



April 5, 2013

Donald Hense, Board Chair
Friendship Public Charter School - Tech Prep Campus
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 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 November 14 and 28, 2012, a Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Friendship Public Charter School - Tech Prep 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, 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 Friendship Public Charter School - Tech Prep. Thank you for your continued cooperation as the PCSB makes every effort to ensure that Friendship Public Charter School is in compliance with its charter.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Naomi DeVeaux.

Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director

Enclosures
cc: School Leader

CHARTER GOALS

This table summarizes the goals that 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 <i>Student Academic Standards</i> .	The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal in classrooms and it was not discussed in the focus groups.
Help students feel comfortable taking intellectual chances and accepting academic challenges.	Classroom observations revealed that students felt comfortable asking questions during class. Teachers in the focus group reported that middle school students are presented with high school-ready skills (e.g. organizational skills, Algebra I, 8 th grade portfolio), and high school students are presented with college-ready skills (e.g. college and career class).
Improve student motivation by increasing the motivation of the education team and by setting high performance standards and expectations.	While not directly observed in classrooms, the administrative team reported high expectations such as 95% average daily attendance, 70% MGP in reading and math, and 100% of students attending and graduating from college.
Develop strong character in students through the building of courage, curiosity, integrity, leadership, perseverance, and concern for others.	The school implements a system called “behavior ladder” that is meant to incentivize students to demonstrate positive behavior, including elements of strong character.
Ensure that students are prepared to lead successful adult lives as workers and consumers.	A new high school course, College and Career Prep, is now offered to students.
Develop in students a strong respect for the democratic ideals of freedom and liberty for all.	The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.
Provide a safe and secure learning community.	Students in the focus group reported that they felt safe in the building. The majority of classrooms observed and hallways were orderly.
Draw on the support of families and the community to reinforce the school’s educational mission.	While not observed, administration described monthly parent meetings called Parent University. Only eight parents attended the last meeting.
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.	The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.

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 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. The specific focus of the Tech Prep campus is to provide a college preparatory Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (“STEM”) education for students in middle and high school. 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 review team concluded that day-to-day operations and activities of Friendship Tech Prep are aligned to the mission and goals as described in the school's charter. However, the review team concluded that these operations and activities are not aligned to the campus-specific STEM focus, specifically technology. Students in the focus group reported that the mission of the school is for them to go to college, and every student stated that they planned to go to college. Teachers reported that all 9th and 10th grade students are required to take a college and career prep course. Students also reported that their teachers and the principal celebrate their successes. Classroom observations revealed an emphasis on teacher-directed lessons, which the administration confirmed they did deliberately to improve the skills of lower level students. Administrators reported that literacy is a theme for this year, and that specific time for independent reading is set aside each day; the classroom observations confirmed this.

Teachers in the focus group stated that in weekly meetings a regular topic of discussion is how to integrate technology in the lesson. Classrooms observations revealed the consistent use of technology by teachers, but very limited use by students. Students stated that there are not many opportunities for hands-on technology use in their classes. Administrators indicated that there is an emphasis on teachers using technology, and the goal is that by exposure, this will improve students' technology skills. Administrators indicated that there are no specific technology-related outcomes for each grade level (skills each student should know), though there are expectations in the Technology course offered. Although the review team did not observe science labs, the administrative team reported that there was a great emphasis on labs this year, the number of experiments had increased from the previous year, and microscopes and other lab materials had been recently delivered to the school. According to administrators in the focus group, science courses are semester long.

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 Tech Prep campus
- Student enrollment trends
- Embedding school mission across all programs
- New curriculum, professional development strategies used across district
- Upcoming 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

Fifty-nine percent of all classroom observations 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 majority of teachers gave positive feedback to students after they answered a question correctly in class ("*XXX spelled that perfectly*"). In the majority of classes, teachers called students by name and many greeted their students at the door as they walked in. Objectives were consistently posted in the classrooms. In some classes, instructions to each part of the lesson were displayed on the projector.

Teachers built a culture of learning by the deliberate use of college names and terms ("*ask a college question*"; "*use your college voice*") and expressed the expectation that all students need to excel ("*I'm seeing 75% of eyes looking at me*" while waiting for 100% of students to participate).

There were varied degrees of managing classroom procedures. Some teachers used timers and assigned class duties to students. The "do now" was done in the first five minutes in most classes, though in a few classes instructional time was lost due to students talking. All classrooms had rules and expectations posted on the walls. Teachers consistently used technology in the classroom with the "do now" and embedded in the lesson.

Most teachers demonstrated strategies to manage student behavior such as count-down, SLANT, giving/taking away points for being on task, and use of the behavior ladder. Teachers consistently addressed students who misbehaved ("*XXX you just got a consequence*") but with varied results; in a few classes students continued to disrupt the class after being addressed. Many teachers walked around as students completed work to ensure that students were on task. In some classes teachers verbally corrected students who were not working ("*I need you silent*"), while other teachers used nonverbal communication such as a light tap on the shoulder or eye contact to a student talking off task.

Many rooms appeared overpopulated with the size of the room and the number of students in the class. However, the majority of teachers arranged their rooms so that students had access to the board, the door and lesson materials. There were several examples of technological resources in the classroom which were used by teachers. PCSB recognizes that this building is a temporary location for the school while the school is completing future facilities.

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

Fifty-eight percent of classrooms were proficient or exemplary in the following areas of Instructional Delivery: Communicating with Students, Using Assessment in Instruction and Demonstrating Flexibility.

Approximately 44% of classrooms were proficient or exemplary in the following areas of Instructional Delivery: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques and Engaging Students in Learning.

Teachers used verbal and nonverbal means of communication to ensure that students understood the lesson including posting the objective on the board (“SWBAT...”), asking students to repeat the instructions for the class (“*can someone clarify*”), repetition of directions, and reminding

students of project due dates. Full class discussion varied from classroom to classroom.

Teachers used a variety of questioning techniques. Some teachers probed students after the first question was asked (“*yes, and why do we use nuestro instead of nuestros*”). Some teachers encouraged students to question other students’ answers. In some classes, the majority of questions were low level (“*can you read question #4?*”, “*what is XXX?*”).

Teachers consistently used promethean boards to engage students in learning. There were more examples of teacher-directed instruction than student-to-student discourse and full participation during class discussion. In one class, the first 50 minutes of class was teacher-directed with students not moving from their seats or initiating the discussion with the teacher or their peers. In other classes, there were similar examples of teachers speaking at the front with little opportunity for students to lead the activity or engage in dialogue.

The majority of teachers embedded informal assessment into the lesson. Teachers used exit slips, thumbs-up/thumbs-down, and full group checks for understanding (“*raise your hand if you got 100% on your do now answer*”).

In many classrooms teachers demonstrated flexibility by offering additional time to an activity if students were not yet finished, slowing the lesson down, or modeling procedures if students had trouble understanding.

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

Administrators reported that differentiation is the main strategy used in instruction to support the learning needs of all students, including students at risk of academic failure. They presented a math packet as an example, in which the content was the same for each student but the strategy explained to find the answer was modified based on the student's skill level. Classroom observations showed varying degrees of differentiation. The QSR team observed and the faculty and staff focus groups confirmed that special education teachers co-teach with general education teachers in core classes. However in some non-core classes there was little evidence of differentiation between special education students, students at risk of academic failure, and the rest of the class. One teacher reported the use of differentiation by limiting the number of problems struggling students had to complete, giving them fewer problems than other students. Teacher focus groups confirmed that in non-core classes there have been challenges with assisting special education students while keeping the rest of the class on track. Teachers reported that there was professional development provided by the special education coordinator on different modifications teachers could do.

There are currently no English Language Learners (“ELLs”) at Tech Prep. The Central Office has an ELL coordinator, so were an ELL to enroll, the support would be available. Aside from discussion with the administrative team about what supports could be offered if needed, ELL services were not observed.

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

Administrators reported various forms of professional development (“PD”) during the focus group, including district level PD and new teacher induction for new teachers and teachers new to Friendship PCS. Every Friday afternoon teachers participate in content circles and work with a team of teachers across campuses. The District is flexible with PD time so each campus can adapt to its needs, according to administration. At Tech Prep, teachers want more time for planning instead of participating in content circles; according to the administration, that is permitted. All departments have a common planning block to use for collaboration. Each department meets Tuesdays and Thursdays. Teachers reported in the focus group that PD had been conducted for the teachers by the special education coordinator to demonstrate how to implement modifications for students with special needs. Administrators stated that the coaches differentiate for the teachers according to each teacher’s needs. For example, if during a walkthrough administrators identify a teacher struggling with classroom management, he/she will have coaching focused on that. Another teacher who has good management may be coached on a different topic, such as having a more student centered classroom.

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 policies were explained by teachers and administrators, and observed in classrooms. The policies to promote an orderly learning environment include implementing a "behavior ladder", posting class rules, and using in-school suspensions. On the days observed, the majority of hallways and classrooms were orderly. Students in the focus group reported that they felt safe at school, though not as safe once they left school and were on their way home. Teachers reported in the focus group that administration was focused on improving the school culture, and from the beginning of the year certain expectations were established, such as not yelling at students. Two students in the focus group reported that the school atmosphere felt the same as last year, but one student stated that there are less fights this year and it feels less chaotic.