



April 5, 2013

Donald Hense, Board Chair
Friendship Public Charter School - Southeast
120 Q Street NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Hense:

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, the 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 2012-2013 school year for the following reason(s):

- o School eligible to petition for 15-year Charter Renewal

Qualitative Site Review Report

On November 16th and November 28th, a Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of the Friendship PCS – Southeast Campus. 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, and 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 schools charter, classroom environments, instructional delivery, meeting the needs of all learners, professional development, school climate and governance/management.

We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that you and your staff gave the monitoring team in conducting the Qualitative Site Review at the Friendship PCS – Southeast. Thank you for your continued cooperation as the PCSB makes every effort to ensure that the Friendship PCS is in compliance with its charter.

Sincerely,



Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: School Leader

CHARTER GOALS

This table summarizes the goals that the Friendship Public Charter School 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.

Goal as Identified by the School	Evidence
Ensure that each student achieves the educational standards in each subject area as outlined in the Student Academic Standards.	The school currently uses the Common Core State Standards for its Reading and Math curricula. The school also referenced its new curriculum, Houghton Mifflin Materials, which the school is using to drive the instruction of the Common Core State Standards. Teachers posted these standards of learning in several classrooms as a part of the mandatory focus wall, which outlines the learning expectations for the current unit. Several teachers used the Houghton Mifflin curricular materials as part of their Reading and Math lessons.
Help students feel comfortable taking intellectual chances and accepting academic challenges.	The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.
Improve student motivation by increasing the motivation of the education team and by setting high performance standards and expectations.	During the administration focus group, the Principal shared the following goals and expectations that he shared with his educational team since the beginning of the school year. Teachers in the teacher focus group also reiterated these goals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management Framework (“PMF”) Tier 1 status • 80% of scholars in grades K – 5 at below basic and basic shift to grade level proficiency by the end of the school year • Shift from behavior-centered school culture to academically-centered, college bound learning environment • Build sustainable relationships of trust and care among all stakeholders
Develop strong character in students through the building of courage, curiosity, integrity, leadership, perseverance, and concern for others.	The school teaches core values through its classroom lessons and morning meetings. Teachers posted the core values in several classrooms and teachers and students also referred to the core values during multiple classroom observations.
Ensure that students are prepared to lead successful adult lives as workers and consumers.	The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.
Develop in students a strong respect for the democratic ideals of freedom and liberty for all.	After reviewing the master schedule and conferencing with the student, administrator and teacher focus groups, the QSR team determined that the school does not offer students any Science or Social Studies course work at Friendship SE campus. The Principal confirmed that school does not enroll students in Social Studies courses because the school does not have an elementary Social Studies curriculum.

Goal as Identified by the School	Evidence
Provide a safe and secure learning community.	During the visit, the observation team saw several administrative and security staff members in the hallways, maintaining a quiet learning environment throughout the school building. During the student focus group, the students reported that there school does not have any bullies. There were boxes seen in several of the classrooms for students to drop notes to the teachers about any issues that they were having. The students and teacher focus groups noted that these were ways for the students to communicate issues with their teachers to address.
Draw on the support of families and the community to reinforce the school's education mission.	During the teacher focus group, the teachers discussed two data talks that the school held for parents thus far this school year. During the meetings, parents and teachers discuss student performance data on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments.
Provide an educational resource to the surrounding Edison-Friendship Public Charter School community.	The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.
Develop in students an abiding commitment to the school's surrounding community.	During the focus groups, students and teachers described some of the activities that the students had participated in this school year. These activities included a homeless walk, a penny drive for Leukemia patients, a holiday clothing and food drive, and support for Hurricane Sandy victims.

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

According to the charter application, the mission of Friendship Public Charter School is to prepare a diverse cross section of children for success as students, workers, and citizens by providing them with a world-class education. This is what the Qualitative Site Review (“QSR”) team looked for when visiting the classrooms, attending a board meeting, and conducting the focus groups.

The staff and students discussed the college-bound focus of the Southeast Campus during the administration, teacher and student focus groups. We saw several informational posters about colleges and posters highlighting some of the decisions that college-bound students have to make posted throughout the hallways and in classrooms. The students shared that the school mission is “for the students to be successful, go to college

and make AYP [Annual Yearly Progress]” and to “have every scholar go to college” during the student focus group. During the classroom observations, teachers referred to their students as scholars and often asked for them to demonstrate the learning positions that a college student would demonstrate. The students often corrected each other’s behaviors and reminded each other of the core values of the school and the norms of their individual classroom. The school has recently adopted the Houghton Mifflin reading and math curricular materials to supplement the instruction, which is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. They use the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment to monitor students’ progress throughout the school year.

PCSB staff visited the Friendship Public Charter School board meeting on October 25, 2012. There were a sufficient number of board members present to make a quorum for this meeting. The focus of the meeting included a discussion about the following topics:

- New facility for Friendship Tech Prep campus
- Student enrollment trends
- Embedding school mission across all programs
- New curriculum, professional development strategies used across district
- Upcoming Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (“PARCC”) assessment, partnership with Achievement Network
- Strategies for improving school climate/culture

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

Eighty-three percent of all classroom observations scored proficient or exemplary in elements of the Classroom Environment rubric, which includes: Environment of Respect, Culture of Learning, Managing Classroom Procedures, Managing Student Behavior, and Organization of Physical Space.

During the classroom observations, the children and teachers were polite and respectful to one another. The QSR team observed several teachers who infused humor in their lessons and gave positive, genuine comments to students when they made good choices or did their work correctly. While the demeanor of the teachers was generally positive, one teacher used sarcasm with his/her students frequently and was dismissive of students' questions.

Nearly all classrooms had an up-to-date word wall, college information, and a focus wall, which outlines the learning expectations of the current unit. Most teachers identified the learning expectations before releasing students to complete their work independently. The students and teachers described these expectations as "college scholar expectations". However, some of the word wall displays were sparse.

Several classrooms lost little to no instructional time during transitions, with, in some classes, the students leading the transitions with little to no support from the classroom teacher. The teachers also used a variety of cues and chants to keep students engaged and to minimize losses in instructional time.

The school uses a colorful level chart in each classroom to visually remind students when they make positive and negative choices in the classroom. Nearly all classrooms observed consistently used this level chart to track their students' behavior accordingly. Only one classroom lost a considerable amount of instructional time as the constant redirection of student misbehavior interfered with the lesson.

The spaces in the classrooms were conducive for small group instruction, whole group instruction, technology centers, and classroom libraries. Most teachers organized classrooms well to allow students access to classroom materials. In some classrooms, students readily moved on their

own if they were unable to see the lesson 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

Approximately 50% of classrooms were proficient or exemplary in areas of Instructional Delivery: Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, Using Assessment in Instruction, and Demonstrating Flexibility.

In most of the classrooms observed, the teachers explained the purpose of the lesson to students and gradually released the students to complete their work following the “I do, we do, you do” school-wide instructional model. However, some of the teachers did not appear to align the classes’ activities to the lesson objective and others chose activities that were not rigorous, such as students coloring or drawing pictures.

The team observed three classrooms effectively using the turn and talk strategy to engage students in discussion.

A few of the classrooms engaged their students in higher-level questioning to spark student discussion and allowed their students to critique each other's answers. However, in other classrooms teachers posed mostly recall or procedural questions.

In one classroom observed, the teacher grouped her students' literacy centers by their current reading level. While her students completed a paired reading activity, the teacher assessed students individually and maintained running records on their progress.

The QSR team observed few examples of differentiation as most teachers used whole group instruction. Some teachers were flexible with their lesson delivery by probing and restating questions for students as needed, but there were a few opportunities missed for teachable moments as well as students who were confused but did not receive follow up from the teacher.

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

The school has recently hired two intervention specialists to support the reading and math needs of students. The site review team observed the reading intervention specialists doing pull-outs with small groups of students throughout the school day. The teacher and administrator focus groups reported that the leadership team identifies students for intervention by grade levels using MAP data. During the observations and focus group follow-ups, the QSR team learned that several teachers also use the MAP data and informal classroom assessment data to identify the students that will receive additional small group instruction during the class.

There are currently no English Language Learners ("ELLs") enrolled at the school, thus the school's performance on this criterion was not assessed.

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

The school holds monthly district-designed professional development sessions. The administration regularly gives the teachers the opportunity to collaborate with teachers in similar grade levels during Content Mastery Circle meetings. During the teacher focus group, the teachers reported being encouraged to attend outside professional development. One of the teachers reported a recent visit to a high-performing local school to observe their inclusion program. The teachers are assigned instructional coaches based on their particular needs and are allotted weekly planning time with their coaches. During the teacher focus group, several teachers voiced a desire to have tiered professional development because the school currently offers the same professional development to all teachers.

While the Friendship network supports new teachers with a weeklong new teacher induction in the summer, there was no evidence of a formal support system to meet the needs of new or novice teachers.

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 QSR team observed a school-wide pep rally to reward and celebrate students' academic success. During the student focus group, the students reported that the school schedule includes pep rallies and other types of incentives to motivate students to be their best. All of the students in the focus group reported feeling safe at the school and that the school had a good plan in place to handle any concerns that the students may have.