



April 5, 2013

Donald Hense, Board Chair
Friendship Public Charter School - Woodridge
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, 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):

- School eligible to petition for 15-year Charter Renewal

Qualitative Site Review Report

On November 9 and November 27, a Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Friendship PCS – Woodridge 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 Friendship PCS – Woodridge. Thank you for your continued cooperation as the PCSB makes every effort to ensure that Friendship PCS is in compliance with its charter.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of Naomi DeVeaux.

Naomi DeVeaux
Deputy Director
Enclosures

cc: Executive Director, Principal

CHARTER GOALS

This table summarizes the goals that all of the Friendship Public Charter Schools 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 is used to drive the instruction of the Common Core State Standards. Standards of learning were posted in several classrooms as a part of the school’s mandatory focus wall, which outlines the learning expectations for the current unit. Several teachers used the Houghton Mifflin Materials tools as part of their Reading and Math lessons.
Help students feel comfortable taking intellectual chances and accepting academic challenges.	The QSR team noted students willing to raise their hands even if they were not sure of the answer. The school challenges its students to use and follow the principles of the International Baccalaureate (“IB”) curriculum, which are internationally recognized as being intellectually challenging. The students interviewed within the focus group indicated that they discussed what it meant to “be principled”, the current theme of the month, in their classrooms on a daily basis.

Goal as Identified by the School	Evidence
<p>Improve student motivation by increasing the motivation of the education team and by setting high performance standards and expectations.</p>	<p>According to the focus groups, the principal has set an expectation for all staff to meet a 100% daily attendance rate. The principal noted that the staff is currently maintaining a 98% staff attendance rate. The principal is also working with his staff to enforce the school’s standardized classroom expectations. These standards, outlined below, are used by administrators when conducting classroom walkthroughs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear/measurable objectives posted in every classrooms • 95% – 100% of scholars engage in classroom activities • Positive narration and clear use of behavior system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learner profile trait of the month ○ Daily community meeting ○ Examples of students being principled ○ Students receive IB bucks • Evidence of differentiation and small groups • Clear rules and routines • Up to date student work • Information rich learning environments • Focus wall and vocabulary wall • Clear evidence of IB (on walls and use of language) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Principled, open minded, reflective, use of IB bucks ○ School intends to continue with current curriculum and imbed IB principles within current curriculum if they receive full candidacy
<p>Develop strong character in students through the building of courage, curiosity, integrity, leadership, perseverance, and concern for others.</p>	<p>In focus groups, students did not mention these principles. The school makes an explicit effort to teach IB skills to students. The students earn IB bucks for successfully demonstrating these IB skills and trade them in for incentives. The students interviewed within the focus group discussed what it meant to “be principled”, the current theme of the month, in their classrooms on a daily basis.</p>
<p>Ensure that students are prepared to lead successful adult lives as workers and consumers.</p>	<p>The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.</p>
<p>Develop in students a strong respect for the democratic ideals of freedom and liberty for all.</p>	<p>The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.</p>
<p>Provide a safe and secure learning community</p>	<p>During the visit, the observation team saw several administrative and security staff members in the hallways, supporting teachers struggling with misbehavior in their classrooms. The students in the focus group reported a change in school culture, particularly with expectations for behavior in the classrooms and in the hallways.</p>
<p>Draw on the support of families and the community to reinforce the school’s education mission.</p>	<p>The administrative team reported that they met with parents at the beginning of the school year to convey the new behavioral and learning expectations.</p>
<p>Provide an educational resource to the surrounding Edison-Friendship Public Charter School community.</p>	<p>The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal.</p>

Goal as Identified by the School	Evidence
Develop in students an abiding commitment to the school's surrounding community.	The QSR team did not observe any evidence related to this goal. Anecdotally, school leaders mentioned that female students recently participated in the Girls on the Run program with other young women from the nearby community.

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. This is what PCSB staff and consultants looked for when visiting the classrooms, attending a board meeting, and conducting the focus groups.

The school encourages all of its students to go to college. This focus is prominent with the displays of college names in each classroom and other college paraphernalia to educate students about the universities attended by the school staff. There is also a large display about colleges visible to students on the way to the cafeteria. When the student focus group was asked what the school focuses on, several students shared, “making us college-bound students” or “making us college material”. The school leadership team and teaching staff discussed the training they had received thus far to obtain International Baccalaureate status at the school within three to five years to ensure that they provide their students with a world-class education. The IB skills are communicated to students daily and emphasized in classroom discussions. Students were given “IB bucks” for demonstrating characteristics of the IB skill of the month; in several of the classes visited, the skill was “being principled”. The school has instituted an “Inquiry Learning Block” at the end of the school day to teach some of the skills of the IB curriculum. Additionally, students in the focus groups were aware of the school’s academic and behavior expectations and stated they believed both led to a safe and secure learning environment.

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 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

Approximately 80% of all classroom observations scored proficient or exemplary on 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 team observed a variety of strategies used by the teachers to establish an environment of respect in their classrooms. Several teachers greeted their students individually as they entered the classrooms. In several classrooms, students were appointed as student greeters to welcome visitors and share what they were learning that day in the classroom.

There was evidence of “Star Scholars” work posted in several classrooms as well as college paraphernalia displayed throughout the classrooms and the school building. The teachers often referred to the IB learner profile skills and these skills were also prominently displayed throughout the school building. During most classroom observations, the teachers rarely conveyed the importance of why students needed to learn the material presented.

Most teachers also used a variety of mechanisms to manage their time, such as timers, cues, and sign language charts for students to indicate their individual needs to the teachers. Some classrooms were missing routines and procedures related to the implementation of small groups in some classrooms and procedures for the use of the restrooms, particularly for younger students. Some of the paraprofessionals and additional adults in the classrooms were not engaged purposefully with the lesson – one showed up late to a classroom, one had no involvement in the lesson, and one was unsuccessful in trying to correct student behavior from across the classroom.

There were several examples of positive reinforcement from the teachers when students made positive behavioral choices and correctly completed their assignments. Each classroom the team observed had a colorful chart to create a visual indicator of whether students have made positive or negative choices. While most classrooms used the level chart effectively, there were some teachers that did not consistently use this school-wide tool. The instances of student misbehavior were rare, but there were a few teachers that struggled with classroom management.

The QSR team noted classrooms well organized, with books on shelves and in baskets. Current student work was prominently displayed. Teachers had desks grouped together for use in small instruction groups.

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

Less than half, approximately 45%, of classrooms were proficient or exemplary in the assessed areas of Instructional Delivery, including Communicating with Students, Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engaging Students in Learning, and Using Assessment in Instruction.

When communicating with students, most of the teachers' delivery and language were correct, without error. However, there were some classrooms where limited academic vocabulary was used and another class where the teacher did not effectively communicate the lesson's main idea to the students. The learning objectives were posted in most but not all classrooms.

While the team observed some questioning in instruction, in general there was limited wait time for the students to respond before the teacher answered. There were limited examples of higher-level or open-ended questions posed to students. Furthermore, during most of the observations, the teacher's voice dominated the lesson, limiting student discussion about the lesson content.

One teacher used real-life examples to connect the content to the students' personal life and there were a few classrooms that used the "Turn & Talk" strategy to engage students in the learning and to encourage discussion among the students.

There were a variety of methods of assessments observed school wide, including quizzes, tests, exit tickets, questioning, and projects. One teacher used differentiated math quizzes for students based on their ability level.

The QSR team did not review teachers' lesson plans in advance and thus was unable to compare observed instruction to lesson plans. As such, the team could not identify adjustments based on student needs and cannot assess the school's performance on the Flexibility and Responsiveness element of the rubric.

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

During the site visit, we observed several examples of inclusion and additional assistance for students who were struggling academically. The team saw co-teachers providing small group instruction to students in need of assistance during whole-group or independent work time. There were several classes that used computer-based intervention programs to provide reading and math assistance to struggling students. The school has also designed regular intervention blocks within their master schedule during which students' time is programmed according to their reading and math needs. These intervention blocks are taught by all teachers.

According to the administrators, the school currently shares an itinerant English Language Learner ("ELL") teacher with another Friendship campus to provide inclusive services to its ELLs. The QSR team did not observe instruction specifically targeted to ELLs.

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. Teachers are regularly given the opportunity to collaborate with teachers in similar grade levels during Content Mastery Circle meetings. Teachers stated in the focus groups that they are encouraged to attend outside professional development. Several teachers interviewed had recently participated in professional development related to IB programming and courses offered by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. The teachers are assigned instructional coaches based on their particular needs and are allotted weekly planning time with their coaches. Several teachers voiced a desire to have additional individual planning time, as much of their daily planning time is required for collaboration with others.

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

Students interviewed in the focus groups reported an improvement in the school culture over the past two years. They also commented on feeling safe at school and felt as if the new administration and its "strict rules" contributed to this positive change. The students commented that they enjoyed learning and were particularly interested in their math and science classes. Teachers also regularly post behavior expectations in classrooms.