



November 21, 2013

Ralph F. Boyd, Jr., Board Chair  
Center City PCS – Petworth  
510 Webster Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20011

Dear Mr. Boyd,

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(s):

- School designated as Focus/Priority by Office of the State Superintendent of Education

**Qualitative Site Review Report**

A QSR team conducted on-site review visits of Center City Public Charter School – Petworth (“Center City PCS – Petworth”) on September 24 and between September 30 and October 11, 2013. 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 Center City PCS – Petworth. Thank you for your continued cooperation as PCSB makes every effort to ensure that Center City PCS is in compliance with its charter.

Sincerely,



Naomi DeVeaux  
Deputy Director

Enclosures  
cc: School Leader

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Center City Public Charter School – Petworth (“Center City PCS – Petworth”) is one of six Center City PCS campuses. It serves approximately 250 prekindergarten to eighth grade students in the Petworth neighborhood of Northwest DC’s Ward 1. According to the charter application, the mission of Center City PCS is to empower children for success through a rigorous academic program and strong character education while challenging students to pursue personal excellence in character, conduct, and scholarship in order to develop the skills necessary to both serve and lead others in the 21st century. Center City PCS – Petworth has earned a Tier 1 designation on the Public Charter School Board’s (“PCSB”) Performance Management Framework (“PMF”) for all three years of the PMF’s publication, consistently scoring about 70% overall. PCSB conducted a Qualitative Site Review (“QSR”) in October 2013 because the campus was designated “Focus” under the Office of the State Superintendent of Education’s (“OSSE”) accountability system as designed in its Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”) waiver due to the academic performance of its English language learners (“ELLs”).

In addition to the unscheduled visits throughout the September 30 to October 11 visit window, PCSB staff conducted a scheduled visit on September 24, 2013 to attend classes and observe events that the school felt would demonstrate the intervention and support strategies the school has implemented to support the academic achievement of English language learners. PCSB collected evidence related to the school’s Focus strategies, including: 1) the implementation of professional learning communities; 2) differentiated instruction for English language learners; and 3) the frequent use of assessments to determine student needs. Throughout the course of these visits, the QSR team visited approximately 20 classrooms, about half of which were assessed using the full *Framework for Teaching* rubric.

The majority of evidence collected during the scheduled day and the unscheduled observation window centered on the school’s effective implementation of strategies to differentiate instruction for ELLs. Throughout the English Language Arts classes observed, teachers differentiated by using small group instruction with multiple adults present during the literacy block. PCSB observed the ELL teacher working with students in several classrooms. In some classrooms, she activated and built upon student background knowledge prior to reading a section of the class novel. Small group instruction gave both ELLs and non-ELLs frequent opportunities to speak. In both small group and whole-group instruction, teachers focused on expanding students’ vocabulary by pre-teaching challenging words before they came up in the lesson. Teachers working on texts during small groups had frequent checks for understanding through a strategy called “Stop, Think, Paraphrase,” which also gave students the opportunity to put the meaning of text into their own words. PCSB concluded that the school is strongly implementing strategies to improve the academic achievement of ELLs.

In addition to the team meetings and interviews conducted as part of the ESEA oversight, the QSR team conducted ten classroom observations based on the *Framework for Teaching*. Overall, the school scored 75% proficient or exemplary on the Classroom Environment domain and 68% scored proficient or exemplary on the Instructional Delivery domain on the *Framework for Teaching* rubric. The highest-rated element of the rubrics was “Managing Student Behavior”, on which 90% of classrooms were scored proficient or exemplary. Throughout the school, student behavior was consistently appropriate, requiring little reactive intervention from teachers. Teachers continuously monitored student behavior

throughout their lessons and prevented student misbehavior by engaging students in the learning activities. The lowest-rated element of the rubrics was “Using Assessment in Instruction”, on which only half of the classrooms observed were proficient or exemplary. A major area for growth on this element of the rubric was clearly stating expectations for high-quality work or by what criteria students would be assessed.

On September 18, 2013, a PCSB staff member also visited a meeting of the Center City PCS Board of Trustees. The meeting began with the president’s report then progressed through reports from the academic committee, the finance committee, and the governance committee. The president’s report headlined the LEA’s goal of achieving composite gains of 11.7% from the 2013 to 2014 DC CAS. While they recognize that this is an audacious goal, the president indicated that all teachers, principals, and board members have bought in. The plans to accomplish this goal include: (1) a stronger curriculum, redeveloped by high performing teachers; (2) a stronger focus on English language arts, including increasing the average number of books read by each student from 5 to 20; (3) teamwork across schools, particularly at the principal level; (4) improved performance systems for principals and teachers; and (6) a student “culture of character.” The president noted greater collaboration across Center City PCS campuses, shifting away from silos and competition to a more collaborative environment. He also described three additional new initiatives: a staff appreciation event, a plan to apply for OSSE’s Dissemination Grant to share Center City PCS’s curriculum with other LEAs, and DC CAS dashboards.

The Board’s academic committee reported on 2013 DC CAS results and discussed the complexity of the Median Growth Percentile metric. The finance committee noted a \$770,000 budget deficit for fiscal year 2014; to cover this and future deficits, the president indicated that he hopes to develop a long-term fundraising plan, but in the meantime, they are pursuing large donations to cover the shortfall. The governance committee noted that the Board plans to meet four times a year, plus hold a summer retreat and a separate Dinner and Discussion meeting. They plan to revisit the charter goals and consider amending their goals, particularly in light of potential misalignment between the school’s goal attainment relative to the PMF. The governance committee also reviewed the Board’s bylaws.

## CHARTER MISSION, GOALS, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

This table summarizes Center 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 & Goals	Observer’s Evidence
<p>According to the charter application, the mission of Center City PCS is to empower children for success through a rigorous academic program and strong character education while challenging students to pursue personal excellence in character, conduct, and scholarship in order to develop the skills necessary to both serve and lead others in the 21st century.</p>	<p>The QSR team observed significant evidence that the school is fulfilling its mission. In particular, the school is succeeding in delivering a rigorous academic program, as assessed on the Instructional Delivery rubric, and has adopted a strong character education program, as assessed by observations of student behavior.</p> <p>About two-thirds of the classrooms scored proficient or advanced in the Instructional Delivery section of the Danielson rubric. The QSR team noted teachers effectively differentiating instruction in most of the classrooms, with small groups completing activities that appeared to be aligned to student need. In one case, the ELL teacher was working on targeted vocabulary work prior to encountering the words in the class text. Several teachers used Guided Reading groups during the literacy block. The QSR team also noted teachers working with students on specific literacy skills, such as figuring out the author’s purpose or comprehending non-fiction text. Throughout the observed classes, teachers extended students’ vocabularies; students used advanced vocabularies in classroom discussions.</p> <p>The school’s weakest element of the Instructional Delivery rubric was Using Assessment in Instruction. The teachers rated below proficient in this category were not observed using routines for assessing students’ grasp of content or giving clear feedback. They did not clearly explain their expectations of what constituted high-quality work or by what criteria students would be assessed.</p> <p>Elements of the character education were imbedded throughout the school program. All students wore uniforms and were notified when their uniform was out of compliance. Between classes, students lined up single file in the hallway, facing forward silently, with separate lines for girls and boys. In most of the line-ups observed, at least one student needed to be removed from the line to discuss proper behavior. Teachers consistently communicated high expectations for student behavior, which a school leader described as aiming for “exemplary character.”</p>

Mission & Goals	Observer's Evidence
	<p>In many observations, teachers clearly reinforced character skills. For example, in a kindergarten class, the teacher stressed manners to students when she told a student to say, "Excuse me", and she explained to a student the difference between "tattling" and "informing." In many classrooms, teachers stressed the importance of paying attention to the speaker. Teachers consistently applied behavior management systems to their classrooms; all of the teachers observed in the upper grades seemed to use the "checks" system. Throughout the school, students and teachers were generally kind to each other. The QSR team did not observe any instances of student-to-teacher disrespect, and almost all cases of student-to-student disrespect were addressed immediately and effectively. The QSR team observed the guidance counselor informally talking to two 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys about bullying, not in reference to a specific incident but as general encouragement.</p>
<p>1. Students will read and comprehend grade-level appropriate text in the core content areas.</p>	<p>The QSR team observed several strategies to improve students' literacy and vocabulary. The school has organized the school-wide schedule to allow for multiple adults in each classroom to work with small groups of students during the literacy block. Many teachers used differentiated small groups throughout the literacy classes. The QSR team observed the use of Guided Reading to improve learning comprehension.</p> <p>The QSR team noted that teachers worked to build students' vocabularies through targeted vocabulary work, by previewing "tricky" vocabulary from the upcoming lesson, and by taking advantage of opportunities to discuss content-specific vocabulary during non-literacy lessons. For example, one small group in a math class read a math-focused book, then described the pictures using varied vocabulary and paraphrased their reading. The QSR team noted several instances of students using advanced vocabulary.</p> <p>There were some missed opportunities for more advanced reading comprehension instruction, such as small groups answering multiple choice, lower-level questions.</p>

Mission & Goals	Observer's Evidence
<p>2. Students will be effective communicators, clearly expressing ideas both orally and in writing, and consistently applying appropriate language conventions.</p>	<p>In most of the classrooms observed, teachers encouraged students to clearly and fully express their ideas and to use formal vocabulary. For example, some teachers encouraged students to say “yes” not “yeah,” and “use” instead of “do” in reference to a number line. One teacher explained to students in advance that one word answers were not sufficient; the standard for high-quality responses was full sentences, even in math class. In another classroom, the teacher required students to explain their response to questions about author’s purpose, stressing that she did not want to hear a one word response, but that she required them to answer the “why.” The strongest students even took leadership roles in classroom discussions; these students were clearly able to communicate higher-level thinking and ideas.</p> <p>The QSR team did not review student writing, but the team did observe writing instruction. Some examples of writing instruction included the steps for developing a thesis statement and the elements necessary in an essay’s conclusion paragraph.</p>
<p>3. Students will master and apply grade-level appropriate computation skills and concepts; they will use mathematical reasoning to solve problems.</p>	<p>While the QSR team did not review quantitative data related to students’ mastery of computational skills and concepts, math instruction was generally strong throughout the QSR visits. Teachers incorporated math instruction into classroom activities that were not specifically math classes, such as during breakfast time.</p> <p>In one math class, students made arrays of multiplication problems as a way to improve their numeracy skills. In another class, students focused on multiplying two digit numbers by two digit numbers. Once they had mastered that, the teacher challenged them to multiply three digit numbers by two digit numbers. The teacher gave the students a strategy called “partial products” and asked the students to complete a worksheet using the strategy. Strong math teachers continuously monitored for student understanding of the math skills and concepts; in one case, the QSR team observed a teacher calling students back together to discuss as a group after noticing that some students did not apply a strategy correctly.</p>

<b>Mission &amp; Goals</b>	<b>Observer's Evidence</b>
<p>4. Students will apply the process of scientific investigation through inquiry-based research and experiential learning activities.</p>	<p>The QSR team did not observe examples of in-depth experiential learning activities, though the quality of instruction in the sciences classes observed was generally proficient. One science class received several “Proficient/Exemplary” ratings on the elements of the Instructional Delivery rubric.</p> <p>In the strongest science class, discussion was equally led by students and the teacher, with students shaping the discussion based on their interests and ideas. Discussion in the other classes observed tended to be teacher-directed. In one class, discussion was centered on the use of “inferences” and how to develop them. Another class focused on specific skills while the teacher circulated throughout the class, supporting small groups. Students drew Bohr models of atoms; as necessary, the teacher referenced the whiteboard, which listed the steps for drawing an accurate Bohr model. Though the QSR team did not judge these strategies as more or less effective than other instructional strategies, the team noted that they were not aligned with the inquiry-based learning aspect of this goal.</p>
<p>5. Students will explain how various historical, cultural, economic, political, technological, and geographical factors impact our world.</p>	<p>The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.</p>
<p>6. Students will be equipped with the academic skills needed to be accepted into the competitive high schools of their choice.</p>	<p>While the QSR team did not attempt to assess students’ mastery of specific academic skills, the team observed several examples of teachers supporting students in building the “academic skills needed to be accepted into competitive high schools.” Teachers took many opportunities to enhance vocabulary throughout various lessons, across content areas. Several English language arts teachers focused on the mechanics of essays, including detailed processes for writing thesis statements and introduction and conclusion paragraphs. Teachers also supported students in improving their reading skills through various small group activities, particularly Guided Reading. Math teachers engaged students in numeracy and multiplication problems with increasing levels of rigor within classes and across grades.</p>

<b>Mission &amp; Goals</b>	<b>Observer's Evidence</b>
<p>7. Campuses will be thriving communities of respectful and responsible learners.</p>	<p>Throughout the classrooms observed, students were generally kind and respectful to each other and to the teacher. In one classroom, the teacher encouraged her young students to say “Excuse me” to each other. In other classrooms, teachers continuously encouraged students to pay attention to the speaker or presenter. The QSR team observed at least two examples of teachers addressing behavior issues outside of the classroom; one of these was a consequence of student disrespect to another student.</p> <p>The QSR team observed teachers regularly citing the importance of students acting as “responsible scholars.” Students generally demonstrated good effort to complete high quality work. In one classroom, students enthusiastically presented the teacher with their work product as a source of pride for what they had done. In most classrooms observed during the two week window, students enthusiastically raised their hands to answer the teacher’s questions and were actively engaged in the learning activities. In one case, a student continued working on a math problem on the whiteboard, even when her peers had begun eating their breakfast.</p>
<p>8. Students will perform regular and reflective community service consistent with the core values.</p>	<p>The QSR team did not observe any evidence of this goal. In informal conversations with a school administrator, the QSR team learned that the school’s guidance counselor is working to develop more opportunities for students to do “selfless service,” such as older students reading with younger students and all students collaborating to make the school trash free.</p>
<p>9. Parents will see themselves as partners in their children’s education. Parents will view the school positively and express satisfaction with their choice.</p>	<p>Though the QSR team did not specifically look for evidence related to this goal, one member of the team noted that approximately five parents were present during the school-wide morning meeting. The QSR team did not ascertain whether or not parents are actively invited to the morning meetings, or the frequency of parent attendance at these meetings, but did note the presence of these parents as some evidence of parent engagement.</p>

<b>Mission &amp; Goals</b>	<b>Observer's Evidence</b>
<p>10. Teachers will actively participate in ongoing professional development opportunities offered by the school, consistent with our philosophy of being reflective, lifelong learners.</p>	<p>During the scheduled visit day, the QSR team had the opportunity to observe a session of a Professional Learning Community (“PLC”). The school organized the PLCs around grade band teams. The session was focused on creating a positive and collaborative teacher team environment, and developing more student driven classrooms. Teachers shared ideas with each other on an article about student driven classrooms. They discussed how realistic it is to implement a more student driven classroom, and shared practical ideas for improving their instruction in this area.</p> <p>During the classroom observations, the QSR team noted a few cases of teachers observing other teachers. In one case, the assistant principal visited a classroom for about five minutes. In another case, the principal visited an early childhood classroom for at least 25 minutes.</p>
<p>11. Principals and academic deans will be instructional leaders.</p>	<p>During classroom observations, the QSR team observed two instances of school leaders observing classes. According to one school leader, the administrative team’s goal is to see each teacher at least once per week. The school leader further described data from The New Teacher Project indicating that in the past, follow-up from feedback and professional development meetings was inconsistent; as such, the academic leadership team has worked to improve upon the processes for giving instructional feedback and action steps.</p>

Mission & Goals	Observer's Evidence
<p>12. Campuses will provide a safe and healthy environment that is conducive to learning.</p>	<p>Throughout the observations, the school seemed to be a happy, safe, and healthy environment. Teachers and school leaders addressed misbehavior immediately and consistently. Teachers addressed more serious behavior problems outside the classroom with individual students; as discussed above, a teacher stepped outside the classroom with a student to talk about that student's mistreatment of another student. The QSR team also observed a dean outside one classroom talking to a student about why his behavior in the classroom was inappropriate. Throughout classrooms, teachers had various ways of effectively dealing with student misbehavior. Students in an early childhood class had to move their color up a chart as they accumulated instances of misbehavior, though actual color changes were rare during the team's visit. Other teachers used "checks" systems or sent students to "buddy" classrooms to write reflections.</p> <p>Classroom environments were generally well organized and orderly, with little loss of instructional time due to transitions. In many classrooms, teachers had efficient systems for small groups and transitions. Students were already divided into groups, such as a color group, or pairs or triplets of desks. In early childhood classrooms, teachers used charts in the room to show each day and where the students in individual groups should be during each day. Teachers also had well-established communication norms, with lots of teachers reminding students to raise hands, or using silent cues to get students to raise hands if they had questions.</p> <p>The QSR team observed students being released for mid-day recess outside, where they could engage in physical activity. In an English language arts class, one small group was working on reading comprehension through a text about healthy eating, sugar substitutes, and diabetes.</p>

## School Intervention and Support Strategies

This table summarizes Center City PCS – Petworth’s intervention and support strategies as detailed in its web-based Intervention and Support Plan, and the evidence that the PCSB staff member observed of the school implementing those strategies during both the scheduled day and the unscheduled observation window for the Fall 2013 Qualitative Site Review for the purposes of the 2012 ESEA Flexibility Waiver. PCSB leaves it to the discretion of school leadership to determine the best use of time during the scheduled day of observations for the purposes of Focus/Priority intervention strategies. As such, it may not be possible to observe certain strategies chosen by the school. In cases where PCSB did not have the opportunity to observe the strategy, we will use the standard language of ‘While this strategy may be in place, PCSB neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to this strategy.’ Different language will be used to indicate poor implementation of a given strategy.

Please note that much of the evidence for the implementation of intervention and support strategies was observed through classroom observation, and was aligned to the *Framework for Teaching*. As such, PCSB noted the specific classroom observation elements that speak to these strategies, where appropriate, in order to avoid repetition.

Strategy Described in Intervention Plan	School’s Description of Strategy on the Ground	Evidence
<p>ID04: All teams prepare agendas for their meetings</p> <p>ID 07: A Leadership Team consisting of the principal, teachers who lead the Instructional Teams, and other key professional staff meets regularly (twice a month or more for an hour each meeting)</p> <p>ID10 - The school’s Leadership Team regularly looks at school performance data and aggregated classroom observation data and uses that data to make decisions about school improvement and professional development needs.</p> <p>ID11: Teacher are organized into grade-level, grade-level cluster, or subject area Instructional teams</p>	<p>Agendas are created and sent for the Instructional Leadership Team, STAT, feedback/observation, and PLC Meetings.</p> <p>The school implements Professional Learning Communities to address student data and create instructional plans based upon current data.</p> <p>There will be a separate school culture team consisting of a variety of teachers to goal set and action plan around results, relationships, and processes.</p>	<p>During the scheduled day, PCSB had the opportunity to observe a Professional Learning Community (“PLC”). The objective of PLCs, according to one of the teacher-facilitators, is to create a positive and collaborative grade band team. The focus of this particular session was to create more student-driven classrooms. The group had read an article about student-driven classrooms and answered questions; they used the time during the session to discuss answers. The group discussed the implementation of more student-driven classrooms in their own practice, and teachers had the opportunity to share experience and insight into how they create more student-driven classrooms. Teachers also had the opportunity to consider and discuss how student-centered their classrooms are. They ended the session by discussing how to have students take more ownership of their work, particularly their work in centers.</p> <p>While the school may be implementing the strategy, PCSB neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to meetings beyond the PLC meeting, nor did PCSB look for or observe a session with the school culture team.</p>

Strategy Described in Intervention Plan	School's Description of Strategy on the Ground	Evidence
IE07: The principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction regularly	The principal & APs performs weekly observations and provide written and/or verbal feedback.	<p>During the two week observation window, PCSB observed the principal and assistant principal in classrooms, though PCSB did not observe the feedback session between the principal and the teacher, nor did PCSB request to see the written feedback.</p> <p>Please see the <i>Instructional Delivery</i> section of this report for additional evidence that speaks to the instructional quality.</p>
<p>IF06: Teachers are required to make individual professional development plans based on classroom observations.</p> <p>IF10: The principal plans opportunities for teachers to share their strengths with other teachers.</p>	<p>The school implements a system of SMART goal- setting and mid-year and end- of-year conferencing.</p> <p>The school implements system of teachers sharing expertise during professional development, specifically during weekly PLC meetings.</p> <p>The school will implement peer observation, starting in January 2014.</p>	<p>While the school may be implementing the strategy, PCSB neither looked for nor observed any evidence related to SMART goals or documentation around teacher performance and conferencing, as document review is not part of the QSR process</p> <p>Please see the <i>Instructional Delivery</i> section of this report for additional evidence that speaks to the instructional quality.</p> <p>Please see evidence related to indicators starting with <i>ID04: All teams prepare agendas for their meetings</i> for information about the PLC meeting observed during the scheduled day.</p> <p>PCSB did not observe formal peer observations, as these are not set to start until January 2014.</p>
<p>IIA02: Units of instruction include standards-based objectives and criteria for mastery</p> <p>IIB04: Teachers individualize instruction based on pre-test results to provide support for some students and enhanced learning opportunities for others.</p> <p>IIC05: All teachers use a variety of instructional models</p> <p>IVE07: The school provides additional time focused on learning strategies for effectively working with students with disabilities or ELLS.</p>	<p>Teachers create 6-8 week units of instruction based on standards-based objectives, with rubrics used in connection with assignments to indicate mastery.</p> <p>Implement system of teachers creating individualized plans to ensure every (ELL) child has a plan of action based on post-test results, including the use of portfolios to show progress through a number of measures.</p> <p>Students will receive highly differentiated instruction, with specialized strategies for English Language Learners, and based on areas of need identified</p>	<p>PCSB did not review unit plans, as we do not conduct a document review as part of the QSR. During the scheduled observation day, PCSB observed the use of rubrics in classrooms to indicate mastery. In an upper level English Language Arts class observed, the teacher went through the mechanics of a three paragraph essay, focusing on the thesis statement. She told students that if they have finished with their essay, including the creation of their thesis statement, they should review their essay against the description of the highest level of the writing rubric. The teacher went through the writing rubric and asked students to highlight in different colors the elements they should include, and elements they should be careful to avoid, in order to get the highest score for their writing.</p> <p>Please see the <i>Instructional Delivery</i> section of this report for additional evidence that speaks to the instructional quality.</p> <p>PCSB saw a variety of instructional models and various modes of differentiation, with specific strategies for English Language Learners (ELLs), during both the scheduled observation day and the two week observation window:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multiple ELA classes used small group instruction and used ELL-specific strategies. Pre-teaching vocabulary, picture supports with vocabulary,</li> </ul>

Strategy Described in Intervention Plan	School's Description of Strategy on the Ground	Evidence
	<p>through student-level data.</p> <p>Teachers push in to work with small groups on tiered activities.</p> <p>Teachers receive additional professional development, particularly in the SIOP model, to enhance their ability to serve ELLs.</p>	<p>teachers using their own personal examples and student examples to teach vocabulary, repetition of vocabulary. In one classroom, students were reading a book about Japan as a class; the ELL strategy in the small group was to build upon students' background knowledge. The teacher showed students Japan on a map, and asked students what they knew about Japan, and what they knew about the atomic bomb. Other groups were working on vocabulary building through the discussion of character traits. The teacher had given the students a word bank to use as a support when completing a worksheet about which character traits a particular action demonstrated. In many classrooms, as students read stories in small groups, the teachers used a strategy called "Stop. Think. Paraphrase" where they would have students read small chunks of text and then think about what the author is saying, and then paraphrase in their own words for the small group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Throughout the classrooms observed, both ELLs and non-ELLs had many opportunities to practice speaking. During many of the English language arts classes observed, students worked with teachers in small groups and had many opportunities to speak both to the adults and to each other. During Guided Reading, teachers asked questions of individual students to ensure they comprehended. In another group, students worked in pairs to read phrases while their partners marked down whether the student was able to read the phrase or not. In a math class observe, the teacher worked with a small group on reading a book called <i>How many seeds?</i>. Students had the opportunity to discuss the fruits they saw with their partners.</li> <li>▪ PCSB also saw many opportunities for students to practice writing. In a middle school writing class observed during the scheduled day, the teacher was discussing how to write a high quality three paragraph summary essay, focusing on the mechanics of a topic sentence. The teacher discussed what high quality work looked like, and asked students to highlight features of high quality work. During the unscheduled observation window, PCSB observed pre-K students writing about the activities they do at the park, and then drawing a picture, giving students multiple ways to show what they know.</li> <li>▪ Both ELL and non-ELL students had opportunities to express what they know about content through pictures. In a social studies class observed</li> </ul>

Strategy Described in Intervention Plan	School's Description of Strategy on the Ground	Evidence
		<p>during the scheduled day, students had the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of World War One through the drawing of a comic strip about the events that started the war. As discussed above, students in pre-K got to write about and draw activities that they do at the park. In a science class, the teacher asked students to draw Bohr models of atoms to demonstrate their understanding of atomic structure. During both the scheduled and the unscheduled day, the kindergarten teacher asked students to draw pictures of various items they discussed during morning meeting to check for comprehension and to improve students' ability to follow directions.</p>
<p>IID02: The school tests each student at least three times each year to determine progress toward standards-based objectives.</p> <p>IID06: Yearly learning goals are set for the school by the Leadership Team, utilizing student learning data</p> <p>IID09: Instructional teams use student learning data to plan instruction</p>	<p>Ensure students are assessed more than three times per year.</p> <p>Ensure smooth functioning of the school's operational systems in order to establish coherent streams of data.</p> <p>Instruction will be differentiated and a based on student data.</p>	<p>While the school may be implementing the strategy, PCSB neither looked for nor observed teachers giving formal assessments during the scheduled day and the two week classroom observation window.</p> <p>Please see the Instructional Delivery section of this report for additional evidence that speaks to the school's instructional quality. In particular, the element of Using Assessment in Instruction may provide evidence around the use of data and assessment during classroom observation.</p>
<p>IIIA02: All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction</p> <p>IIIA31: All teachers interact instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback)</p> <p>IIIA32: All teachers interact managerially with students (reinforcing rules, procedures)</p> <p>IIIA40: All teachers assess student mastery in ways other than those provided by the computer program.</p>	<p>Ensure that learning activities, assignments given to each student are targeted to that student's level of mastery, and are aligned to the objectives.</p> <p>Teachers monitor students' progress with mastering the objective of the lesson and provide feedback to ensure students are on track.</p> <p>Teachers explain throughout the lesson to ensure mastery. Teachers monitor student progress with mastering the objective and provide feedback</p>	<p>Throughout the classrooms observed during both the scheduled day and the unscheduled two week observation window, teachers worked with students in small groups on instruction that appeared to be tailored to the students' level of mastery. Please see the section above starting with indicator <i>IIA02: Units of instruction include standards-based objectives and criteria for mastery</i> for specific evidence around instructional differentiation, particularly for ELLs.</p> <p>Please see the <i>Classroom Environments</i> section of this report for additional evidence that speaks to the teacher interactions with students. In particular: The element of Managing Classroom Procedures may provide evidence around how teachers interacted managerially with students.</p> <p>Please see the <i>Instructional Delivery</i> section of this report for additional evidence that speaks to the instructional quality. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The element of Using Assessment in Instruction may provide evidence around the use of data and assessment during classroom observations.</li> </ul>

Strategy Described in Intervention Plan	School's Description of Strategy on the Ground	Evidence
	<p>to ensure students are on track.</p> <p>Teachers monitor students' progress towards mastery and ensure they reinforce rules, policies, and procedures.</p> <p>Teachers utilize curriculum-based assessments. They also use formative assessments and homework to determine whether or not standards need to be retaught for mastery. Teachers also regularly discuss assessment results with students to provide prompt feedback.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The element of Communication with Students may provide evidence around how teachers interacted instructionally with students.</li> </ul>
IVE06: The LEA/School has allocated funds to support extended learning time, including innovative partnerships	The school will provide after-school support for ELL students.	While the school may be implementing the strategy, PCSB neither looked for nor observed after-school tutoring for ELLs.

## CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS<sup>1</sup>

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, 75% of classrooms received a rating of proficient or advanced for the Classroom Environment indicator.

Class Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
		Rating	Percentage
<b>Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</b>	Seventy percent of classrooms established strong environments of respect and rapport; nearly one-third of the classrooms were rated exemplary, the highest rating possible. With the exception of a few teachers who exhibited a more businesslike relationship with their students, most teachers had warm relationships with their students; students hugged their teachers and teachers took care to comfort students who were upset. Students were consistently respectful toward their teachers. Teachers regularly expressed that students should focus on each other as their peers shared; students responded by tracking their peers, listening silently, and asking questions of the presenters.	Limited	0%
		Satisfactory	30%
		Proficient	40%
		Exemplary	30%
<b>Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>	<p>In classroom observations, students generally took pride in their work, as demonstrated by their enthusiasm for answering the teachers’ questions and their willingness to show their completed work to the teacher. Some teachers narrated model student engagement, such as, “This student is engrossed in her chapter book.” Students were generally very engaged in their educational tasks; one student, for example, continued to work on a math problem on the board, even while other students were served breakfast. Teachers in small groups pushed all students to participate in the learning activities, and encouraged students to speak loudly and confidently, though their success in this was mixed.</p> <p>However, some teachers failed to convey the importance of the lesson objective or content. Their focus was heavier on the importance of completing tasks. Further, most teacher encouragement of students was about their behavior, rather than academic achievements.</p>	Limited	0%
		Satisfactory	30%
		Proficient	60%
		Exemplary	10%
<b>Managing Classroom Procedures</b>	<p>Throughout the school, the QSR team observed students productively engaged in learning tasks, particularly in small groups. In most classrooms, routines were well-established and students needed little prompting to transition after teachers indicated that it was time for transition. Teachers had to give very few reminders to get students back on task in the rare instances of off-task behavior.</p> <p>However, in about one-third of classes, the QSR team observed poorly managed transitions. Transitions took longer than originally expected, as announced by the teacher, and students waited idly, with no activities or tasks.</p>	Limited	0%
		Satisfactory	30%
		Proficient	60%
		Exemplary	10%

<sup>1</sup> Teachers may be observed more than once by different review team members.

Class Environment	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
<b>Managing Student Behavior</b>	<p>In 90% of the classrooms observed, student behavior was consistently appropriate, requiring little reactive intervention from teachers. During whole group instruction, teachers monitored behavior as they moved throughout the classroom. During small groups, teachers prevented student misbehavior by continuously engaging all students in the learning activities. Teachers responded to almost all students of student misbehavior, though this was not consistently the case in the weaker classrooms.</p> <p>In a few classrooms, students took initiative to ensure their peers' good behavior; student participation in setting and maintaining behavioral standards is a key element of the "exemplary" rating on this element of the rubric.</p>	Limited	0%
		Satisfactory	10%
		Proficient	70%
		Exemplary	20%

## 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, 68% of classrooms received a rating of proficient or advanced for the Instructional Delivery indicator.

Instructional Delivery	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
<b>Communicating with Students</b>	<p>Four-fifths of the teachers observed were rated proficient or exemplary in Communicating with Students, including one-fifth of the teachers rated as exemplary. In these classrooms, teachers’ explanations of the instructional purpose were clear and repeatedly referenced throughout the lesson. Their explanations of the instructional content were clear and error-free; teachers also communicated tasks clearly, though they occasionally had to repeat themselves based on student misunderstanding. In most classrooms, teachers focused explicitly on vocabulary and encouraged students to use correct English, such as saying “yes” not “yeah,” and “use” instead of “do” in reference to a number line. The strongest teachers also gave students the opportunity to present instructional content to other students.</p>	Limited	0%
	<p>Some teachers’ communication with students was rated as satisfactory because of ineffective or nonexistent communication of lesson objectives. In one class, the posted “SWBAT” [Students Will Be Able To...] was incorrect for the lesson at hand.</p>	Satisfactory	20%
		Proficient	60%
		Exemplary	20%
<b>Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</b>	<p>The majority of the teachers observed scored proficient or exemplary in Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques. These teachers used a mix of low level and high level questioning, starting with low level questioning to established student understanding of content, then moving into higher level questioning to build students’ critical thinking students. Most students were engaged in classroom discussion, and teachers worked to involve all students in classroom discussions, in both whole group and small group settings. Teachers took opportunities during whole group discussion to allow the class to react to each student’s comments or to answer each other’s questions.</p>	Limited	0%
	<p>One teacher rated exemplary stood out in this element of the rubric: in this classroom, students asked open-ended and thought-provoking content-related questions. The teacher fielded these questions with interest and built classroom discussion around student interest. In contrast, the teachers rated proficient tended to dominate the mediator role in their classroom discussions rather than pushing students to assume responsibility for leading the discussion.</p>	Satisfactory	40%
		Proficient	50%
		<p>In the classrooms that did not score well in this element of the rubric, teachers dismissed</p>	

Instructional Delivery	Evidence Observed	School Wide Rating	
	open-ended questions or missed opportunities to extend students' learning. For example, when one student asked a question partially related to the lesson content but not specifically addressed in the reading, the teacher said that they would have to Google it and moved on. These teachers who scored lower on the rubric also relied heavily on questions with a single correct response, such as asking multiple choice questions to gauge reading comprehension.	Exemplary	10%
<b>Engaging Students in Learning</b>	Throughout the school, the QSR team observed students engaged in lessons and activities. Most classrooms had more than one teacher present to support students in learning and performing tasks.  In the stronger classrooms, the questions posed to students allowed for multiple correct answers, giving students some flexibility in how they answered questions, and teachers frequently asked students to explain their answers in more depth. Lesson pacing appeared to be appropriate, particularly during the literacy block, where students worked on stations for 15-20 minutes before transitioning.	Limited	0%
		Satisfactory	20%
		Proficient	70%
		Exemplary	10%
<b>Using Assessment in Instruction</b>	Just half of the observations scored proficient or exemplary on Using Assessment in Instruction. In these classrooms, teachers continually gauged their students' understanding. Students were given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge through multiple channels, such as through oral indications, exit tickets, and in one-on-one teacher check-ins. In small groups, these teachers ensured that all students had opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge.  In the other classrooms, while teachers generally did assess for understanding it was done through informal checks during individual work times, meaning that not all students were given timely feedback and others were not assessed at all. In these classrooms, teachers did not clearly state their expectations of what constituted high-quality work or by what criteria students would be assessed.	Limited	0%
		Satisfactory	50%
		Proficient	40%
		Exemplary	10%

**APPENDIX I: CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT OBSERVATION RUBRIC**

<b>Class Environment</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<b>Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport</b>	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.
<b>Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>	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.
<b>Managing Classroom Procedures</b>	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.
<b>Managing Student Behavior</b>	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**

<b>Instructional Delivery</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>
<b>Communicating with Students</b>	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.
<b>Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques</b>	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.
<b>Engaging Students in Learning</b>	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
<b>Using Assessment in Instruction</b>	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.