questions and prompted students to justify their reasoning. In two observations	Distinguished	7%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	teachers asked students to teach peers a new concept. In one distinguished observation the teacher's line of questioning supported students in answering correctly, justifying their responses, and supporting ideas with facts from the reading. The teacher prompted students by asking a series of questions including, "What did you think about question 3? Did the costs go up or down? Why did the costs go up? Can you find the paragraph about their production costs?"	Proficient	65%
	The QSR team scored 28% of the observations as basic in this component. During these observations, the teachers' questions were often along a single path of inquiry and did not prompt students to explain their thinking. Classroom discussions were only teacher-directed. One teacher attempted to engage students in the discussion but only a few students participated. The teacher focused on the students who quickly responded when called on during the lesson.	Basic	28%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team scored 70% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component. The class materials and resources, such as technology, leveled texts and visual aids, were appropriate and aligned to the learning tasks. In one observation the lesson allowed for all students to be actively engaged even when they were not presenting by having them take notes on classmates' presentations and	Distinguished	3%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	scoring classmates on a peer presentation rubric. In another observation students worked independently or with a partner to complete the tasks as the teacher circulated and prompted critical reflection asking, "What is a better sentence? What is the verb/action? Is that a complete sentence?"	Proficient	67%
	The QSR team scored 30% of the observations as basic in this component. In several of these observations, the students did not have a choice in how to complete their tasks and if students finished a task early, they were not engaged with any content. The QSR team also noted that in these observations some students did not participate in discussions or otherwise intellectually engage in the lesson. Several students were reluctant to respond to questions from the teacher.	Basic	30%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Assessment in Instruction	The QSR team scored 97% of the observations as distinguished or proficient in this component, with the majority receiving a rating of proficient. Most teachers monitored student understanding during each lesson. Teachers used a variety of strategies to gauge student understanding that included questioning, reviewing students' work individually, class surveys,	Distinguished	3%

Instruction	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	and small white boards. When necessary teachers gave specific feedback to students who got questions wrong. In one observation when one student made a computational mistake on the whiteboard, the teacher led the student through a series of questions to correct the problem. During another observation the students used a rubric to correct their work on a project.	Proficient	94%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as basic in this component.	Basic	3%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	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 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.

Instruction	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
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.