

**2009-10 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION RUBRIC
SCORE SHEET
Imagine Middle School at St. Petersburg**

This rubric will be used to provide a score of acceptable or unacceptable in each of the five categories and an overall score of acceptable or unacceptable. The rubric will represent the Superintendent's recommendation to the School Board for their consideration.

Within each category there are legal requirements that must be met in order to receive an acceptable score. Even one unacceptable score may translate to an overall recommendation to reject the application.

In some cases a category may be rated unacceptable but the recommendation may be to approve the application and to correct deficiencies during charter negotiations.

OVERALL SCORE = A

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| I. | <u>Academic Design:</u> | Score = A |
| II. | <u>Governance, Administration, and Operations:</u> | Score = A |
| III. | <u>Business Management Issues:</u> | Score = A |
| IV. | <u>Unitary Status Issues:</u> | Score = A |
| V. | <u>General Issues:</u> | Score = A |

NOTE: Score of 'A' denotes acceptable
Score of 'U' denotes unacceptable

2009-2010 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION RUBRIC

Imagine Middle School at St. Petersburg

ACADEMIC DESIGN

I. Guiding Principles, Purpose & Mission

A. Did the applicant clearly define the core philosophy of the school?

Yes. The applicant clearly defined its core philosophy as a school that provides middle school students with a rigorous approach to learning which incorporates differentiated instruction. The school's vision is:

"Imagine is to assist parents in educating their children through a challenging program of study and strong character development within a nurturing and orderly learning environment. Imagine Middle School at St. Petersburg will have highly qualified teachers, excellent thematic curricula, positive character development programs and vibrant leadership. The school's approach to learning will position and facilitate youth to succeed in and beyond the classroom."

Imagine Middle's key program and philosophy features include:

- Positive Character Development
- Challenging program of study
- Nurturing and orderly learning environment
- Economic Sustainability
- New School Development

B. Did the applicant adequately address the principles of the school as specified by law?

Yes. The applicant addressed how it would complete the required principles of:

- Meeting high standards of student achievement by using the state accountability system to measure student's academic success, as well as, utilizing on-going assessment data to monitor success throughout the year.
- Promoting enhanced academic success as well as financial efficiency by meeting Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). Ongoing financial reports will be monitored by the principal, the Limited Liability Company (LLC) board and will forward monthly financial statements to the appropriate sponsor personnel for review.
- Providing parents with sufficient information concerning their child's reading level and ongoing performance by utilizing progress reports, report cards, parent/teacher conferences, on-line grading postings, portfolio reviews and progress monitoring plans.

C. Did the applicant adequately address the required purposes of the school as specified by law?

Yes. The applicant addressed how it would complete the required purposes of:

- Improving student learning and achievement by implementing a standards-based, interdisciplinary curriculum, using on-going assessments of student

learning, planning on-going professional development, utilizing exemplary instructional practices and maximizing student instructional/learning time.

- Increasing learning opportunities by placing a special emphasis on assisting low performing students and using high-quality core classroom reading instruction methods, analyzing student success through the use of on-going assessment data, and maintaining a staff of highly qualified teachers through on-going staff development.
- Encouraging the use of innovative learning methods by effectively executing a delivery model that emphasizes teamwork, technology, hands-on activities, and project-based learning.
- Requiring measurement for learning by utilizing on-going assessment tools to monitor and communicate progress in each subject area

- D. Was there any other information shared by the applicant that pertained to this area? (optional purposes)

Yes. On page 11, the applicant included a statement concerning one of the five optional purposes:

- Expand the capacity of the public school system by assisting in complying with the state mandate of the lower class size amendment and providing the district with additional student stations.

- E. Was the target student population clearly defined (age, grade level, maximum number of students per year)?

Yes. The proposed school will enroll students ages 11-14, in grades 6-8. The school plans to open with 220 students in year one, and cap its enrollment to 396 in year five. Each class size will not exceed 22 students.

II. Educational Programs

- A. Did the applicant adequately define the curriculum objectives and the alignment to the Sunshine State Standards?

Yes. The applicant plans to use the middle school teaming approach in conjunction with the research-based Project CHILD model that will help learning experiences focus on active learning, and group cooperation. The school will also utilize advisors to support students and help create a bridge between students and teachers.

- B. Did the applicant adequately define the reading curriculum as required by state law?

Yes. The reading program will focus on the five strategic reading areas of:

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics Instruction
- Vocabulary
- Fluency
- Comprehension

In addition, the school's emphasis on teaming, and on reading skills being incorporated in content area classes with a focus of the strong correlation between reading and writing will add to the importance of reading as the integrator of the curriculum.

- C. Did the applicant clearly define the curriculum goals and objectives? Are the student academic expectations clearly defined?

Yes. On pages 21-38 the applicant defines what students are expected to know and be able to do for each subject at each grade level. The school's curriculum and related content directly aligns to the state's Sunshine State Standards.

- D. Has the applicant clearly defined instructional methods and distinctive instructional techniques?

Yes. The applicant will implement a standards-based, interdisciplinary curriculum, using the middle school teaming approach in conjunction with the research-based Project CHILD model that will help learning experiences focus on active learning, and group cooperation.

- E. Did the applicant clearly address how the school will meet the needs of exceptional education students?

Yes. On pages 50-58 the applicant gave a detailed explanation of how the needs of the exceptional education students would be met by complying with all federal, state, and local policies and procedures to meet exceptional education students. The school recognizes that it is obligated to provide a full continuum of services to Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students to the same extent as other schools within the district. We do have concerns in respect to the school's specific procedures in respect to Pinellas County Schools continuing to be the Local Education Agency (LEA) for students and will work in conjunction with the applicant on the specific ESE processes. This issue will be addressed with the applicant.

- F. Did the applicant specifically demonstrate the ability to meet the needs of English for Speakers of Other Languages Program?

Yes. On pages 57-58 the applicant describes in detail the identification and screening process, an instructional delivery model, and communication methods it will use to inform parents of students with limited English proficiency.

III. Student Assessment

The applicant adequately provided for the measurement of student performance. In Pinellas, we have used a consultant each year to work with each of our charter schools individually to set adequate and measurable goals each fall and measure the student progress toward those goals at the end of the school year. This system meets the state requirements.

- A. Did the applicant clearly define how the school will measure student improvement at all grade levels?

See above statement.

- B. Did the applicant define how the school will measure student performance using baseline data?

See above statement.

- C. Did the applicant clearly define methods that would be used to measure the strengths and needs of students?

See above statement.

- D. Did the applicant include a plan to compare the progress of students in the charter school with comparable students in other Pinellas County schools?

See above statement.

- E. Did the applicant define how the school will participate in the state assessment program?

See above statement.

- F. If this is a secondary school, did the applicant provide a legal method for graduation documentation?

N/A

GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

I. Organizing Board

- A. Is the proposed charter school organized as, or operated by, a Florida nonprofit organization?

Yes, the school will be under the same not-for-profit used by the existing Imagine Elementary Charter School.

- B. Has the applicant supplied the requested information on the organizing board?

Yes, the board will be the same as the existing school.

- C. Did the applicant disclose any relationship with a for-profit entity? If so, will approving the charter school become problematic?

No, the management company operates as a not-for-profit entity.

- D. Did the applicant disclose any business arrangements that may have an impact on school operations? If so, will approving the charter school become problematic?

No. The school will also be an affiliate of Imagine Schools Non-profit which is a Virginia based corporation.

- E. Did the applicant provide the name of an official representative to negotiate the charter?

Yes, Kathy Helean.

II. School Governance

- A. Did the applicant adequately describe the governance structure of the school including whether the school will be a public or private employer?

The school will be a private employer and operate in the traditional method. The local board will delegate the operation of the school and the administrative duties to the principal.

- B. Did the applicant adequately describe the administrative structure of the school?

Yes. The school will be headed by a principal who will answer to the governing board. Teachers and other staff will report to the principal.

- C. Did the applicant adequately describe how the board of directors will be chosen and what steps will be taken to maintain continuity between the founding organizer's vision and the board of directors?

Yes. The founding board will stay in place until the community members of the board are appointed.

- D. Did the applicant adequately describe the roles and responsibilities of the governing board, including the relationship of the board to the teachers and administrators?

Yes.

- E. Did the applicant adequately describe how and when parents will be involved in decision-making?

Yes. The school will establish a Parent Teacher Association/Organization (PTA/PTO) to encourage and foster parent involvement. Parents will be encouraged to participate at board meetings and through volunteer activities at the school.

- F. Did the applicant adequately describe how the charter school would comply with Florida's public records laws and public meetings laws?

Yes. The applicant is aware of and will comply with these laws.

- G. Does the applicant adequately address the storage of student and financial records?

The school will comply with Florida law that requires student records to be stored in fireproof and waterproof cabinets.

- H. Does the application adequately address emergency plans for fire, hurricanes, tornadoes, and child safety issues?

The school will share the facility with the Imagine Elementary Charter School and implement the safety plans in effect there. We will clarify this in the charter if the application is approved.

III. Enrollment Procedures, Recruiting Strategies, and Marketing Plans

- A. Did the applicant adequately describe the procedure for enrolling students?

Yes. The school will follow the legal processes including a lottery selection in the event that more students apply than seats are available.

- B. Did the applicant provide the required information regarding the adoption of a code of student conduct?

The school will adopt the Pinellas County Schools Code of Student Conduct.

- C. Did the applicant provide an adequate time table for registering and enrolling students, including a procedure for enrollment in a lottery if necessary?

Yes.

- D. Did the applicant provide recruiting and marketing plans to be used to attract a sufficient pool of student applicants, and include plans to match the educational needs of the students with the school's academic program?

Yes. The school will use an extensive public information campaign that includes advertising in various publications in both English and Spanish. They will meet with community and neighborhood organizations.

IV. Employee/Human Resource Information

- A. Does the application adequately define employee selection and qualification criteria? Were job descriptions and qualifications of each position included?

The applicant included detailed selection processes. Job descriptions were available.

- B. Did the applicant provide the requested salary and benefit proposals for employees, and the employee dismissal procedures to be used?

The applicant will provide teacher salaries "competitive" to Pinellas County Schools, including consideration for experience and past employment history. Bonuses are available for exemplary performance. Comprehensive benefits are provided to full time employees. Staff is hired on a year to year basis.

- C. Did the applicant provide the method to notify parents of the qualifications of teachers at the charter school?

Yes, through parent newsletters.

- D. Did the applicant provide the staffing model to be used and did it include class sizes and student/teacher ratios?

The applicant understands and commits to meeting the class size mandates in the Florida Constitution.

V. Student Transportation/Food Service

- A. Did the applicant provide for the necessary student transportation procedures?

Yes.

- B. Did the applicant include a process to deliver a food service program to the students which includes methods of complying with the federal free and reduced lunch?

Yes, the school may attempt to contract with the district for food programs. Other options could be considered. The applicant is aware of its responsibilities under federal law.

VI. Length of Contract and Implementation Time Table

- A. Did the applicant request a specific length of time for the charter?

Yes, five years.

- B. Did the applicant provide a time table for implementing the charter which includes information to ensure that the proposed date of the final charter approval will allow sufficient time to open the school in a timely manner?

Yes, a detailed time table was provided.

VII. Evidence of Support

- A. Did the applicant provide documentation of local community support among teachers, parents, students, community members, and institutional leaders, through letters of support, surveys, or other means?

No petitions or letters of support were provided, however, the Imagine Elementary Charter School has already enrolled over 300 students.

VIII. Facilities

- A. Has the applicant secured an adequate school facility or identified potential school locations? If so, does the location present any educational, logistical or safety problems?

Imagine Middle School will be located in the same building as the existing Imagine Elementary Charter School at 1950 First Avenue North, St. Petersburg. The middle school will be located within the five classrooms on the third floor and one side of the second floor. If approved, the renovation for the third floor will take place in the summer so as not to be disruptive to the students. The remainder of the second floor will be used by students in grades 3 through 5 and students in grades K through 2 will be located on the ground floor. Primary students will be scheduled at one time, intermediate at another, and preparatory (middle grades) will have their own lunch period. Dismissal will be coordinated to allocate a separate entrance/exit area for middle school students to ensure the safety of all students.

- B. Has the applicant provided for a suitable educational facility? Does the applicant also include a funding source for remodeling the facility and for demonstrating how and when the facility would be brought into compliance with applicable building codes?

See A above.

- C. If applicable, did the applicant describe financing plans for the proposed charter school facility?

See A above.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- A. Did the applicant adequately describe the financial management and internal accounting procedures of the school to be used? Were the resumes of accounting services provided applicable and did the applicant include a description of the school's process for completing an annual financial audit?

Yes.

- B. Did the applicant present a balanced budget for start-up expenses covering only the planning and capital expenses necessary before school opening?

Yes.

- C. Did the applicant provide an annual financial plan for each year requested by the charter? Did the plan contain anticipated fund balances based on revenue projections, a spending plan based on revenue and expenses, and a description of the controls which will safeguard the finances and projected enrollment trends? Over all, did the applicant provide evidence of fiscal viability and sound financial planning?

Yes, annual financial plans were provided; however, revenue and expenditure details will be clarified in the charter to ensure the financial viability of the school.

- D. If applicable, did the applicant provide detailed plans to supplement revenues through fundraising or other activities?

No fundraising is included in the financial plan.

- E. Did the applicant provide detailed plans for school insurance, both liability and property and casualty?

Yes. The charter will provide specific levels of required coverage.

UNITARY STATUS ISSUES

- A. Does the applicant provide adequate and appropriate procedures to assure attaining the goals of racial and socioeconomic diversity in the community?

The applicant sufficiently addresses the goal of a diverse student population and the mechanisms it will use to promote this goal. These mechanisms include advertisements in varying community-based media across the county, direct mailings, and informational

meetings. The applicant affirms a commitment to a diverse population and an atmosphere of inclusion and acceptance. The applicant would be a companion charter school to an existing K-5 charter school (Imagine Charter School) that was previously approved by the school board.

GENERAL ISSUES

- A. Has the applicant demonstrated full knowledge of the charter school concept and law?

Yes.

- B. Does the application reflect careful preparation and attention to detail?

Yes.

- C. Additional issues and/or concerns.

None.