



January 24, 2013

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

Dear Mr. Gomez:

The Public Charter School Board (PCSB) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews to gather and document authentic evidence to support the oversight of all PCSB schools. According to the School Reform Act § 38-1802.11, PCSB shall monitor the progress of each school in meeting student academic achievement expectations specified in the charter granted to such school. Your school was selected to undergo a Qualitative Site Review during the 2012-13 school year for the following reason(s):

- School eligible to petition for 15-year Charter Renewal

Qualitative Site Review Report

On December 4, 5, and 12, 2012, a Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School. 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 conducted focus groups with a random selection of students, a group of teachers, and your administrators.

Enclosed is the team's report. You will find that the Qualitative Site Review Report is focused primarily on the following areas: mission/goals of the school's charter, classroom environments, instructional delivery, meeting the needs of all learners, professional development, and school climate.

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. Thank you for your continued cooperation as the PCSB makes every effort to ensure that Carlos Rosario PCS is in compliance with its charter.

Sincerely,

Scott Pearson
Executive Director



Enclosures
cc: School Leader

CHARTER GOALS

This table summarizes the goals that Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School (“Carlos Rosario PCS”) contracted to in its charter and the evidence that the Qualitative Site Review (“QSR”) team observed of the school meeting the goal during the Qualitative Site Visit. These goals are what the school indicated that it should be held accountable to.

Goal as Identified by the School	Evidence
Students will achieve proficiency in English language and life skills.	The QSR team observed several classroom activities focused on English instruction, including: creative role plays, structured student dialogues, group exercises, one-on-one tutoring, computer-assisted English instruction, simulated/mock interviews, student and teacher read-alouds, student dictations, classroom libraries, and the Spark3000 reading program.
Students increasing their opportunity to become naturalized American citizens and fully contributing members of American society.	The QSR team observed mock interviews that focused on the citizenship examination. The school provides leadership training and coordinates access to health and legal services.
Students will earn their GED or high school equivalency, thereby increasing their potential for employment and/or continuing education.	The QSR team observed students using the General Equivalency Diploma (“GED”) computer lab to improve their online test taking skills and using classroom computer centers to practice their computer and test-taking skills. Teachers designed instructional delivery strategies in the English language arts and mathematics classes to address components of the GED exam. Additionally, teachers used mock interviews and simulated debates and essays to assess students’ readiness for the GED exam.
Students will become more employable.	The QSR team did not look for evidence related to this goal while on the site visits.
Through workshops, students will acquire necessary life skills.	According to school leaders, Carlos Rosario PCS offers comprehensive support services for its students, including individual bilingual counseling, job counseling and placement, leadership training, and college application and financial aid support. The QSR team observed teachers linking classroom skills to real-life situations, such as potential employers’ expectations for English fluency. Student government members were present during student focus group interviews; they indicated that their participation in the student government allows them to practice leadership skills. Students also cited several extracurricular activities that support this goal: grammar and math clubs, Latin and zumba dance groups, legal clinics, and additional remedial computer instruction.
Regular attendance.	The QSR team did not look for evidence related to this goal while on the site visits. The school incentivizes attendance with cafeteria vouchers for perfect attendance.

SCHOOL MISSION

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on aligning its operations with the mission and goals of its charter.

School Mission	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
The school's mission and educational goals as articulated in the charter application and subsequent amendments are implemented in the day to day operations of the school.	Limited observations of day to day observations as aligned with mission and educational goals by any school stakeholders.	Day to day operations and activities as aligned with mission and educational goals are demonstrated by some staff members.	Day to day operations and activities as aligned with mission and educational goals are demonstrated by nearly all staff members.	Day to day operations and activities as aligned with the mission and educational goals are demonstrated by students throughout the school building.
The Board and school administrators govern and manage in a manner consistent with the school's design and mission.	Administrators and Board members demonstrate a limited understanding of the school's design. Evidence of its use in the management and governance of the school is substantially lacking.	Administrators and Board members demonstrate an adequate understanding of the school's design. There is evidence that understanding of the design is sometimes used to effectively manage and govern the school.	Administrators and Board members demonstrate a good understanding of the school's design. There is evidence that understanding of the design is used to effectively manage and govern the school.	All key administrators and Board members demonstrate an excellent understanding of the school's design. There is significant evidence that understanding of the design is used to effectively manage and govern the school.
The school's curriculum and instruction are aligned with the school's mission and educational goals.	School curriculum and instruction are not aligned with the mission and educational goals and/or are utilized in limited/no classrooms.	School curriculum and instruction are aligned with the mission and educational goals and are utilized in some classrooms.	School curriculum and instruction are aligned with the mission and educational goals and are utilized in most classrooms.	School curriculum and instruction are aligned with the mission and educational goals and are utilized in all classrooms.
The school has met or is making progress toward meeting the educational goals of its charter.	The school demonstrates limited evidence of progress towards monitoring and making progress towards few of the goals of its charter.	The school demonstrates adequate evidence of progress towards monitoring and making progress towards some of the goals of its charter.	The school demonstrates proficient evidence of progress towards monitoring and making progress towards most of the goals of its charter.	The school demonstrates exemplary evidence of progress towards monitoring and making progress towards all of the goals of its charter.

School Mission Summary

According to the charter application, the mission of Carlos Rosario International PCS is to provide education that prepares an 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 strives to accomplish this through excellence in teaching and learning in partnership with the community and by fostering a safe and compassionate learning environment. This is what PCSB staff and consultants looked for when visiting the classrooms, attending a parent meeting and board meeting, and conducting the focus groups.

The QSR team's observations during its visits to the school were consistent with the well-documented evidence of the school's success. Carlos Rosario PCS is nationally recognized as a leader in adult education and citizenship training; the school's dedication to fostering students to become effective American citizens is apparent in the school's everyday operations. The QSR team noted the strong school culture and consistent dedication to the school's mission among students, faculty, and administrators.

Graphic presentations and exhibits depict a diverse student population representing 72 countries and speaking 37 different languages. Administrators provided data documenting students' significant accomplishments and high achievement, including GED attainment and English proficiency rates. Instructional programs are grounded in Equipped for the Future and Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) standards, and aligned with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System ("CASAS") Life Skill Competencies and Adult Basic Education. The school provides workforce development services, foundational literacy and skills through English as a second language courses (levels 1 – 8), and basic technology use training. The GED programs and the "ESL for Families" family literacy program also support the school's mission. According to one student and reiterated by others, "the purpose of the school is to help everyone who wants to achieve their goals, become good citizens, and contribute to this country through different programs."

A review of recent Board of Trustee minutes, showed that most meetings had a full quorum with members of the leadership staff presenting. Discussion has typically centered on academics, governance, and finance. The QSR team noted evidence that the Board and school administration deploy resources effectively to further the academic and organizational success of the school. The QSR team further noted that the school is led by a strong Board with effective, engaged Trustees and a dedicated and passionate Executive Director who is widely recognized for her service to the community and her leadership.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the Classroom Environments elements of the rubric during the scheduled and unscheduled visits.

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.

Class Environment	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
Organizing Physical Space	Teacher makes poor use of the physical environment, resulting in unsafe or inaccessible conditions for some students or a serious mismatch between the furniture arrangement and the lesson activities.	Teacher's classroom is safe, and essential learning is accessible to all students, but the furniture arrangement only partially supports the learning activities.	Teacher's classroom is safe, and learning is accessible to all students; teacher uses physical resources well and ensures that the arrangement of furniture supports the learning activities.	Teacher's classroom is safe, and students contribute to ensuring that the physical environment supports the learning of all students.

Classroom Environments Summary

The QSR team observed thirty-five classrooms. Approximately 80% of them scored proficient or exemplary on elements of the Classroom Environment Rubric, which includes five elements: Environment of Respect, Culture of Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, and Organization of Physical Space.

The QSR team observed informal but respectful interactions between students and teachers. The review team observed positive interactions, respectful talk, politeness, and respect for students' lives outside the classroom. Classroom environments were cooperative and professional, and different ethnicities were celebrated in posted work.

The QSR team noted most teachers effectively establishing a culture for learning. Teachers displayed pride in student performance and regularly related the importance of content to real-life scenarios, such as, "If you are going to be effective writers and speakers, you must know how to conjugate verbs into the proper tenses." Teachers also reminded students that instruction was to assist them with passing the GED examination.

The QSR team noted clearly established procedures and routines; students demonstrated knowledge of these procedures through their actions, such as signing in upon entry to the classroom to confirm attendance. Students assisted teachers in distributing handouts and quietly exited the class to use the bathroom without disrupting instruction.

The review team did not observe any incidents of disrespectful behavior and students complimented each other on several occasions. Students encouraged each other with statements like "You try it," "Don't be afraid," and "What do you think?" In one case, the QSR team observed students reprimanding another student whose cell phone rang during class.

Teachers organized their classrooms to allow for ease of teacher and student movement. Classrooms were safe. Decorations included grammar rules posted for reference, students' pictures, and artifacts from different ethnic groups and different countries, particularly those represented in the student body. Most classrooms had computer centers and libraries containing books, newspapers, and other texts appropriate to students'

reading levels. The QSR team noted teachers using Smart boards to aid instruction.

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the Instructional Delivery elements of the rubric during the scheduled and unscheduled visits.

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.
Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness	Teacher adheres to the instruction plan in spite of evidence of poor student understanding or of students' lack of interest, and fails to respond to students' questions; teacher assumes no responsibility for students' failure.	Teacher demonstrates moderate flexibility and responsiveness to students' needs and interests, and seeks to ensure success of all students.	Teacher seeks ways to ensure successful learning for all students, making adjustments as needed to instruction plans and responding to student interest and questions.	Teacher is highly responsive to students' interests and questions, making major lesson adjustments if necessary, and persists in ensuring the success of all students.

Instructional Delivery Summary

Overall, approximately 90% of classrooms were proficient or exemplary in areas of Instructional Delivery, including: Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, and Demonstrating Flexibility.

The QSR team observed clear and accurate communication that included expectations for and purposes of each learning activity. Teachers informed students of academic and work-related standards to be accomplished during instructional tasks and units. For example, “You will be able to prepare PowerPoint presentations, present the slide show, and write an evaluation of each presentation.”

While some questions were open-ended and required students to use critical thinking skills in order to correctly respond, most questions were limited to low-level questioning and required students to recall previously taught information, such as: “What must an essay introduction include?” and “What abbreviations do we need to use in this sentence?”

The QSR team noted a variety of instructional delivery strategies designed to engage students, including teacher and student demonstrations, small and whole group activities, and use of technology during guided and independent practices. Students helped each other complete activities.

Teachers used formative assessments to assess students’ mastery of content, such as quizzes, demonstrations, and presentations. The QSR team also observed teachers circulating throughout the room to check written work for accuracy.

The QSR team did not review teachers’ lesson plans in advance and thus was unable to compare observed instruction to lesson plans. As such, the team could not identify real-time adjustments based on student needs. In some cases, the QSR team observed teachers giving students a few more minutes than originally allotted to complete activities.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the elements of the rubric related to meeting the needs of all learners.

All Learners' Needs	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
The school has strategies in place to meet the needs of students at risk of academic failure.	The school has implemented a limited number of programs to help students who are struggling academically to meet school goals. Resources for such programs are marginal; or the programs experience low participation given the students' needs.	The school has implemented programs and provided adequate resources to help students who are struggling academically to meet school goals. Based on individual needs, student participation is moderate.	The school has implemented special programs and provided significant resources to help students who are struggling academically to meet school goals. Based on individual needs, student participation is moderate to high.	The school has implemented research-based and/or special programs and provided a full complement of resources to help students who are struggling academically to meet school goals. Based on individual needs, student participation is high.
The school has strategies in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners ("ELLs").	The school has a program in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners who enroll at the school. In order to comply with federal regulations, however, the program could benefit from increased staffing, improved staff qualifications and/or additional resources.	The school has a program in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners who enroll at the school. The services are in keeping with federal regulations, which include sufficient staffing with requisite training and resources.	The school has a successful program in place to meet the needs of English Language Learners who enroll at the school. The services are in keeping with federal standards for sufficient staffing with requisite training, qualifications and resources.	The school has a successful program(s) in place to meet the needs of any English Language Learners who enroll at the school. The services are in keeping with, and in some ways, exceed federal standards for staffing with requisite training, qualifications and resources.

Meeting the Needs of All Learners Summary

Carlos Rosario PCS serves a population of immigrant and English learning students; according to the school leaders, the school provides resources and programs that surpass local and federal regulations for ELL and special education students. In addition to a staff that includes bilingual and multilingual certified teachers, translators, and paraprofessionals, the school has a Supportive Services Department that provides services in four major languages: English, Spanish, Amharic, and Vietnamese. Services include individual bilingual counseling, vocational counseling and placement, childcare and health referrals, life skills workshops, and financial aid assistance. The school's curriculum, which was validated by the Georgetown University Center for Language Education and Development, offers intensive language and life skills instruction for students.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the Professional Development elements of the rubric during the scheduled and unscheduled classroom observations and as discussed during the focus groups with administrators, faculty, and staff.

Professional Development	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
Time is made available throughout the year.	The school offers very few professional development days throughout the school year, and teachers indicate that they do not have enough time for ongoing professional development and planning.	The school offers several professional development activities throughout the school year, although teachers indicate they could use more time for planning.	The school day and the annual calendar reflect a strong focus on professional development and planning. Most teachers agree that they are given sufficient time for professional development and planning.	The school day and the annual calendar reflect a high priority given to professional development and planning. All teachers agree that they are given sufficient time for a variety of professional development opportunities and planning.
Extra support is in place for novice teachers.	The school offers limited formal or informal support and guidance for novice teachers. These teachers do not think that the support is adequate.	The school offers formal or informal support and guidance to novice teachers. These teachers think that the support is adequate.	The school has implemented a support system that is effective in meeting the needs of novice teachers.	The school has implemented a highly structured support system that is highly effective in meeting the needs of novice teachers.

Professional Development Summary

According to the teacher and administrator focus groups, the school's professional development ("PD") program provides opportunities for teachers to study best practices in the fields of adult education and linguistics. The professional development calendar, which was reviewed by the QSR team, indicates that teachers receive professional development throughout the year. Teachers are expected to attend professional conferences, give presentations back to their colleagues, and participate in just-in-time training. All teachers receive support from their immediate instructional supervisors and a full-time instructional coach who works with teachers on a one-to-one basis. This support includes reflection forums after classroom observations. ELL teachers of all levels also have access to a comprehensive Teacher Resource Guide and lesson plan exemplars.

Recent PD activities included "Current TESOL Trends and Teaching Strategies," "Let's Talk Speaking Activities and Strategies for Beginning ELLs," "How to Manage Your Online Personal Learning Network," and "Sheltered Instruction in Workforce Programs." Teachers also cited the revision of the curriculum to align with national standards as another critical component of the professional development program.

Novice teachers also have assigned peer mentors. The professional development program includes a New Teacher Induction Program focused on mentoring, topic-driven teacher study circles, and a Teacher Evaluation Agreement.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

This rubric summarizes the school's performance on the School Climate elements of the rubric during the scheduled and unscheduled classroom observations and as discussed during the focus groups with students, faculty, and staff.

School Climate	Limited	Satisfactory	Proficient	Exemplary
The school is a safe and orderly learning environment.	The school's discipline policies and practices are not well-articulated or understood by most of the staff, students and parents. Such policies and practices are partially implemented due to the lack of clarity or understanding and, as a result, the learning environment provides limited safety and order.	The school's discipline policies and practices are adequately articulated and understood by the administration and by most of the staff, students and parents. Such policies and practices may not be fully implemented, due to a lack of clarity or understanding. The learning environment, however, is relatively safe and orderly.	The school's discipline policies and practices are clearly articulated and understood by the administration, staff, students and parents. Such policies and practices are consistently implemented, providing for a safe and orderly learning environment.	The school's discipline policies and practices are clearly articulated and understood by the administration, staff, students and parents. Such policies and practices are fully implemented by students and staff, providing for a consistently safe and orderly learning environment.

School Climate Summary

The school's discipline policy is clearly outlined in the student handbook and shared during a student assembly each semester. According to school leaders, the discipline policy is non-negotiable. It is preventive in design and allows every student to receive a second chance if he/she is suspended or expelled, depending on the violation.

Carlos Rosario PCS offers comprehensive support services for its students, including individual bilingual counseling, job counseling and placement, leadership training, and college application and financial aid support. Health care services include free vision screening, eye examinations, and HIV testing by the La Clinica del Pueblo and the Mayor's Office of Latino Affairs. Students receive free legal services and the District of Columbia Bar Association provides a series of four Saturday legal clinics to students and to members of the local community. Student-organized activities include Hispanic Heritage Month, African American History Month, and Asian Pacific Spring Festival. Extracurricular clubs and activities include Computers for Beginners in Amharic and Spanish and Zumba dancing. The student government association, elected by students, ensures that the student voice is heard in all major operational decisions. Among student recognition and honors are school cafeteria vouchers for perfect attendance and end-of-the-semester classroom celebrations. The school's provision of bus transportation from the Metro is another service provided to students as parking is very difficult at both campuses.