



May 4, 2020

Glen Howard, Board Chair
Goodwill Excel Center Public Charter School
1776 G St, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. Howard,

The DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) conducts Qualitative Site Reviews to gather and document evidence to support school oversight. According to the School Reform Act § 38-1802.11, DC PCSB shall monitor the progress of each school in meeting the goals and student academic achievement expectations specified in the school's charter. Goodwill Excel Center Public Charter School (Goodwill Excel Center PCS) was selected to undergo a Qualitative Site Review during the 2019-20 school year for the following reason(s):

- School eligible for 5-year Charter Renewal during 2020-21 school year

Qualitative Site Review Report

A Qualitative Site Review team conducted on-site reviews of Goodwill Excel Center PCS between February 3 – February 14, 2020. Enclosed is the team's report. You will find that the Qualitative Site Review Report focuses primarily on the following areas: classroom environment and instruction.

We appreciate the assistance and hospitality that you and your staff gave the monitoring team in conducting the Qualitative Site Review at Goodwill Excel Center PCS.

Sincerely,

Rashida Young
Chief Schools Performance Officer

Enclosures
cc: School Leader

Qualitative Site Review Report

Date: May 4, 2020

Campus Information

Campus Name: Goodwill Excel Center PCS

Ward: 2

Grade levels: Ninth through twelfth

Qualitative Site Review Information

Reason for Visit: School eligible for 5-year Charter Renewal during 2020-21 school year

Two-week Window: February 3 – 14, 2020

QSR Team Members: One DC PCSB staff member (who is a special education specialist) and two consultants

Number of Observations: 10

Total Enrollment: 310

Students with Disabilities Enrollment: 18

English Language Learners Enrollment: 0

In-seat Attendance on Observation Days:

Visit 1: February 6, 2020 – 61.6%

Visit 2: February 12, 2020 – 63.8 %

Visit 3:

Visit 4:

Summary

The mission of the Goodwill Excel Center PCS is, “To transform adult lives through the power of achieving a high school diploma and accessing post-secondary education and careers in growing, sustainable local industries.”

The QSR team observed strong evidence the Goodwill Excel Center PCS is meeting its mission. Throughout the school, teachers and students interacted with one another warmly and respectfully. Students took ownership over many of the classroom routines and procedures, and ensured transitions happened quickly resulting in no loss of instructional time. Observers noted students participated willingly in all classroom discussions, and often respectfully challenged their peers to explain their thinking. There was a strong emphasis on post-secondary education, as teachers often referenced the connection between in-class assignments and career development.

During the QSR two-week window, the team used the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to examine classroom environment and instruction (see Appendices I and II). The QSR team scored 100% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Classroom Environment domain. Students in these observations respectfully engaged their peers. The QSR team noted a strong sense of community throughout all observations. Classroom routines and procedures functioned largely due to students taking the lead to ensure they ran smoothly. The QSR team scored 100% of observations as distinguished or proficient in the Instruction domain. Observers noted clear learning goals, frequent use of academic vocabulary, and effective explanations of content that encouraged students' thinking and participation. Effective use of student groupings allowed all students the opportunity to participate freely in classroom discussions. Throughout all observations, students themselves took the initiative to assess their own work and made changes when appropriate.

Notably, the Goodwill Excel Center PCS is the first campus to earn a score of 100% proficiency in both domains.

Governance

Glen Howard chairs the Goodwill Excel Center PCS Board of Trustees. The School Reform Act requires each DC public charter school to have a majority of DC residents and two parents on its board, which the school has been compliant with for the past four years.

Specialized Instruction for Students with Disabilities

Prior to the two-week window, the Goodwill Excel Center PCS completed a questionnaire about how it serves its students with disabilities (SWD). DC PCSB staff looked for evidence of the school's articulated special education (SPED) program. DC PCSB observed two SPED classroom environments, which were both in a general education inclusion setting. In these observations, the classroom environment had a collegial atmosphere in which the students eagerly took the lead on engaging in rich discussions about the skills and content being taught in their classes. Each class consisted of both a special education teacher as well as a general education teacher. All students had ample opportunity to work independently, but also received individualized support as needed. Key trends from the SPED observations are summarized below.

- To support the needs of SWD, the Goodwill Excel Center PCS explained in its SPED questionnaire that the school primarily uses a co-teaching model in which general education and SPED teachers work in tandem to facilitate instruction. DC PCSB observed ample evidence of this given most classrooms

at the school are co-taught, and both SPED observations consisted of team-teaching pairs. The school also stated that SPED at the Goodwill Excel Center PCS “looks like the student playing an active role in his or her education and graduation plan and advocating for extra support needed and any questions or concerns he or she might have.” The SPED specialist found that students took significant ownership of their learning and advocated when they needed more support in the class. Despite the fulltime SPED teacher being absent during the date of the SPED specialist’s site visit, the school arranged for a substitute teacher to assist the general education teacher to ensure students continued to receive their required services per their Individualized Education Plans.

- To provide accommodations for SWD, the school explained in its questionnaire that DC PCSB staff might observe the use of calculators in math, extended time, frequent breaks, graphic organizers, small groups, simplification of directions, repetition of directions, preferential seating, enlarged text, read aloud directions, use of earplugs/headphones, hands on manipulatives, text reader application, and highlighting. The SPED specialist observed examples of nearly every accommodation the school listed, including the repetition of directions, frequent breaks, directions being read aloud, and the use of calculators in math. In each observation, the classrooms were well organized with the materials that students needed to independently complete their work. The classroom space was designed so students could comfortably spread out, while maintaining proximity to their peers to engage in discussion and peer support.

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT¹

This table summarizes the school’s performance on the Classroom Environment domain of the rubric during the unannounced visits. The ratings for classroom observations—“distinguished,” “proficient,” “basic,” and “unsatisfactory”—come from the Danielson framework. The QSR team scored 100% of classrooms as “distinguished” or “proficient” for the Classroom Environment domain. Please see Appendix III for a breakdown of each subdomain score.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating ²	
Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport	<p>The QSR team scored 100% of observations as proficient or distinguished in this component. In the distinguished observations, teachers demonstrated knowledge and caring about individual students. In one observation, when a student arrived to class late, the teacher walked over to them and whispered to ask if they were ok. In another observation, the teacher told a student, “It’s not about doing it my way, it’s about doing it in a way that works for you” and “I care about you and want you to make it personal and make it work for you.”</p>	Distinguished	60%
	<p>In the proficient observations, talk between teachers and students was uniformly respectful. In one observation, a teacher accidentally bumped a student’s desk and immediately said, “Excuse me.” The student responded by saying, “No problem.” In another observation, when a student struggled to answer a problem, the teacher encouraged them by saying, “Good job, you’re so close, that’s almost correct,” and “Come on now you’ll get it.”</p>	Proficient	40%
	<p>The QSR team scored none of observations as basic in this component.</p>	Basic	0%

¹ Teachers may be observed more than once by different review team members.

² DC PCSB does not report out qualitative evidence if less than 10% of observations in any given component earned a “basic” or “unsatisfactory” level of performance.

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating ²	
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Establishing a Culture for Learning	<p>The QSR team scored 100% of observations as proficient or distinguished in this component. In distinguished observations, teachers demonstrated a genuine passion for the subject by saying things like, "Let's do my favorite problem of them all." Students responded by enthusiastically participating in solving the problem and playfully challenged the teacher's answer by saying, "Let's see you prove it." Teachers in these observations insisted that all students participate and often cold-called students to ensure optimal student participation.</p> <p>In the proficient observations, teachers communicated the importance of the content and the conviction that with hard work all students could master the material. In one observation, the teacher said, "Let's keep on going, you can do this," and "Try it another way if you get stuck." In another observation, a student took it upon themselves to ensure they understood the material. The student asked, "Can you show me another one?"</p>	Distinguished	50%
		Proficient	50%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as basic in this component.	Basic	0%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%

The Classroom Environment	Evidence	School Wide Rating²	
Managing Classroom Procedures	The QSR team scored an extraordinary 100% of the observations as distinguished in this component. In these distinguished observations, students themselves ensured classroom routines and procedures functioned smoothly. Students in these observations took the initiative to ensure their classroom time was used productively. Students moved quickly between lessons and activities without any prompting from their teachers.	Distinguished	100%
		Proficient	0%
	The QSR team scored none of observations as basic in this component.	Basic	0%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Managing Student Behavior	The QSR team scored 100% of observations as proficient or distinguished in this component. In the distinguished observations, student behavior was entirely appropriate. Students interacted respectfully with their peers, supported one another when they needed help, and politely addressed their teachers. Throughout these observations, there was no need for teachers to intervene or redirect any student misbehavior.	Distinguished	90%
		Proficient	10%
	The QSR team scored none of observations as basic in this component.	Basic	0%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%

INSTRUCTION

This table summarizes the school’s performance on the Instruction domain of the rubric during the unannounced visits. The ratings for classroom observations—“distinguished,” “proficient,” “basic,” and “unsatisfactory”—come from the Danielson framework. The QSR team scored 100% of classrooms as “distinguished” or “proficient” for the Instruction domain. Please see Appendix III for a breakdown of each subdomain score.

Instruction	Evidence	School Wide Rating	
<p>Communicating with Students</p>	<p>The QSR team scored 100% of observations as proficient in this component and none as distinguished. In the proficient observations, teachers stated clearly at some point what students would be learning. In one observation, the teacher scaffolded instruction by starting with a verbal overview of the lesson. Next, the teacher wrote the directions on the board and had students take notes based on the lesson objective. Finally, the teacher modeled a few problems before asking students to practice them independently. Students quickly got to work on the assigned task and did not require any additional support from the teacher.</p>	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	100%
	<p>The QSR team scored none of observations as basic in this component.</p>	Basic	0%
	<p>The QSR team scored none of observations as unsatisfactory in this component.</p>	Unsatisfactory	0%

Using Questioning/Prompts and Discussion Techniques	The QSR team scored 100% of observations as proficient in this component and none as distinguished. In the proficient observations, teachers asked open-ended questions to help facilitate classroom discussions. In one observation, the teacher called on multiple students whether they volunteered or not. In another observation, students called out conflicting answers during a classroom discussion and the teacher intentionally slowed down the pace of the lesson and allowed students to discuss why they believed they had the correct answer. Students in this observation worked collaboratively with their peers to solve the problem.	Distinguished	0%
		Proficient	100%
	The QSR team scored none of observations as basic in this component.	Basic	0%
	The QSR team scored none of observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Engaging Students in Learning	The QSR team scored 100% of observations as proficient or distinguished in this component. In the distinguished observations, all students intellectually engaged in the learning tasks. Students in these observations listened attentively as teachers lectured, followed along in their notes, and worked independently with no additional intervention from the teacher.	Distinguished	20%

	In the proficient observations, almost all students intellectually engaged with the learning tasks. In one observation, students worked together in small groups before joining a whole group discussion about their responses. As they shared their responses, students referenced evidence form the text and made sure to explain how they got their answers.	Proficient	80%
	The QSR team scored none of observations as basic in this component.	Basic	0%
	The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.	Unsatisfactory	0%
Using Assessment in Instruction	The QSR team scored 100% of observations as proficient or distinguished in this component. In the distinguished observation, students helped establish the assessment criteria. In this observation, students and teachers worked together to analyze student work against a rubric	Distinguished	10%

	<p>that was displayed on the board. During this activity, a teacher asked students to describe why they would assign a certain score versus another based on the rubric. Later, the teacher asked students to explain their rationale.</p> <p>In the proficient observations, teachers checked frequently for student understanding using a variety of methods. Teachers in these observations asked students to use verbal and non-verbal cues to indicate comprehension. Students raised their hands, gave thumbs up, and verbally responded to questions posed by the teacher. In one observation, the teacher told students, "I am not looking for the correct answer, I need to know where you found that answer," as they circulated the room assessing individual student's work.</p>	Proficient	90%
	<p>The QSR team scored none of observations as basic in this component.</p>	Basic	0%
	<p>The QSR team scored none of the observations as unsatisfactory in this component.</p>	Unsatisfactory	0%

APPENDIX I: THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT OBSERVATION RUBRIC

The Classroom Environment	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
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.

APPENDIX II: INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION RUBRIC

Instruction	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
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 situation 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.
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.

APPENDIX III: DOMAIN AVERAGES BY COMPONENT

Percent of:	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	3b	3c	3d
Unsatisfactory	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Basic	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Proficient	40%	50%	0%	10%	100%	100%	80%	90%
Distinguished	60%	50%	100%	90%	0%	0%	20%	10%
Subdomain Average	3.60	3.50	4.00	3.90	3.00	3.00	3.20	3.10

	Domain 2	Domain 3
% of Proficient or above	100%	100%
Domain Averages	3.75	3.08