

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna Charter Application Index

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A. Overview of School

I. Mission

“The Imagine International Academy of Smyrna is a community partnership whose purpose is to empower students to be critical thinkers, well-rounded individuals and caring world citizens by developing intellect in a nurturing environment, through a rigorous and relevant curriculum.”

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna (IAS) had its beginnings in Imagine International Academy of Mableton (IAM) another proposed charter school, when a concerned parent contacted Imagine Schools about the possibility of opening a charter school in Mableton. On November 17th, 2005 an informational meeting was given at the Kennesaw Charter School. Several parents of children from the school were there and spoke about the benefits they have found in being a part of the charter school in their community. Approximately 30 parents from our community were represented at that first meeting.

Word began to spread, primarily by way of the internet and word of mouth. Three weeks later, the first community meeting was held in a neighborhood clubhouse. Over 150 families were represented at that meeting from both the Smyrna and Mableton communities.

On February 23rd 2006, the next community meeting was held and there was an overwhelming response. Over 400 families were present at the meeting. It became very apparent that more than one school was needed to support the interest of the communities. Imagine Schools announced that they would fund two schools, the Imagine International Academy of Mableton and the Imagine International Academy of Smyrna.

There is considerable community support for the Imagine International Academy of Smyrna. Currently more than 450 families have registered with IAS. These families have approximately 344 children interested in beginning the 2007 school year at IAS and an additional 267 to follow in subsequent school years as they become eligible for kindergarten. That is a total of over 611 children. These families are seeking an alternative to the current public schools in the city of Smyrna.

The City of Smyrna known as the “Jonquil City” has developed a reputation for smart growth and revitalization and was recently awarded the Urban Land Institute’s Award for Excellence. The City of Smyrna, for more than a decade, has been in the business of reinventing itself and setting the standard for community and Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will continue in that tradition by setting the standard in education. Smyrna has also long been an integral part of the growth and development of Cobb County and is recognized as one of the most desirable places to live in the entire Metropolitan Atlanta area. It offers a “small town” atmosphere which is desirable for families seeking to raise a family. As a result the city has experienced tremendous growth over the past decade and has attracted a diverse population. Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will be well positioned to meet the demands of that growth and the diversity.

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will be tuition-free, public charter school serving students kindergarten through eighth grade. At the International Academy each child will be treated as a unique individual and encouraged to reach his or her true potential. The students will participate in a curriculum that follows the guidelines set by the International Baccalaureate Organization's (IBO) Primary Years Program (PYP) and Middle Years Program (MYP). The parents/guardians, students and educators, will be required to work together to create a positive, warm, loving environment in which the student can develop their whole self. The school will explore and celebrate cultural differences in an academically challenging, nurturing and intentionally multi-ethnic environment. Our IAS children will have the great fortune of incorporating a second language into their everyday lives starting at 6 years of age. The goal is to encourage the children to develop into global thinkers and lifelong learners. By nature of a charter school, enormous community involvement will be required, which, already, has been shown in that this petition is supported by more than 450 families! From these families, over 100 volunteers serve on committees, devoting countless hours of energy and talent to help make the dream a reality.

These are truly our desires as petitioners: to allow the child to grow and learn as a globally aware individual, to foster a love for life-long learning, to encourage enormous involvement of parents/guardians and educators in a diverse and flexible environment, and to offer a unique alternative in education for Cobb County. Our intention is to create exceptional opportunities for all the students by delivering the curriculum through an international approach and enhance the learning opportunities already offered through the county. In short, the Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will offer parents another choice for schooling.

The Academy will be affiliated with Imagine Schools Non Profit (ISNP). Imagine Schools was founded by Dennis and Eileen Bakke. Eileen Bakke has been involved in education for 30 years. Her passion is mentoring teachers and creating a school culture that engages students in meaningful and effective learning. Dennis Bakke, co-founder and CEO Emeritus of the AES Corp., a global power company, brings to Imagine Schools an impressive business background, including a pioneering approach to decentralized management. Both Dennis and Eileen are passionate about making a difference in education by implementing a unique organizational and operational structure that creates a dynamic learning environment by putting teachers and school leaders squarely in charge of the decisions affecting the schools they serve. The partnership between the petitioners and ISNP will provide the school with the passion and knowledge of the former and the educational expertise and financial resources of the latter

II. How the Academy will Accomplish its Mission

The mission of the Imagine International Academy of Smyrna ("IA Smyrna", "IAS", "Charter School" or "the Academy") will be delivered by utilizing the Imagine Schools approach to developing and operating healthy schools that are sustainable in their core mission. The key factors that we believe will help deliver the mission are:

- International education through the use of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP), and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP)
- Language other than English (LOTE) every day
- Using decentralization of services and shared decision making by all professionals within the school.
- High level of parental involvement
- Using 5 areas of concentration in operating and grading the success of the school
 - Academic Achievement
 - Character Development
 - Economic Sustainability
 - Parent Satisfaction
 - Adherence to Shared Values

III. Innovation

The Georgia legislative intent for charter schools is to “increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation.” As such, the International Academy of Smyrna will seek to differentiate itself from traditional public schools via its:

- Daily language other than English (LOTE) class for all students
 With the choice of the International approach to curriculum delivery, and the multi ethnic and very diverse population supporting this petition, coupled with the growing need in the United States for multi-lingual speakers, IAS will offer daily LOTE classes with an initial focus on Spanish. As stated in the Georgia Department of Education web site :
 “Languages and International Education
 Today foreign language skills are vital to national defense, law enforcement and economic security. It is therefore the goal of the Georgia Department of Education to enable all students to graduate from high school fluent in one language other than English. Acquiring this kind of skill in a second language is a long and arduous process, demanding hard work and motivation on the part of the student, and a combination of linguistic and pedagogical skill on the part of the teacher.”
- Balanced Year Calendar and extended time on task
 A year round schedule and a longer school day will equip IAS students for the rigors of high school and college without “down time” in the summer. Intercession times may be used for enrichment classes.
- Use of the IBPYP and IBMYP. As of the 2005-2006 school year, no other elementary or middle schools in the Cobb County School District utilize these programs. According to the International Baccalaureate Organization, a recognized leader in the field of international education, only 3 schools offer the IBPYP Program in the state of Georgia (none offer IBMYP):
 - Garden Hills Elementary School located in Atlanta, GA. IB World School since February 2006. Authorized to offer the IBPYP since February 2006.
 - Clubview Elementary School located in Columbus, GA. IB World School since February 2006. Authorized to offer the IBPYP since February 2006.

- Atlanta International School. IB World School since July 1990. Authorized to offer the IBPYP since July 2004.

In his fiscal 2007 budget request, President Bush proposed a major expansion of a federal incentive program that encourages schools to launch or expand both the IB and AP programs, and prepare more teachers to teach those courses. President Bush’s proposal would quadruple funding for an existing \$32 million-a-year program that awards competitive grants to states and districts to expand AP and IB offerings and cover test fees, especially in schools serving low-income students. This endorsement by the President of the International Baccalaureate programs show in what esteem they are held

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP)

During the time period in which IAS seeks authorization as an IBPYP/MYP School, the school is implementing the IBPYP/MYP program. (See Appendix F for more information about the IBPYP/MYP). In the IBPYP/MYP teachers plan activities, engage students in the learning process, assess the success of their students in reaching the goals established, and then reformulate the plan according to the results. IBPYP/MYP planning documents further this thoughtful approach. **To be authorized, the IB mandates that all students in the school have to be part of these programs.**

IBPYP/MYP Outcomes. The “student as learner” is at the center of this framework. Therefore, “outcomes” for this program are that the students should be/become:

- Inquirers:** Their natural curiosity has been nurtured. They have acquired the skills necessary to conduct purposeful, constructive research. They actively enjoy learning.
- Thinkers:** They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to make sound decisions and solve complex problems.
- Communicators:** They receive and express ideas and information confidently in more than one language, including the language of mathematical symbols.
- Risk-takers** They approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence and independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies.
- Knowledgeable:** They have spent time in our schools exploring themes which have global relevance and importance.
- Principled** They have integrity, honesty and a sense of fairness and justice.
- Caring** They show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a sense of personal commitment to action and service.
- Open-minded** They respect the views, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures.

Well-balanced They understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being.

Reflective They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and analyze their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

IBPYP Key Concepts: The International Baccalaureate Organization intends that primary-age children not only understand but also use an investigative, inquiry-based approach as they study any area worth learning. Those who developed the program identified certain key concepts. In the following list, a brief question follows the name of each concept. The question should draw the student's attention to that particular perspective when trying to understand and appreciate a particular subject or theme:

FORM

(What is it like?)

FUNCTION

(How does it work?)

CAUSATION

(Why is it like it is?)

CHANGE

(How is it changing?)

CONNECTION

(How is it connected to other things?)

PERSPECTIVE

(What are our points of view?)

RESPONSIBILITY

(What is our responsibility?)

REFLECTION

(How do we know?)

IV. Target Student Population

There will be a Primary and Secondary Attendance Zone for the Charter School. The Primary Zone will include any household that is part of the Campbell High School Attendance Zone. The

Secondary Zone will be all of Cobb County. The Charter School will not accept attendees whose primary residence is not in Cobb County.

The intent in establishing the Primary Attendance Zone is to represent the community of Smyrna, including the City of Smyrna itself and those that normally associate themselves with the City. This is defined by such measures as payment of City taxes, use of City utilities, or residing in a ZIP Code associated with the City.

It is understood that the Campbell High School Attendance Zone may change based on Cobb County School System needs. To accommodate this, the IAS Primary Attendance Zone will be subject to revision by the IAS LLC whenever a change occurs in the Campbell High School Attendance Zone. Any revisions will be done based on the intent of maintaining this as a school focused on the Smyrna community. Revisions undertaken as a result of a change in the Campbell High School Attendance Zone will not require a revision to the charter or approval of the School Board so long as this original intent is maintained.

The Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will provide free public education that is non-sectarian, non-religious and non-profit in nature as an alternative to students and families in its primary and secondary attendance zones.

IAS will serve students in grades K – 8, with a target class size in grade K of 18 students per class without a paraprofessional and 20 students per class with a paraprofessional. The target class size for grades 1-3 will be 18 - 21 students per class, and for grades 4 – 8, 22-24 students per class. The class sizes will use the Georgia Department of education class sizes as a minimum standard for the school. The typical age range of students attending the school will be between 5 and 14 years of age. The student population at IAS will grow to 1000 students over 5 years.

Non-Discrimination

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will be nonsectarian and nonreligious in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. The Academy shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender or disability. Students with limited English and with special needs or disabilities will be welcomed at the school.

Our Charter School will comply with all applicable special education requirements including, but not limited to, those imposed by the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, along with any applicable provisions of the Georgia charter school law concerning the provision of special education and related services.

**The Coordinators of the Exceptional Children Program will be:
Ms. Dana Williams – (678) 370-0980 - ext. 8438**

Discrimination complaints may be filed directly with:

**The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center
1000 Alabama Street SW Suite 4R30
Atlanta GA 30303 – Telephone Number: 404 562-6800 And/Or**

**The US Department of Education
Atlanta Office for Civil Rights
61 Forsyth Street S.W., Suite 19T70
Atlanta GA 30303-31204
Tel. 404 562-6350**

Questions concerning policies and practices of Imagine International Academy of Smyrna (IAS) may be addressed to the principal, 4451 South Atlanta Road, Georgia 30080 (678) 370-0980.

Assurances

IAS, as a charter school, shall be subject to all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, court orders, and statutes relating to civil rights; insurance; the protection of physical health and safety of school students, employees and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct.

V. School Calendar

In order to meet the high demands of the IBPYP/IBMYP program, the Charter school year will be 188 days long. These days will be divided throughout the year, adopting a balanced-year school model. Typically, students will attend school for 47 days, followed by 10 to 15 days off for Fall, Winter and Spring breaks. The summer break will be approximately 6 weeks long. After school and during breaks, referred to as intercessions, the school will offer enrichment and remediation. Enrichment will include, but is not be limited to:

- chess
- intramurals
- dance
- visual art
- music
- drama
- language other than English

The dedicated faculty will work for at least 198 calendar days.

A sample day and schedule for the Lower School (K-5) is shown below:

Daily Minimums for PYP:

120 minutes reading and language arts
75 minutes mathematics
45 minutes science or social studies
30 minutes Spanish
45 minutes Encore enrichment modules (fine arts)
30 minutes Physical Education
15 minutes recess
30 minutes lunch
390 (or 6.5 hours) Total

Technology is a minimum of 45 minutes per week integrated within other subjects

A sample schedule for PYP:

8:00 - 10:00 – Language Arts
10:00 - 10:15 - recess
10:15 – 10:45 - Spanish
10:45 - 12:00 - Math
12:00 - 12:30 - Lunch
12:30 - 1:15 - specials
1:15 – 2:00 - Social studies/Science
2:00 – 2:30 – Physical Education
2:30 dismissal

Daily Minimums for MYP:

45 minutes Reading/Literature
45 minutes Language Arts
45 minutes Science
45 minutes Social Studies
45 minutes Spanish
45 minutes Math
30 minutes Tech
30 minutes Encore specials (fine arts)
45 minutes Physical Education
30 minutes Lunch
15 minutes recess

420 minutes (or 7 hours)

A Sample Schedule for MYP

7:55 – 8:40 Reading
8:45 - 9:30 Language Arts
9:35 - 10:20 Math
10:20 – 10:35 recess

10:35 – 11:20 Spanish
11:20 - 11:50 Encore Specials
11:55 - 12:25 Tech
12:25 -12:55 Lunch
12:55 – 1:40 Soc. Studies
1:45 - 2:30 Science
2:35 – 3:20 Physical Education
3:20 dismissal

VI. Terms Of Charter

The Charter School is seeking an initial charter term of five (5) years, commencing the first day of the fiscal year which will run from July 1st 2007 to June 30, 2012 The petitioners understand that the charter may be renewed for one or more renewal periods that will not exceed ten years at a time.

B. Accountability and Evaluation

IAS will apply for accreditation from the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools (SACS) as soon as possible within the first year of operation with the intention of being certified within the second year.

I. Student Assessment

Assessment is a process to guide teaching and learning. We expect students to learn and apply standards-based knowledge, strategies, and concepts from various disciplines. Only through accurate and ongoing assessment of student learning can teachers know the impact of their teaching activities and make adjustments needed to ensure success.

Assessment is usually expressed as feedback that identifies progress made, determines current needs and guides future decisions about teaching and learning.

We emphasize data-driven decision making with two complimentary assessment processes. Formal Assessments which are large scale standardized assessments and Classroom-based Assessments which are selected or designed and implemented by the classroom teacher.

Formal Assessments include:

- ❑ **Standardized tests**, taken by each student annually, are used to plan improvements in program delivery. The state and district tests will be administered according to the provisions of the district's policies and the state's educational legislation
- ❑ **School Climate Surveys** give us input from students, parents, and teachers and serve as a guide for improving school services.
- ❑ **Satisfaction Surveys:** We will administer the Cobb County student and stakeholder satisfaction surveys as mandated by Cobb County.
- ❑ **Standards-based Unit Tests:** These tests measure student achievement on the Imagine Schools grade-level standards-based curriculum content. Unit tests are given to all

students at the end of each nine-week period in reading language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

- ❑ **Writing Assessments:** The Charter School will give a series of assessments to measure student writing proficiency in grades 6-8. The tests require students to write responses to assigned topics in a single testing period. Once again teachers and students will use diagnostic feedback to guide teaching and learning.
- ❑ **Diagnostic Base-line Tests:** Given to collect base-line information in order to assess academic levels for instructional placement decisions. These tests are readministered after instruction has taken place to re-evaluate a student's academic level.

Classroom-based Assessments include:

Performance-Based Assessments:

- ❑ **Rubrics** describe the specific criteria used to assess projects and/or performances.
- ❑ **Observation Checklists** identify the critical attributes of specific activities and indicate the levels of mastery individual students have gained.
- ❑ **Learning Logs** demonstrate how well students express ideas, organize thoughts, interpret data and apply skills. Students keep logs for independent reading, journal writing, science notes and observations.
- ❑ **Anecdotal Records** describe observations of student interactions, participation, learning styles and strategies.
- ❑ **Student – Teacher Conferences** highlight strengths and weaknesses in student performance.
- ❑ **Audiotapes and videotapes** show authentic individual and/or collaborative performances. Student and/or group tapes can include drama performances, speeches, interviews, debates, demonstrations, oral readings and musical productions.

Traditional Assessments:

- ❑ **Skills tests** are designed to test mastery on specific skills taught during a unit of study in the core subjects. They include:
 - Reading anthology unit tests
 - Mathematics chapter tests
 - Spelling tests
 - Science and Social Studies chapter tests
 - Math fact tests
- ❑ **Test Formats include:**
 - Multiple Choice
 - True/False
 - Short and Extended Response
 - Fill in the Blank
 - Gridded Response

Baseline Academic Achievement Levels: Grades K–8:

The baseline student academic achievement levels for the Charter School will be established using student academic performance on the Georgia Assessment Programs in grades K-5 and the Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc. assessment program. The specific tests to be used are as follows:

- Kindergarten Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program-Revised (GKAP-R)
- Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT)– Grades 1 to 8
- A Norm Referenced Tests (NRT) such as Stanford Complete Battery or Iowa Test of Basic Skills – Grades 1 and above, fall and spring administrations¹
 - Cognitive Ability Assessments
- Georgia Writing Assessments – grades 3, 5 and MGWA in grade 8
- ACCESS

The school will continue to align the assessment program with the state and the district mandates (CCSD and SDOE). The Charter School will follow the accountability provisions found in O.C.G.A. §20-14-30 through §20-14-41 and will meet and follow any legislative and district school accountability changes and/or initiatives.

Rates of Academic Progress:

The baseline levels of academic achievement established during the first academic year will be compared to academic achievement levels in prior years, when data is available, in order to assess rates of prior academic progress and the baseline rates of academic progress for the Charter School students. Continuing longitudinal examination of the levels of academic achievement will be performed to establish rates of individual learning gains of each student attending the Charter School.

We will also compare rates of student learning gains in the Charter School with national progress rates. In order to establish a national progress rate, the national norm will be defined based on two points in time when norm-referenced standardized tests are administered. The computed gain based on the scale score will be plotted in a graph that demonstrates the national growth rate. Using the available data from the previous year and the data from the first administration of the statewide assessments at the Charter School, we will compute the gain for our students and use the results to determine the improvement rate based on the national gain. We will continue this process longitudinally in subsequent years. Student performance data on the CRCT and the NRT will be compared to the student results at the state and School System levels.

Based on the demographic data provided by the Georgia Department of Education, we will identify schools that are comparable demographically to the Charter School and that use similar measurements to the Charter School. We will determine rates of progress based on comparable measurements and compare the results from the Charter School with those from other schools.

¹ The Charter school acknowledges that the school district does not test students both fall and spring and thus the school will need to pay for one of these tests

The Charter School will apply a range of acceptance of plus or minus five percent ($\pm 5\%$) or plus or minus 0.5 (± 0.5) standard deviations from the mean when comparing student populations. Comparable populations will be determined by the following variables: ethnicity; gender; school size (student population); LEP, Special Education, and Free and Reduced Lunch populations; and similar academic achievement based on the same assessment instruments at the same grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics.

The intent of the assessment program is to provide a continuous flow of information to teachers about the academic progress of their students so that appropriate instructional processes are implemented. These measuring standards will not waive the accountability provisions of O.C.G.A. Sections 20-14-30 through 20-14-41. The Charter School will follow all rules and regulations of the Cobb County School District regarding posting of student scores in the students' permanent record. Specifically, the school will utilize the CCSD student information system that will record all state and district mandated student information. The system will host all the student outcomes from the IS sponsored assessments. The school will submit to the district, on annual bases, an electronic file containing the student outcomes on the standardized assessments sponsored by the school. Members from the school staff will meet with district representatives to formulate a plan and a process for the transmission of the student assessment file. The transmission of student data will be done in accordance with district policy and guidelines, and will meet all FERPA requirements.

The charter school assessment program will provide accurate information about the longitudinal academic progress of each student. The reliability of the student evaluation process is enhanced by the use of multiple measures, that is, criterion-referenced and norm-referenced assessments. Note: once the DOE releases the vertical scale for the CRCT, the student CRCT outcomes on the vertical scale will be used to measure longitudinal growth, that is, outcomes from both the NRT and the CRT will be analyzed and reported. A robust program evaluation component will be implemented to assess the value and the size effect of the instructional interventions implemented at the school. Moreover, longitudinal student outcome data will be analyzed to assess the growth over time of students that remain in program. The use of each measurement and testing standard will provide the necessary feedback to determine the success of the program at each grade level.

Imagine IAS Improvement Plan

Imagine IAS will file an annual school improvement plan known as the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The objectives on the SIP will be aligned with the Georgia School Accountability Indicators. Minimally, it will include an objective in reading, mathematics and writing. Additionally, an objective in reading will be earmarked for the lowest performing group at the school. The SIP will align fiscal and human resources in order to meet the stipulated objectives; and it will include detailed action plans for each of the stated objectives. Moreover, strategies addressing the academic needs of the subpopulations stipulated by the No Child Left Behind Legislation will be incorporated. The implementation of the SIP will be monitored by Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc. staff (Principal, teachers, and region staff) to gauge progress and to provide technical assistance to the school. A formal mid-year check and end-of the year evaluation will be conducted annually to determine adequate progress. The SIP is a document

that will be shared with the stakeholders and an annual report will be generated documenting the progress made by the school in meeting the stated objectives. The report, including the annual assessment results, will be submitted to the Cobb County School Board and shared with the Charter School's stakeholders.

The school improvement process at the Charter School is based on a continuous improvement model and will be driven by a student/school data collection system, on going assessment, a data interpretation system, and continuous data analysis that will enable the instructional and administrative staff to make informed decisions and to develop educationally sound action plans.

Outcomes To Be Achieved

The Charter School will demonstrate individual learning gains in Reading achievement as measured by the Reading Comprehension portion of the CRCT and a Norm Referenced Test (NRT). Learning gains will be determined as follows:

Year One:

- The percentage of students meeting On Target and Exceeding Target will either meet or exceed the outcomes from comparable schools.

Continuous Improvement Language- Year 2 and above

- The percentage of students meeting the On Target or Exceeding Target standards will improve from the prior year by at least 5 percentage points and exceed district and state averages².
- The academic learning gains for the students at the Charter school will meet and/or exceed the national academic growth rates as evidenced by the gain on scale scores from the Fall to the Spring administrations of the NRT across all grade levels tested.
- At least 5 percentage points decrease in students scoring in the lowest quartile in reading from the fall to the spring administrations of the NRT.

The Charter School will improve Language Arts achievement as measured by the language arts portion of the CRCT. Improvement will be determined as follows:

Year One:

- The percentage of students meeting On Target and Exceeding Target will either meet or exceed the outcomes from comparable schools.

Continuous Improvement Language-Year 2 and above

- The percentage of students meeting the On Target or Exceeding Target standards will improve from the prior year by at least 5 percentage points and exceed district and state averages.

² Once the school reaches 80% of the students either meeting or exceeding target in Language Arts, mathematics, writing and reading, this objective will be met by either maintaining this level of performance or by posting a gain.

The Charter School will improve Mathematics achievement as measured by the mathematics portion of the CRCT and a Norm Referenced Test (NRT) such as the Stanford or ITBS. Improvement will be determined as follows:

Year One:

- The percentage of students meeting On Target and Exceeding Target will either meet or exceed the outcomes from comparable schools.

Continuous Improvement Language-Year 2 and above

- The percentage of students meeting the On Target or Exceeding Target standards will improve from the prior year by at least five percentage points and exceed district and state averages.
- The academic learning gains for the students at the Charter school will meet and/or exceed the national academic growth rates as evidenced by the gain on scale scores from the Fall to the Spring administrations of the NRT across all grade levels tested.
- At least 5 percentage points decrease in students scoring in the lowest quartile in mathematics from the fall to the spring administrations of the NRT.

The Charter School will improve writing achievement as measured by the writing assessments (CRCT Writing Test) in grades 3, 5 and 8. Improvement will be determined as follows:

Year One:

- The percentage of students meeting On Target and Exceeding Target will either meet or exceed the outcomes from comparable schools.

Continuous Improvement Language-Year 2 and above

- The percentage of students meeting the On Target or Exceeding Target standards will improve from the prior year by at least five percentage points and exceed district and state averages.
- At least three percentage points decrease in students scoring at stages 1 and 2.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Outcomes

We believe that all children can learn at high levels if given the opportunity. Our Comprehensive Assessment Plan will have built-in safeguards to ensure that students are performing according to the defined standards. These include timely assessments to gauge students' levels of standards mastery; performance tests, including pre- and post-testing measurements; monitoring of journals and portfolios; observations; teacher-designed tests; and

evaluation of writing samples that focus on the development of expository, persuasive, and analytic writing skills.

Where corrective action is necessary because student achievement has fallen below established standards, we will use one or more of the following procedures as necessary:

- After-school tutoring and mentoring
- Computerized instructional programs to track student progress and provide practice on skills needed
- Small group instruction, emphasizing individual learning styles
- Parent and home-learning programs

The educational philosophy of Imagine IAS mandates that Adequate Yearly Progress remain as originally intended, *as the minimum acceptable progress for students*. As such it will be our intent and our educational goal to have 100% of our students at “Proficient” or above on each GA AYP grade 5 test given. Our ongoing assessment of student progress should identify students at-risk for meeting AYP prior to the annual state assessment.

The Charter School will be assessed on two different criteria:

- No students failing to pass AYP testing who haven’t been previously identified as needing remediation and practice.
- Over 90% of our students should pass these minimal standards.

The Charter School will work with the school district to develop and submit an Annual Report (Evaluation Plan) to Cobb County School District. The School recognizes that in addition to student achievement results, the School will be evaluated on the number of students who re-enroll each year and the teachers who remain on staff (note- the school will take into account those students and staff who cannot stay with the school due to relocation). The report/plan will identify projected levels of achievement on student assessments, results of student assessments, results of the annual student and stakeholder surveys, information regarding student and staff retention, as well as an update on the charter objectives. This information will be maintained through the STI database at the school and reported to CCSD at the end of each year. (Note- All reporting to CCSD will be done in the format required by the district)

C. Admission of Students

I. Student Admissions and Dismissal

In accordance with the Georgia Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended July 1, 2005), IA Smyrna will use the any household that is part of the Campbell High School Attendance Zone.

The intent in establishing the Primary Attendance Zone is to represent the community of Smyrna, including the City of Smyrna itself and those that normally associate themselves with the City. This is defined by such measures as payment of City taxes, use of City utilities, or residing in a ZIP Code associated with the City.

It is understood that the Campbell High School Attendance Zone may change based on Cobb County School System needs. To accommodate this, the IAS Primary Attendance Zone will be subject to revision by the IAS LLC whenever a change occurs in the Campbell High School Attendance Zone. Any revisions will be done based on the intent of maintaining this as a school focused on the Smyrna community. Revisions undertaken as a result of a change in the Campbell High School Attendance Zone will not require a revision to the charter or approval of the School Board so long as this original intent is maintained, IA Smyrna will enroll any eligible student who resides in this attendance zone and who submits a timely application (including a signed Family Commitment Contract) as specified in the Admissions Timetable section below, unless the number of applicants exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level or building. In such case, all such applicants shall have an equal chance of being admitted through a random selection process not including those applicants that will be given enrollment preference based upon the following categories, listed in order of priority:

1. A sibling of a student who is already enrolled in or accepted to IA Smyrna;
2. A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the Founding or Governing Board of the charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the charter school.

If the number of applicants from both the primary attendance zone and the preferred enrollment categories do not exceed capacity of a program, class, grade level or building, applicants who do not qualify under the aforementioned categories and attendance zone but that reside in the Cobb County School District may apply and be accepted for admission to the school – the secondary admission zone. No student who resides outside of the Cobb County School District will be allowed to enroll in the school unless they meet the criteria in O.C.G.A. 20-2-293(b), which states “a student shall be allowed to attend and be enrolled in the school in which a parent or guardian of such student is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee, notwithstanding the fact that such school is not located in the local unit of administration in which such student resides.”

After the lottery is held, another random lottery will take place to select 25 students per grade level for an ordered waiting list that takes into account the primary attendance zone and enrollment preference criteria. The remaining names will be placed in a general waiting list. If a student from the lottery results list does not register or chooses not to attend the school, the first person on the ordered waiting list will be given the opportunity to register. Should the ordered waiting list be exhausted, students will be selected randomly from the general waiting list. This procedure will continue throughout the school year. The waiting list will only be in effect for one school year; students must reapply each year for open spaces in the school.

The intent of establishing a Family Commitment Contract is based on the demonstrated success of programs where families are actively involved in their children’s education. Research has

shown that students attending schools with strong parental involvement perform better and achieve more. To contribute to the student's and school's success, parents and/or legal guardians will be expected to volunteer at least 30 hours (multiple caregiver household) or 15 hours (single adult caregiver household) per household, per school year. These hours can be met through both "in" and "out" of school volunteer opportunities. IAS will ensure that these opportunities are varied and available during the day, evening and weekends to accommodate the busy schedules of our families. The adult caregiver/s of any student who is unable meet this requirement will be encouraged to bring this to the attention of the principal, who will coordinate a meeting with the members of the Governing Board of Managers.. To ensure that this requirement does not negatively impact a decision to enroll at IAS and to prevent this requirement from being misapplied should there be extenuating circumstances, the IAS LLC will have the exclusive ability at its sole discretion to modify or waive the family commitment contract for an individual family. Any family who does not meet the requirements of volunteer hours as outlined in the Family Commitment Contract, and has not received a modification or waiver from the Governing Board of Managers will lose the priority for enrollment for any subsequent year they choose to enroll until such commitments are fulfilled. If the grade is full, the student will be placed on the wait list.

Parents of students who will enroll in the Charter School will receive an Enrollment Package containing information about the school and forms necessary for registration. The Enrollment Package will include the District's standard registration form; the Department of Health's Cumulative School Health Record form; an Emergency Dismissal form designed to indicate where the student should go in the event that school is dismissed at an unscheduled time due to any unforeseen circumstances; and a Clinic Information card designed to indicate emergency contacts and the doctor that should be called in case of an accident. Parents will be given a copy of the Student Handbook, which will be based on the current Cobb County Board of Education discipline policies, and will be required to sign a form indicating that they have received the handbook and will read its contents. The form will be kept in the student's file. The Student Handbook includes descriptions of the policies and procedures that will be utilized to ensure student and parent due process rights.

The Charter School will ask parents to state their address on the registration form and to mark a checkbox indicating they are residents of Cobb County. Parents will be required to sign a statement that all information they provide on the enrollment form is true. The Charter School also requires parents to provide two forms of address verification identification, such as a utility bill, a driver's license, or a lease and will follow the guidelines for address verification used by the Cobb County School District.

All student records will be screened prior to the start of the school year. School officials will notify parents of the need for physical examinations and immunizations.

An orientation meeting will take place prior to the opening of the Charter School. The orientation meeting will serve to acquaint students and parents with the facility, introduce school policies and procedures, and provide information that will be of benefit for the first days of school.

Students may withdraw from the school at any time and enroll in another public school as determined by the Cobb County School District's Board policy. The Principal or designee will attempt to meet with the parents of a student who wishes to withdraw from the Charter School to discern the reason for withdrawal and to review options for continuing the student's education. This Exit Interview will also serve to ensure that students are not coerced to withdraw from the school. The outcomes of Exit Interviews will be forwarded to the Cobb County School District's representative upon request and will be summarized in the Charter School's Annual Report.

The current Cobb County School District's discipline policies will serve as the primary model for the Charter School's policies, including those for suspension and dismissal procedures. In the event that a student with a disability should engage in behavior that violates the discipline policies and results in dismissal or change of placement for more than ten (10) days, the Charter School will immediately notify the student's parents of the rendered decision. The student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) Team will conduct a review in accordance with the requirements of IDEA to determine the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action. If the result of the review is a determination that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the disciplinary procedures applicable to students without disabilities will be applied. Otherwise, the IEP Team will review the student's plan and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.

II. Student Admissions Timetable

IA Smyrna acknowledges that the recruitment of students is the responsibility of the school.

The timetable for the process of recruitment, applications, lottery, admissions, notification, and related matters will be as follows

Jan 1 - 15: Disseminate accurate and up-to-date information about the school's educational program, services, amenities, application procedure, and the admissions process through a variety of sources that may include, but are not limited to:

- Local newspapers
- Local radio stations
- Local public television
- Open Houses at the Charter School facility
- Direct mail to parents
- Word-of-mouth

Jan 15: application submission deadline

Jan 15 – Feb. 5: Review applications for completeness and eligibility of students (e.g. appropriate grade levels, non-district applicants, etc.)

Feb. 5 – Feb. 10: Advise parents of the status of their application, student eligibility, date of lottery, and date of final notification.

Feb. 10: Conduct lottery.

Feb. 15: Notify parents of child's admission to the school or placement on waiting list.

III. Admitted Students Reporting

Aside from the initial year of operations, the Charter School will complete registration for the upcoming school year and except for the initial school year will provide the names and addresses of all accepted students to the CCSD no later than April 1.

E. Curriculum and Instruction

I. International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP) and Middle Years Program (IBMYP)

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will seek approval to use the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP or PYP) and International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP or MYP) from the authorizers as a framework for delivery of the curriculum. The framework consists of a process whereby teachers plan activities, engage students in learning, assess the success of their students in reaching the goals established, and then reformulate the plan according to the results. It is an international, transdisciplinary program designed to foster the development of the whole student encompassing social, physical, emotional and cultural needs as well as academic welfare. While the IB programs cultivate internationalism and respect for other cultures, they also adapt to the local environment and allow students to maintain a strong sense of cultural identity. Students are taught to be active learners, well-rounded individuals and engaged citizens, who gain practical experience of being part of a global community.

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), founded in 1968, is a recognized leader in the field of international education. It is a non-profit, mission-driven foundation that works with 1,597 schools (November 2005) to develop and offer three challenging programs in 122 countries to approximately 200,000 students. In the USA, 41 public schools are approved to use the PYP (with 100 more in the application process, including APS school Garden Hills), 66 the Middle Years Program (MYP) and 444 the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program. There are currently no public IBO approved PYP or MYP schools in Georgia and 18 approved IB Diploma schools. Newsweek magazine, May 16 2005 identified the top one hundred public high schools in the United States. In the top ten of these, positions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 10 were held by IB schools. Overall, 40 of the top 100 are IB schools. Georgia has no schools in the top 100. It is the intention of IAS to provide a strong foundation for their students to compete on all levels with their peers across the nation by seeking approval to use the PYP to frame the

curriculum. This approval can only be granted after the school has used this approach for at least two years. At that stage, the authorizers send in a team to examine the school and make recommendations. The process is similar in some ways to seeking accreditation from an outside agency such as the Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS).

IAS will use the Imagine Schools Chancellor Beacon Standards Based Curriculum as a guide to high academic success. IAS community believes that the written curriculum can best be taught and learned if the students are actively engaged in their own learning and asked to work with the teacher in setting goals, planning and carrying out learning activities and assessing what they have and have not learned. Referring to their Primary Years Program, the International Baccalaureate Organization puts it this way: “Students bring to the learning situation their own prior knowledge and engage with the curriculum through the activities designed by the teacher. In the context of the total learning environment, the students make sense of their experiences and construct meaning. Our responsibility is to identify the students' prior knowledge, provide appropriate experiences, assess their new learning and begin the cycle anew.”³

The philosophy of the PYP, with regard to the student/learning environment, is expressed in a series of desired attributes and traits/outcomes that reflect the international perspective. The “student as learner” is at the center of the IBPYP framework. Therefore, “outcomes” for this program are that the students should be/become:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Inquirers: | Their natural curiosity has been nurtured. They have acquired the skills necessary to conduct purposeful, constructive research. They actively enjoy learning. |
| Thinkers: | They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to make sound decisions and solve complex problems. |
| Communicators: | They receive and express ideas and information confidently in more than one language, including the language of mathematical symbols. |
| Risk-takers | They approach unfamiliar situations without anxiety and have the confidence and independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. |
| Knowledgeable: | They have spent time in our schools exploring themes which have global relevance and importance. |
| Principled | They have integrity, honesty and a sense of fairness and justice. |
| Caring | They show sensitivity towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a sense of personal commitment to action and service. |

³ IBPYP Making the PYP Happen, 2000

Open-minded	They respect the views, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures.
Well-balanced	They understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being.
Reflective	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and analyze their personal strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

Inquiry is the foundation of the approach to teaching and learning. The PYP is committed to structured, purposeful inquiry, which engages students actively in their own learning. Students will be invited to investigate important subject matter by formulating their own questions, looking at the various means available to answer the questions and proceeding with research, experimentation, observation and other means that will lead them to their own responses to the issues. The starting point has to be students' current understanding, and the goal is the active construction of meaning by building connections between the students' experience and the inquiry into new content.

Separate disciplines are integrated into a coherent whole. At the heart of the PYP program are essential elements: concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions. These elements transcend curricular disciplinary barriers. Furthermore, the PYP emphasizes meaning and understanding, and great importance is attached in all areas of the curriculum – the written, the taught and the assessed components – to the exploration of a core set of concepts:

Form: What is it like?

Function: How does it work?

Causation: Why is it like it is?

Change: How is it changing?

Connection: How is it connected to other things?

Perspective: What are the points of view?

Responsibility: What is our responsibility?

Reflection: How do we know?

One of the reasons IAS intends to apply to use the PYP is that the PYP identifies a body of knowledge for all students in all cultures, in six subject areas.

- language
- social studies

- mathematics
- science and technology
- arts
- personal, social and physical education

These fit in very well with the curriculum model selected by the school. In addition, in keeping with the requirements of the PYP, IAS students will be required to learn a second language in addition to the language of instruction of the school. IAS will seek to provide a strong component of Spanish language as part of the curriculum. Thus the essential elements at the center of the CBC curriculum model will be developed and applied in a context defined by the six PYP transdisciplinary themes which are:

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organize ourselves
- Sharing the planet



Curriculum model showing the inter-related CBC areas and PYP approach.

II. Educational Philosophy

Imagine Schools and the Imagine International Academy of Smyrna believe that educational reform calls on educators to modify their instructional programs so that every student achieves high academic standards. Teacher instructional methods, the structure of the learning environment, and complex and relevant ideas and materials can stimulate curiosity, creativity, and higher-order thinking in children. At IAS, learning will be a process of discovery and constructing meaning from knowledge, information, and experience.

“Learning for Leadership”

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna students will:

- Develop a strong foundation in the basic skills;
- Integrate curriculum across subject areas;
- Create project-based activities;
- Integrate computer technology and interdisciplinary activities;
- Participate effectively in collaborative groups;
- Infuse global and cultural literacy;
- Exercise critical thinking skills;
- Practice problem-solving concepts.

Character Education

Respect and Responsibility. These are just two of the values at the heart of the Charter School’s school culture. The Charter School community lives in an age where technology and social concerns dictate the need for a deepening concern for character. The principles of character education are utilized as basic principles for an integrated character education program. The program includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- The teacher as caregiver, model and mentor;
- The classroom as a democratic community;
- Activities that promote values and ethics;
- Encouraging moral reflection;
- Discussion of issues and answers, problems and solutions;
- Conflict resolution and students as mediators
- Parent and community involvement. The following core values will be included in the Character Education Program:

<i>Citizenship:</i>	Understanding the role the individual plays in society.
<i>Cooperation:</i>	Working together toward goals in an interdependent world.
<i>Fairness:</i>	Treating others impartially, maintaining an objective attitude toward those whose actions and ideas are different.
<i>Honesty:</i>	Being sincere. Not cheating or lying.
<i>Integrity:</i>	Standing up for your own beliefs. Resisting social pressure.
<i>Kindness:</i>	Being helpful, compassionate and gentle toward all living things.
<i>Pursuit of Excellence:</i>	Striving to do your best and not giving up.

<i>Respect:</i>	Showing regard for others. Being courteous and polite.
<i>Responsibility:</i>	Thinking before you act. Being responsible for those actions.
<i>Positive Thinking:</i>	Teaching the value of a positive outlook. Teaching positive language as a reinforcement technique.

Service Learning: Learning to Serve-Serving to Learn

Enhancing the Charter School’s character education component are service learning projects that extend the values and ethics infused into each subject area. Service Learning represents the connection of intellectual and character development. Students engage in the skills necessary to solve real world problems, and at the same time develop the disposition to be active and compassionate members of society.

A primary goal of the Charter School’s Imagine Chancellor Beacon standards-based curriculum is to extend students’ learning beyond the Charter School community to the real world. When students are able to see a connection between academic content and the problems of everyday life, it provides an opportunity to apply knowledge beyond the Charter School setting.

Knowing and doing are bound together in the service learning activities of each academy. Guided by their teachers, students in each academy will identify and select a problem that reflects a local, national, or international concern. A plan is developed to engage students in relevant activities that provide them with an informational background, active service, and community awareness related to the issue. Students will see service not as an isolated action, but as a way of being a member of a community. Students will take responsibility for their learning, knowing that what they accomplish will benefit others. By the time students leave the academies, a significant number of hours will have been devoted to community service, as documented in portfolios and individual student plans.

Conflict Resolution

The Charter School’s learning communities model those of the real world, offering many opportunities to teach students to handle conflict constructively. The students will be taught to recognize various kinds of conflict and those situations that may lead to conflict. They will learn not only to solve problems, but also to prevent them. Conflict avoidance and conflict resolution skills are infused into each of the core subjects as they relate to content. Students might brainstorm a list of alternative solutions to historical conflicts in social studies, while they write about “peaceful” resolutions to conflicts found in literature. With a curriculum that involves students in thinking, writing, and talking about conflict resolution, our goal is to make children responsible for working out their own conflicts in positive ways.

III. Instructional Methodologies

By what method does one person enable another to learn? Instructional methodology makes a major difference in the quality of the educational process. Intelligent and sensitive choices lead to academic achievement and a sense of purpose. Poor choices present learners with barriers to learning they may never overcome. Instructional methodologies at IAS will be a repertoire of research-based teaching and learning practices that enable children to succeed in a rigorous curriculum.

Based on state-of-the-art cognitive theory about how humans learn, the teachers will plan their lessons around activities that impact student thinking through the mastery of rigorous academic standards and development of the traits of an effective life-long learner.

The learning infrastructure created by these instructional methodologies has four major components as outlined below:

1. A focus on higher-order thinking competencies;
2. A central set of essential methodologies that are used in all classrooms at all grade levels;
3. A repertoire of supporting methods that enable effective individualization and adjustments based on data-driven decision making processes;
4. The use of 21st Century methodologies for learning.

A Focus on Higher-Order Thinking Competencies

Learning is about thinking. Mastery of a rigorous standards-based curriculum and success at performance-based assessment requires that students be engaged in active learning and higher-order thinking skills as a routine part of their school experience. For all age groups, our teachers choose instructional methods that infuse growth in thinking and construction of meaning as part of the academic experience.

Teaching methods and student tasks used to develop thinking competencies focus on five essential aspects of thinking. The instructional methodologies at IAS will target developing students' thinking in these core areas:

- Positive student perceptions about their capacity to think;
- Thinking skills to acquire and integrate knowledge;
- Thinking skills to refine and extend knowledge;
- Thinking skills to make effective use of knowledge;
- Habits of mind that enhance life-long learning.

A Central Set of Essential Methodologies

A central set of research-based practices will be infused into the instructional program at IAS. These include cooperative learning, critical thinking, home learning and practice, questioning methodologies, choosing learning goals, summarization, and note-taking competencies.

Classroom activities become meaningful experiences only when students think and act upon them. The Charter School's instructional methods are designed to promote active involvement

and engagement in learning. Research shows that active learning methods are critical to student success. The following methods will be implemented in all IAS classrooms.

Cooperative Learning

While many challenges in life are faced using one's individual abilities, two important realities must be faced by any effective school:

- Employment opportunities in an information age favor people able to work effectively with others
- Research on effective organizations reveals that team learning - the process of people sharing strengths and solving problems as a team - is an essential element

Students will not be prepared for the 21st century unless they master these essential workplace competencies as a routine part of their school experience. For these reasons, IAS will infuse age appropriate cooperative learning processes into every classroom.

Critical Thinking Strategies

Research shows that students are more engaged and make better connections between existing and new knowledge when they have recurring opportunities for generating and testing hypotheses. Through applying these methods across the curriculum by predicting what happens next in a story, hypothesizing why an historical event occurred, or testing ideas about what will happen in a science experiment, students will practice and apply tools necessary to generate and test hypotheses.

Specific Feedback on Home Learning and Practice

IAS students will have home learning and homework responsibilities. They will all be required to practice essential skills and competencies in order to develop proficiency. Specific and timely feedback will always be provided to students on their home learning efforts and the impact of their practice. Students will understand that home learning is a time to both improve proficiency and to generate questions. All home learning activities will be followed up in the classroom to provide students with specific feedback.

Questioning Methodologies

IAS's teachers will use a variety of question formats to engage students with differing learning styles. Question variations will enable students to remember, reason, relate, and imagine. Students will be taught questioning techniques to guide clarification processes and focus on problem solving behaviors. Students will be taught to recognize cues to understanding in both written and oral contexts. Through a variety of methods such as concept maps, time tables, flow charts, and time lines, they will learn to organize their work and focus attention on key issues.

Choosing Goals and Objectives and Systematic Feedback

Becoming a life-long learner requires early student engagement in selecting learning objectives and seeking feedback on the quality of one's understandings and performance competencies. IAS's instructional methodologies will guide students in the process of selecting learning goals to which the student makes a personal commitment. We will teach students to clarify their learning objectives for the tasks assigned. Our students will be taught to seek out and make use of feedback from others to improve the quality of their understanding and performance skills. Student learning portfolios will be used to enable students to focus on priority objectives and gather work products, which will serve as a basis for feedback reflecting growth toward mastery of their targeted objectives.

Summarizing and Note Taking

Comprehension is a critical element in successful learning. Comprehension is accelerated by recurring opportunities for students to summarize the essential meaning of the subject under study. Students will be taught note-taking techniques so that key points are recognized and recorded as tools for later review and study. The use of summaries and note taking enhances students' ability to recognize key concepts, think, and express themselves in writing while expanding their vocabulary in the academic disciplines being studied.

A Repertoire of Supporting Methods

The general practice methods described will set a basic pattern to the learning activities typical in an IAS classroom. Teachers will use assessment information and direct observation of student performance to select additional and supplementary instructional methods to enhance student achievement. They will select strategies from a well-defined research-based repertoire of methods, which includes individualized instruction and group learning processes. Some methods will be used across the curriculum and others are specific to particular academic disciplines.

- ❖ *Parental Involvement Activities:* IAS will encourage a “curriculum of the home” that is linked to and supportive of the student's responsibilities at school. The methods that involve parents effectively in the child's education include daily parent-child conversations about what is happening at school, encouraging student reading (academic and leisure), and parent-child discussion about the leisure reading. It includes thoughtful parental monitoring of television watching. It involves active support and interest in the student's schoolwork. IAS will encourage these parent-child relationships and provide support to parents in nurturing the home-school connection.
- ❖ *Time on Task – As a Curricular Focus:* Learning tasks are centered on the standards-based core curriculum. As a general rule, the more time students spend on core academic disciplines, the higher they will achieve. IAS's teachers will design activities that focus student use of time on academic content. Attention will be directed to the content and performance skills that should be mastered at specific grade levels and ages. Learners who are actively engaged in learning tasks that focus on explicit instructional objectives make more progress toward achieving those objectives.

- ❖ *Direct Teaching*: An approach to learning requires that students construct knowledge and meaning. Application of a constructivist strategy to a standards-based curriculum requires a balance of student inquiry and direct teaching. IAS’s teachers will use direct teaching to enhance student ability to construct knowledge and make content connections. These include:
 - Daily review of essential concepts, homework, and re-teaching;
 - Engagement with new content/skills, but in small steps;
 - Guided student practice with careful teacher monitoring;
 - Clarifying feedback and reinforcement of success;
 - Individual practice;
 - Weekly and monthly reviews of key content/skills.

- ❖ *Teaching/Learning Strategies*: Students will be taught to monitor and manage their own learning. This includes learning to plan, allocate time, and review prior learning. This will be accomplished by:
 - Teachers modeling these behaviors for students;
 - Guided practice where students plan learning strategies with teacher help;
 - Independent student application of learning strategies to master specific instructional objectives.

- ❖ *Tutoring*: Students learn at different rates. Individualized assistance helps focus student effort and provides additional time on task. Students will not only receive tutoring as needed, they will learn to tutor others. The process of organizing to help each other deepens understanding of the content and fosters time-management and communication competencies.

- ❖ *Competency-Based Learning*: The Charter School’s instructional methodologies are not designed to “cover” the curriculum, but to enable students to master it. Competency-based or mastery learning focuses on clear identification of the concepts to be mastered, on-going assessment to measure actual learning, and adjustments in instruction based on assessments. Feedback systems and re-teaching processes will be used to help students until mastery is accomplished.

Use of 21st Century Methodologies as Learning Tools

Students will apply strategies they will be expected to perform in the workplace. Our students will learn to use the following elements:

- ❖ *Data-Driven Decision-Making*: Students will be trained to use systems thinking, continuous process improvement methods, and data analysis tools for problem solving. Students will apply these concepts to their schoolwork to prepare them for the workplace and higher education.

- ❖ *Learning Organization Paradigm:* Research has identified the behaviors and characteristics of people in highly successful organizations. Schools must foster the emergence of these characteristics such as personal mastery, shared vision, mental models, team learning, and systems thinking in students. IAS’s teachers will model these learning organization behaviors for students and parents. Our instructional methods enable our students to learn the skills needed for effective participation in the workplace.

- ❖ *Project-Based Learning:* Projects are a central part of the IAS’s multidisciplinary instruction. Teachers will plan projects that support grade level themes. Students will be required to develop individual and group projects every nine weeks. Project-based learning is an effective strategy to extend student learning. Projects allow students to investigate, construct knowledge, problem solve, and use multiple forms of creative expression. Technology is an integral part of student presentations and displays. Students will work individually or in groups to prepare presentations, produce products, or extend knowledge. Projects help students build conceptual understanding and provide opportunities to engage students in meaningful, creative activities.

- ❖ *Learning Centers:* A learning center contains a collection of activities or materials designed to teach, reinforce, or extend a particular skill or concept. Centers motivate students’ exploration of topics. Our centers will focus on important learning concepts, contain materials that promote individual student growth toward goals, and include activities that address specific learning levels or learning styles.

- ❖ *Flexible Uses of Time and Variable Grouping Strategies:* Students, working in small learning teams, will use a variety of competencies as learning tools. Groups will rotate from task to task based on teacher and student developed schedules. Different groups may be doing different tasks. For example, a small group may be working with a teacher in a directed learning activity while other groups work on personal learning projects cooperatively agreed upon by student, teacher, and parent, while others work on technology supported instruction. Yet another group may be engaged in cooperative learning projects while others work on portfolios related to school or personal learning goals to share with parents.

- ❖ *Personal Learning Goals:* One of the core purposes of education is to enable the students to take over their own education and become lifelong learners. Like other skills, you must “do it” to master it. Therefore, every IAS student, in addition to routine school selected objectives, will have personal learning goals. Such goals, selected by the student in consultation with teacher and parent, will focus on something the student sees as a valuable or interesting thing to learn. Portfolios, shared at intervals with parents and teachers, will share student progress on these learning agendas.

- ❖ *Technology Literacy:* Students will be engaged in mastery of the use of technology as a learning tool of the Information Age at all grade levels. Grade appropriate activities will be provided in each major strand of technology literacy:
 - Basic operations and concepts

- Social, ethical, and human issues
 - Technology productivity tools
 - Technology communications tools
 - Technology research tools
 - Technology problem-solving and decision-making tools
- ❖ *Internet access:* Classrooms will have computer workstations with Internet and worldwide web access, on-line access to reference resources, and access to the school's instructional software collection.
- ❖ *Multimedia production for targeted objectives:* Teachers and students will develop multimedia lesson banks and projects in core academic disciplines. Students will have access to software to review information or to prepare individual and group assignments.
- ❖ *Individualized software supplementation:* Students are prescribed specific curriculum support software based on identified individual needs and each student's learning style and learning goals. As possible, computer training for parents will be available.

IV. Imagine's Chancellor Beacon Standards-Based Curriculum

The International Academy of Smyrna will utilize Imagine's Chancellor Beacon Standards-Based Curriculum which is characterized by challenging academic standards that seek high achievement for all students. The curriculum has been aligned to the Quality Core Curriculum and Georgia Performance Standards and is clearly articulated at each grade level, building upon a solid content base in each academic subject. Students expand prior knowledge through a spiraled curriculum, focusing on inquiry and project based applications of key concepts and universal ideas. Instructional practices vary, ensuring that teachers meet the needs of students with diverse learning styles. Integrated units engage students in creative activities and encourage them to make mental connections between disciplines. The four academic subjects of reading and language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science are divided into strands that organize them into essential information and skills needed by all students. Permeating the strands of each subject are unifying concepts that provide links between the content that is introduced and taught in each strand, enriching the delivery of the standards-based curriculum.

The curriculum provides students and teachers with world class learning opportunities, with a focus on the following:

- Learner centered results
- Authentic and challenging materials and activities
- Critical thinking and creative problem solving
- Technology as a learning tool
- A hands-on, minds-on approach to learning
- Personal and global perspectives
- Reflection and exchange of ideas
- Interdisciplinary thematic units

Engaging students in a rigorous standards-based curriculum is essential to student achievement and success. The curriculum characteristics allow for flexibility, yet maintain high and appropriate expectations for all. The curriculum ensures that students enjoy the moment, and learn for a lifetime.

The Curriculum is built upon national standards, often exceeding them in ways that enrich the learning process. Local needs are addressed by aligning the standards with those from the state and/or district. In addition, educators familiar with local issues and areas of interest develop integrated subject area standards-based units at individual school sites. This is just one of the features that ensure individual members of each learning community avenues for input and creative ideas. Imagine Schools provides a roadmap to guide teachers as to the standards to be taught, methodology and strategies, resources and materials, and activities.

The process used for choosing these standards involved a review stage and a development stage. Subject area experts, classroom teachers, and Imagine Schools' staff researched national standards in each of the core disciplines and enrichments. The standards from multiple states, including Georgia's, were researched and a database that compared and rated standards from different states was consulted. Based on the research and review results, grade level standards that included content knowledge (*what students should know*) and performance *standards* (*what students should be able to do*) were compiled. The standards were then divided into nine-week thematic units. The standards are presented in nine-week units in order to provide timely ongoing assessment based on these standards. IAS will be committed to ensuring that students meet these standards.

K-8 Curricular Themes

The themes for each grade level are as follows:

- **Kindergarten – Discoveries**

1. What discoveries can we make using numbers?
2. What kinds of discoveries did people make long ago?
3. In what ways can we use magnifiers to discover nature?
4. What new words can we discover on the pages of a book?

- **Grade 1 – Structures**

1. What shapes can we see in the structures of our city?
2. Can we compare the structures of living things?
3. What are some of the oldest structures in the world?
4. In what ways can I structure the words of my sentences?

- a. **Grade 2 – Connections**

1. In what ways can we connect what we learn in science with concepts in math?
2. How can we connect our classroom to our community?
3. What connections can we make between the elements of a story?
4. In what ways can we connect great ideas in music and art?

- **Grade 3 – Change**
 1. In what ways can change be observed and measured in science?
 2. How can we analyze change using mathematical concepts?
 3. In what ways might a character change and develop in the pages of a novel?
 4. How have various cultures changed over time?

- **Grade 4 – Systems**
 1. How are systems of government organized in our state and our nation?
 2. How do number systems differ from one country to the next?
 3. In what ways can I apply a system of investigation to research and to problem solving?
 4. What systems of writing will help me organize my thoughts and ideas?

- **Grade 5 – Environments**
 1. In what literary environments might I share and present my work?
 2. How might we model a native environment on our school grounds?
 3. What data exists on the animal and plant populations of our local natural environments?
 4. In what ways have environmental influences affected people over time?

- **Grade 6 – Relationships**
 1. What relationships exist between the plants and animals in various ecosystems?
 2. In what ways is the lifestyle of a culture related to its geographical location?
 3. How might we establish relationships between the literary elements in our writing?
 4. What relationships exist between and among numbers?

- **Grade 7 – Patterns**
 1. How have weather patterns affected our planet over time?
 2. Are there certain societal patterns that determine our civic responsibility?
 3. What geometric patterns might we identify in works of art?
 4. How might we develop an original pattern of prose?

- **Grade 8 – Universes**
 1. What microscopic universes can we observe using scientific technology?
 2. What universal ideas can we explore through events of our country’s past?
 3. Does a particular “course of action” influence our literacy preferences?
 4. In what ways are algebraic equations used to measure distance and time in the universe?

CONTENT (What Students Should Know)	APPLICATION (What Students Should be Able to Do)	MATERIALS AND RESOURCES
The STANDARD: This is a general statement of expected student achievement or outcomes. Each standard is coded, and identified by a black strip that precedes the grade level content knowledge and performance applications.		
Content Knowledge states what each student should know (information and/or skills) at each grade level. These items are	Performance Applications are student applications of content knowledge. These statements may address one or more items of Content Knowledge, but	Suggested materials and resources are included to enhance instruction related to content and performance.

numbered for easy reference.	always relate directly to the standard highlighted in black.	List any of your own ideas in the spaces provided.
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The Imagine’s Chancellor Beacon Standard-Based Curriculum document is also a tool for teacher professional development. It can also be used to develop personal mastery as an educator:

The **Content** column is a guide to essential academic content which you should know. You should also develop expertise in the most appropriate instructional methods to enable students to master this content.

The **Application** column is a guide to active learning and content integration practices which you must master. It also guides construction of learning tasks appropriate to the developmental levels of your students.

The **Materials** column guides your growth in the identification of materials and resources that will support the teaching learning process.

Imagine Schools organization model is comprised of the Primary Academy (Grades K-2), the Intermediate Academy (Grades 3-5), and a Prep Academy (Grades 6-8). This organizational structure is designed to enhance our ability to individualize our program and to address both the individual and developmental needs of our students. In addition, this structure serves to coordinate curriculum mastery with learner developmental traits and needs. The standards-based curriculum is delivered at each grade level, with standards spiraled from one year to the next.

The academies increase focus on priority content and performance goals at each developmental level. In this way, students continue to build upon what they learn.

Teams of teachers plan horizontally across the grade level and vertically between grade levels to ensure mastery of required standards. The following is an overview of the core subject content and methodology presented by academy and subject area.

V. Core Subject Approach

Reading and Language Arts

Imagine Schools believes that reading and language arts will be the centerpiece of the Charter School’s academic program. Hence, effective literacy skills are central to Imagine’s Chancellor Beacon Standard-Based Curriculum, weaving their way among the content and skills introduced and developed through Reading; Writing; Listening and Speaking; and Viewing and Presenting. Communication skills and strategies are intertwined, strengthening the strands that lead from

content and concepts to connections among people and disciplines. The school will use an approved state reading program that is a systematic, balanced, and researched based that builds success with every lesson that is introduced and reinforced. The five essential components of reading which are: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are emphasized within the instructional design of the lesson. Students will be provided with activities and strategies that regularly reinforce these essential components.

The primary goal of Imagine Schools reading program is to help students understand what they read, effectively express what they mean, and apply these skills to all areas of the curriculum. A firm foundation of reading skills is developed through a strong phonics program to provide word attack and word analysis skills and the acquisition of decoding skills. During daily reading periods, teachers use numerous approaches and strengthen skills of comprehension. A minimum of 90 minutes of uninterrupted instruction is required. Informal discussions of stories promote inferential skill development and frequent oral reading encourages expressiveness. The use of multi-level tests, computer programs, and a wide variety of literature help each child master the skills needed to achieve early independence in reading. The literature covers a broad scope of interests that encourage personal development through reading. Children learn to appreciate literature and their own creative stories. Students further develop the reading habit at an early age to include parents in an at-home reading routine.

The primary goal of the language arts program is to help students build basic understanding of the mechanics and structure of the English language. Language Arts is integrated into all areas of the curriculum. The curriculum continually builds upon and extends language development as they refine their skills while writing in their journals, reviewing current events, studying mathematical word problems, and enjoying literature. The core curriculum emphasizes the formation of good listening, writing, and speaking skills. Students improve speaking, listening, and spelling abilities through large and small group instruction. Teachers provide daily opportunities to apply skills learned in both writing and speaking activities, all students participate in activities which develop important basic concepts and foster creative expression. The core curriculum emphasizes traditional grammar, including parts of speech; students must analyze and eventually learn to diagram sentences. Spelling and vocabulary development are continued and composition skills are extended through both formal and creative writing assignments.

Reading is the integrator of the curriculum. Charter School students will be strong readers by the time they leave the Primary Academy, having opened doors to good literature that crosses the boundaries of subjects, cultures, and times. In addition to literary and expository texts read in class, students read independently from a comprehensive list of leading works prepared for each grade level. This strand produces strong, fluent, lifelong readers.

Students reflect upon and write about what they read. Writing should be, first and foremost, an exercise in thinking. Students write on a daily basis as they progress through the academies. From creative writing activities to exposition, research, and reporting, our students write to express points of view and share information, and use writing as an avenue to self-discovery and self-expression.

Listening and Speaking play a valuable role in the curriculum, as students receive information from a variety of sources and practice presenting it for a variety of purposes. Socially interactive environments within each academy foster a love of language that encourages students to listen, question, discuss, debate and share all that they learn. This strand produces articulate, expressive students.

Viewing and Presenting experiences instruct students to observe different forms of media from a critical perspective and to be responsible and effective users of innovative communication tools and technology. Making sense of their information rich environment requires visual literacy as well as a fine-tuned ear.

Instructional Interventions for Students with Reading Deficits

Current treatment intervention research has shown that appropriate early direct instruction seems to be the best medicine for reading problems. Reading is not developmental or natural, but is learned. Reading disabilities reflect a persistent deficit, rather than a developmental lag in linguistic (phonological) skills and basic reading skills. Children who fall behind at an early age (K and grade 1) fall further and further behind over time. These findings contradict the prevalent notion that children will begin to learn to read when they are "ready." The concept "developmentally appropriate" should not suggest delaying intervention, but using appropriate instructional strategies at an early age—especially in Kindergarten. In accordance with Imagine Schools educational principles, only reading instructional methodology that has been identified as successful scientific research-based practices (such as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) will be employed coupled with a census administration of a standardized test in reading (such as the Stanford) in the fall during the second week of school for grades 1-5. Information from the test and previous information from the statewide assessment program will be used to identify students with reading deficits. In each of the five areas of reading instruction there are proven strategies for teaching reading skills. Effective phonemic awareness instruction teaches children to notice, think about, and work with sounds in spoken language. Children will be taught how to manipulate phonemes by using the letters of the alphabet as well as focusing on phoneme manipulation. Instruction will also focus on the connection between phonemic awareness and reading. Phonics instruction teaches children the relationships between the letters of written language and the individual sound of spoken language. Teachers will use systematic and explicit phonic instruction in the classroom and will provide ample opportunities for children to apply what they are learning about letters and sounds to the reading of words, sentences, and stories. Fluency Instruction in the classroom will include modeling, student-adult reading, choral reading, tape-assisted reading, partner reading, and readers' theatre. With vocabulary instruction many words are learned indirectly through reading as well as directly by teaching the concept of a word. Classroom instruction will include using word parts to identify the meaning of a word, context clues, as well as providing reference material in the classroom. Students will engage daily in oral language, listen to adult read to them and also read on their own to develop vocabulary independently. Students will also be explicitly taught both individual words and word learning strategies directly by the teacher. Comprehension strategies will be taught through explicit instruction and cooperative learning. Teachers will include direct explanation, teacher modeling, guided practice, and application in their reading instruction.

Key Principles for Early Reading Instruction and Intervention

- Teaching phonemic awareness directly at an early age. Children who are able to recognize individual sounds in words are phonemically aware. Phonemic awareness can be taught with listening and oral reproduction tasks similar to those listed below. When concurrent instruction in sound-spelling relationships occurs, growth in the development of phonemic awareness seems to accelerate. Teachers should initiate instruction in phonemic awareness before beginning instruction in sound-spelling relationships and continue phonemic awareness activities while teaching the sound-spelling relationships. There is little correlation between developmental stages and phonemic awareness. Every school child is ready for some phonemic instruction. The earliest direct interventions have been initiated in kindergarten with very positive results. How preschoolers respond to instruction is a question currently under investigation.
- Teaching each sound-spelling correspondence explicitly. Not all phonics instructional methods are equally effective. Telling the children explicitly what single sound a given letter or letter combination makes is more effective in preventing reading problems than encouraging the child to figure out the sounds for the letters by giving clues. Many children have difficulty figuring out the individual sound-spelling correspondences if they hear them only in the context of words and word parts. Phonemes must be separated from words for instruction. Explicit instruction means that a phoneme is isolated for the children. In this way a new phoneme is introduced. A new phoneme and other phonemes the children have learned should be briefly practiced each day, not in the context of words, but in isolation. These practice sessions need only be about 5 minutes long. The rest of the lesson involves using these same phonemes in the context of words and stories that are composed of only the letter-phoneme relationships the children know at that point.
- Teaching frequent, highly regular sound-spelling relationships systematically. Only a few sound-spelling relationships are necessary to read. The most effective instructional programs teach children to read successfully with only 40 to 50 sound-spelling relationships. These sound-spelling relationships will be taught systematically. Systematically means that the introduction of the sound-spellings will be coordinated with the material the children will be asked to read.
- Showing children exactly how to sound out words. After children have learned two or three sound-spelling correspondences, instruction will begin on how to blend the sounds into words. All students will practice how to move sequentially from left to right through spellings as they "sound out," or say the sound for each spelling. Also students will practice blending words composed of only the sound-spelling relationships the children have learned every day.
- Using connected decodable text for children to practice the sound-spelling relationships they learn. Findings on current research emphasize that children need extensive practice applying their knowledge of sound-spelling relationships to the task of reading as they are learning them. This integration of phonics and reading can only occur with the use of decodable text. Decodable text is composed of words that use the sound-spelling correspondences the children have learned to that point and a limited number of sight words that have been systematically taught. As the children learn more sound-spelling

correspondences, the texts become more sophisticated in meaning, but initially they are very limited. Only decodable text provides children the opportunity to practice their new knowledge of sound-letter relationships in the context of connected reading.

- Using interesting stories to develop language comprehension. The use of interesting authentic stories to develop language comprehension will be employed. Only the use of these stories as reading material for nonreaders is ruled out. Any controlled connected text, whether it is controlled for decodability or for vocabulary, will not be able to provide entire coherent stories in the early stages of reading acquisition. During this early stage of reading acquisition, the children can still benefit from stories that the teacher reads to them. These teacher-read stories can play an important role in building the children's oral language comprehension, which ultimately affects their reading comprehension. These story-based activities should be structured to build comprehension skills, not decoding skills.
- Using real stories to develop comprehension will be balanced with the decoding instruction described in the first five features. The comprehension instruction and the decoding instruction are separate from each other while children are learning to decode, but both types of instructional activities will occur. In other words, comprehension and decoding instruction will be balanced. During the early stages of reading acquisition, children's oral language comprehension level is much higher than their reading comprehension level. The text material used to build children's comprehension will be geared to their oral language comprehension level. The material used to build their decoding will be geared to their decoding skills, with attention to meaning. Comprehension strategies and new vocabulary will be taught using orally presented stories and texts that are more sophisticated than the early decodable text the children read. The teacher will read this text to the children and discuss the meaning with them. After the children become fluent decoders, they will apply these comprehension strategies to their own reading.

Approach: Early Identification and Treatment

- Phonemic Awareness: The best predictor in Kindergarten or 1st grade of a future reading disability in grade 3 is a combination of performance on measures of phonemic awareness, rapid naming of letters, numbers, and objects, and print awareness. Phonemic awareness is the ability to segment words and syllables into constituent sound units, or phonemes. Converging evidence from all the research centers show that deficits in phonemic awareness reflect the core deficit in reading disabilities. These deficits are characterized by difficulties in segmenting syllables and words into constituent sound units called phonemes—in short, there is a difficulty in turning spelling into sounds. Lack of phonemic awareness seems to be a major obstacle for learning to read. About 2 in 5 children have some level of difficulty with phonemic awareness. Instruction using the following types of phonemic awareness tasks has had a positive effect on reading acquisition and spelling for nonreaders and will be embedded into the educational plan for students that have been identified as having reading deficits: rhyming, auditorily discriminating sounds that are different, blending spoken sounds into words, word-to-word matching, isolating sounds in words, counting phonemes, segmenting spoken words into sounds, deleting sounds from words. Explicit instruction in how segmentation and blending are involved in the reading process will be employed. According to current

reading research, this approach has proven to be superior to instruction that did not explicitly teach the children to apply phonemic awareness to reading.

- Explicit, Systematic Instruction in Sound-spelling Correspondences. In addition to phonemic awareness, explicit, systematic instruction in common sound-spelling correspondences will be taught. Instruction in specific sound-spelling relationships has proven to be more effective than a strategy for using analogous word parts on transfer to new words and on standardized reading. The systematic, explicit phonics approach will include phonemic awareness instruction, explicit instruction in sound-spelling relationships, and extensive practice in decodable text.

The Primary Academy Reading and Language Arts Program (K- 2)

Students will be able to make connections between letters and words, and words and ideas. They will progress from the rhythms and cadences of nursery rhymes to the designs and patterns of poetry, from the telling of stories to the performance of plays, and from fables and folktales to real life adventure. As active participants in a culture of inquiry, primary students extend their appreciation of literature to include the communication skills and strategies necessary to comprehend and respond to what they read, hear, and see.

Checklist for the Primary Academy Reading and Language Arts Program:

- ✓ Emphasize phonics, word attack, comprehension, and study skills through a literature-based approach
- ✓ Present non-fiction and fiction, drama, classic, and contemporary works of literature
- ✓ Introduce stories, fables, fairytales, myths, legends, folk tales, and poetry from many cultures
- ✓ Introduce spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and content as essential writing elements
- ✓ Provide a comprehensive listening and speaking program, including opportunities for oral presentations, read-alouds, role-playing, and performances
- ✓ Provide a comprehensive writing program, including opportunities for journaling, research, creative and expository writing, and publishing
- ✓ Provide access to technology and communication tools for research, editing, revising, and project development
- ✓ Maintain individually kept writing portfolios and independent reading logs
- ✓ Ensure that every student reads and writes on grade level and beyond by the end of second grade

The Intermediate Academy Reading and Language Arts Program (Grades 3- 5)

The Charter School will utilize state-of-the-art materials and texts for each subject area. Intermediate students will be exposed to a wide variety of literary genres, including fiction, nonfiction, classic, and contemporary works. They will write in response to what they read, questioning information presented in a variety of formats and predicting outcomes. Our intermediate students will complete individual research reports and cooperative multimedia

displays as they hone the skills needed to gather and present information using communication tools.

Checklist for the Intermediate Academy Reading and Language Arts Program:

- ✓ Refine essential tools related to reading, writing, listening, and speaking and integrate these tools as applicable to all subject areas
- ✓ Increase ability to comprehend a variety of prose materials, including trade books and subject area textbooks; Great Books; Core Knowledge materials; poems; novels; drama; and short stories
- ✓ Develop critical thinking and problem solving techniques as they apply to print and non-print media
- ✓ Foster appreciation and memorization of passages from leading works of great literature
- ✓ Heighten sensitivity to other cultures and build cultural literacy
- ✓ Provide instruction on the rules and mechanics of Standard English, effective speaking skills, and oral presentations
- ✓ Introduce structural vocabulary program focusing on origins of words
- ✓ Refine research skills and narrative and expository writing skills and strategies
- ✓ Provide oral communication experiences, including speech and debate, recitations, and literature circles
- ✓ Publish student works in the form of newsletters, books, and anthologies
- ✓ Introduce the five-paragraph expository theme and a variety of creative writing formats
- ✓ Instruct in the use of literary devices in works of literature and apply them in original writing assignments
- ✓ Require independent and collaborative theme-related projects at each grade level
- ✓ Require the completion of four books from the independent reading list every nine weeks
- ✓ Maintain individually kept writing, reading, and speaking portfolios
- ✓ Develop leadership abilities through peer evaluation and assessment

The Prep Academy Reading and Language Arts Program (Grades 6-8)

We believe that it is language that makes human beings unique. However, it is the writers of literature, the language they give to their characters, and the ideas their works convey that define human beings as individuals and mark our place in society. Not only do their stories, poems, and plays entertain us, but they also teach us lessons about life. We learn about bravery and courage, about love and sacrifice, as well as about fear and distrust. We learn about the elegance of the human condition in its most noble moments and also about the tragedy and disappointment of humans at their lowest point. Some stories are told with joy, elation and pride; others are told with sorrow and pain. But it is through these tellings and readings that we find our way and learn which steps to take on the journey of life.

It is by exposing students to all areas of the language/literature experience that we encourage them to explore their own selves, their relationships with others, their place in the world, and to reflect on humans of all cultures and all times who have sought, seek, and will continue to search for the meaning of life.

The strands, standards, content knowledge and performance objectives that follow are designed to give Imagine Schools students the maximum opportunity to experience life through text: to talk, listen, read, write and view life in its many varieties and, after reflection, to present their thoughts. It is our hope that by working through these skills and objectives that our students will become learned, literate, productive, responsible, thoughtful human beings.

Students will master the following reading skills:

- Using the reading process to construct meaning
- Understanding and applying literature terminology and literary devices
- Recognizing and understanding the characteristics of various literary forms
- Analyzing literary selections as a whole
- Analyzing characters and their words and/or actions
- Evaluating the authors purpose or intent, as well as actions or events that occur within the selection

Students will learn to select and use different forms of writing for specific purposes such as to explain, to inform, to persuade, or to entertain. Through targeted research activities, students will learn to collect and interpret information and then communicate their findings through age appropriate media productions, research reports, and projects. Through the various forms of the writing process, students will learn how to revise and edit work to produce final, error-free pieces of written composition. Students will learn how to take notes during presentations and lectures, preparing then not only for summarizing the spoken word but also for evaluating presentations. Students will identify key elements of a well delivered, first rate presentations allowing them to create a rubric that will be used to evaluate their own presentations.

Mathematics Programs

A mastery of mathematics is critical for all students. Hence, the Charter School will provide students with in-depth mathematics content that is standards-based and reflects the best thinking of mathematicians and teachers. It is our goal to ensure that every student achieves the essential skills needed for mathematical literacy. In keeping with this challenge, the Charter School teachers in the Primary, Intermediate and Prep Academies will have a strong interest and background in mathematics. Our teachers will have mathematical knowledge beyond the curriculum that is taught and will participate in ongoing professional development to better serve our students.

What students learn is fundamentally connected to how they learn it. In response to this, the Charter School's mathematics program reflects a learning environment that emphasizes the unifying concepts of fundamental computational operations, communication, reasoning and proof, representation, problem solving, and connections. These are embedded in each of the content strands, which are based on those in the new standards from the National Council Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) 2000 as reflected in applicable state standards.

Number Sense, Concepts, and Operations

The knowledge and skills addressed in this strand ensure that our students develop an understanding of what numbers are and of how they work. From counting wheels on a tricycle

to counting profit from simulated business transactions, students gain deeper understanding of numbers as they move from the Primary Academy to the Prep Academy.

Algebra

The algebra strand introduces pattern recognition and the relationships among quantities, preparing students for more formal study of algebra in the Intermediate and Prep Academies as algebra is the gateway to higher level math. Pre-algebra and applicable algebraic concepts are introduced early on and students explore and apply these mathematical concepts to real world problems.

Geometry

Geometry is the study of shapes and solids. It offers many connections to other areas of mathematics as well as to the real world. In this strand, students become familiar with hands-on tools and manipulatives that enhance opportunities to improve their reasoning skills. Geometric solids, graphing calculators, and dynamic geometry software all assist students in the exploration and understanding of concepts presented in this strand.

Measurement

The measurement concepts strand provides opportunities for students to participate in relevant activities to demonstrate that measurement is full of real-life applications and a necessary tool for all students to master. Students move from using simple measuring concepts tools to using measurement information in class to more sophisticated notions such as comprehending that measurements are estimates and applications of measurement systems to problems, an important concept for students to learn in mathematics and science.

Data Analysis

Working with data gives students an opportunity to connect mathematics to other subjects as well as to their world. Analyzing the results of school-wide elections, searching the Internet for data related to a research topic, or comparing results of trials in a scientific investigation engages students and teachers in active learning.

Mathematical Thinking

The process strands that enable students to communicate what they learn, solve a multitude of problems, make decisions involving mathematical thinking, organize thinking through graphic and visual representations, and make the connections between mathematics and other subjects are integrated with the content and methodologies of Charter School's mathematics program.

Presenting the mathematics curriculum in this way helps all students experience the subject as significant and relevant to their lives.

The Primary Academy Mathematics Program (K- 2)

Students in the Primary Academy will participate in active, numeracy-rich experiences in mathematics. Problem solving skills and computational skills are interwoven across lessons, subject areas, and mathematical strands. Students will be introduced to foundations in geometry, algebra, data analysis, measurement and number sense. Primary Academy students will develop

a disposition for learning mathematics early on, providing a foundation for the conceptual and abstract thinking that teachers build upon in later grades.

Sampling of Primary Academy Mathematics Content:

- Developing “number sense”
- Mastering basic computation skills
- Understanding and extending patterns
- Applying problem solving strategies
- Developing understanding of concepts through problem solving
- Analyzing data and using and connecting a variety of mathematical representations
- Manipulating shapes, numbers, and space to develop estimation skills

Intermediate Academy Mathematics Program (Grades 3-5)

Intermediate students need active engagement in exploring mathematical concepts, as well as both challenge and support when learning mathematics. Our students will use opportunities in mathematics to develop methods of inquiry and application as they participate in the problem solving process in real-world contexts. Within the integrated curriculum, problem-solving strategies are developed in all disciplines. Problems that are difficult enough to challenge our students’ thinking inspire persistence, curiosity, and feelings of confidence in their abilities.

Sampling of Intermediate Mathematics Content:

- Understanding geometric relationships
- Organizing and comparing data sets
- Applying problem solving strategies
- Developing algebraic reasoning
- Establishing measurement techniques
- Using advanced mathematical tools and technologies
- Reasoning and making sense of mathematics
- Demonstrating flexibility in choosing computational methods
- Understanding and explaining computational methods
- Producing and explaining accurate answers efficiently
- Representing thinking
- Exhibiting number sense and mastery of computation skills

The Prep Academy Mathematics Program (Grades 6-8)

Mathematical thinking is the central competency that distinguishes people who can balance a checkbook from those who can make use of mathematics to enhance their employability, understand social and scientific issues important to American citizens, and make meaning of the mass of mathematical information available to technologically literate citizens.

Applying mathematics to solve problems, the heart of the Prep Academy curriculum, will engage students in such areas as number theory, data investigations, probability, and algebraic thinking. Students will experience the real-world applications of mathematics and, modeling real work-place competencies, learn to work cooperatively with others in applying mathematics to solve problems.

Imagine Schools Prep Academy students will continue to develop mastery of the core mathematical skills needed for success in high school and future employment. On-going work on core computation and number sense competencies develops each student's personal mastery of basic math operations. Our students learn how to apply mathematics across the curriculum and make mathematics a tool for life-long learning.

Science Programs

Effective science education begins in early childhood, when parents and teachers respond to a child's natural curiosity about the world around him or her. Charter School will offer a science curriculum that reflects the practices of scientists by providing hands-on, minds-on opportunities for students to apply the scientific method. They will inquire, explore, analyze, classify, and test hypotheses in the classroom and in their environment. The science curriculum is based on national academic standards presented in the strands of Physical Science, Life Science, Earth and Space Science, Science as Universal Inquiry, and Science, and Society. Unifying concepts of systems and organization, evidence and explanation, constancy and change, and form and function link content between strands and across disciplines.

Physical Science is one of the strands of the science curriculum. In this strand, children will enhance, refine and explore the concepts they bring to school about the nature of matter, the way things move, and how different forms of energy behave and interact.

Life Science focuses on observation, exploration, experimentation, and fact-finding expeditions about the life processes in natural communities. Students use a myriad of scientific tools to document the processes of life and access books, magazines, software, and the Internet to augment and clarify their understanding of the living world. Taking part as questioning members of diverse environments, our students form associations that lead to a multitude of discoveries in our natural world.

Science and Society is a strand that enables students to broaden the horizons of their scientific knowledge and gain a new sense of the world around them. They begin to question the events that may jeopardize the harmony of life on Earth and to take an active role as solution finders. Students' problem solving abilities are enhanced by participation in purposeful tasks using technology to seek solutions. Additionally, students explore important aspects of personal health and safety. The Charter School students will become learning contributors, decision-makers, and problem solvers while acquiring a sense of the ever-changing world in which they live.

Science as Universal Inquiry is a strand for curious young minds. Whether students are observing unicellular organisms under a microscope or simply exploring the various states of matter, they will be encouraged to ask questions, to provide explanations, and to reflect on their

findings. This strand is infused into the overall science curriculum, providing students with opportunities to explore and experience the excitement of science by doing science and increase their competence in the subject by interacting with teachers who are subject area specialists. As they engage in activities that combine science knowledge with scientific reasoning and critical thinking, students will develop an understanding of the skills needed to become active and efficient learners.

The science curriculum is designed to develop the capacity to:

- Explain concepts, principles, and theories fundamental to understanding the natural world in which we live;
- Develop the ability to read, understand, and analyze current science articles, books, and presentations from both an analytical and ethical viewpoint;
- Observe and describe events as they occur during scientific investigations and draw conclusions based on evidence and scientific studies;
- Design and implement scientific investigations;
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate mathematical concepts and technology with scientific principles;
- Understand the interrelationships between the branches of science and its defining strands;
- Introduce significant events, discoveries, careers, and personalities as they relate to content presented through the science curriculum.

The Primary Academy Science Program (K- 2)

The Primary Academy science curriculum captures, nurtures and guides the spontaneity that characterizes young children's interaction with their surroundings. Students will participate in guided exploration activities in which they handle simple objects, organisms, and scientific tools to satisfy their sensory and intellectual curiosity about these items. During these periods, teachers and students will share thoughts, findings, and questions. Through these initial phases of scientific exploration, the students' naturally inquisitive natures will be directed toward the more sophisticated problem-solving situations that they will encounter in the Intermediate Academy.

Sampling of Primary Academy Science Topics:

- Dinosaurs and Discoveries
- Life cycles of animals and plants
- Relationships between living things
- Ecology and the environment
- Structure of the human body, health, and hygiene
- Properties and states of matter
- Energy of heat, light, sound, and electricity
- How inventors, inventions, and machines connect
- Weather patterns and change
- How the bodies of our solar system are organized and interact

- Current events and stories about scientists

The Intermediate Academy Science Program (Grades 3- 5)

The Intermediate Academy provides an environment where students feel comfortable observing, describing, classifying, pondering, and communicating with fellow investigators to learn about their world. The integrated curriculum provides a model well suited to the nature of young students. Children who study coastal ecosystems, graph the number of organisms within a square meter, paint a landscape, and research the interactions of plants and animals in their natural habitat will be exposed to meaningful experiences.

In response to national trends, we concentrate on fewer science topics explored in more depth and focus in the five strands. Intermediate students will become scientists as part of an environment where they can consider the lives and contributions of scientists in the past and present and relate them to their own experiences and investigations today.

Sampling of Intermediate Academy Science Topics:

- Structure and function of living things
- The impact of evolution and heredity
- Ecosystems and their components
- Earth changes
- Stars, galaxies, and the universe
- Energy transferred and transformed
- Environmental problems and solutions
- Technological solutions and design
- Desirable health habits
- Systems of scientific investigation
- The science and mathematics connection

The Prep Academy Science Program (Grades 6-8)

In the 21st century, understanding the purposes and methods of science is an essential competency for effective citizenship. Imagine Schools Prep Academy science curriculum teaches our learners that scientific literacy is an important part of a fulfilling life in an inter-dependant global economy. Making sound decisions as citizens and voters will require recognizing cause and effect relationships between human actions and the realities of the world revealed by quality scientific research.

Imagine Schools students study the life sciences, the physical sciences, and earth and space sciences. Our sixth graders focus on the life sciences. They learn to understand the systemic nature of living organisms and the relationships between living things and the environment. Our seventh graders concentrate on the physical sciences. They are engaged in study of physical and chemical properties, natural forces, and forms of energy. Eighth graders focus on the earth and

space science. They examine what we know about our place in the physical universe, the natural forces that influence our planet, and the environmental factors that affect life on Earth.

Across the grades Imagine Schools' students learn about the societal impact of science research and technology. Our students engage in hands-on, minds-on exploration of science processes and the application of scientific thinking.

Social Studies Programs

The Social Studies portion of the curriculum incorporates several fields. The Social Studies curriculum uses literature, science, technology, and the arts to enrich the canvas on which students learn. A personal and global perspective are essential elements for students facing a world of rapid change, so both perspectives are present throughout the four social studies strands of History, Geography, Civics, and Economics. Embedded within these strands are themes ranging from cultures to environments, providing for the integration, extension, and application of knowledge to active participation in a global society.

History should build on students' prior knowledge of their own lives and communities by taking them on journeys to those of other places and times. Integrating their own experiences with those of other cultures, children construct meaning and develop important concepts that help them to link the past and the present and pose questions about the future. History is present in each strand of the Social Studies curriculum, enabling students to understand the vital role that past events have on our lives today.

Geography: Students develop the understanding that this strand is a powerful force that motivates human behavior and influences movement, cultures, beliefs, and values. In learning to access and use geographical tools and technologies, students gain valuable literacy skills for a world that becomes figuratively smaller day-by-day.

Civics activities impart both the specific content as well as the development of skills related to good citizenship, democratic principles, and the application of these to active participation in community affairs at local, national, and global levels. The Charter School classroom will be a microcosm of a social system, enabling our students to gain respect for the rights and differences of others through a strong infusion of character education, service learning, and problem-solving programs.

Economic Literacy enables our students to become wise consumers and make good financial choices. Activities that tie economic understanding to events in history, geography, and civics establish a strong foundation of basic economic principles that prepare our students to participate in the worldwide marketplace.

The Primary Academy Social Studies Program (K-2)

The Primary Academy Social Studies curriculum presents history as a great story. Students will learn about the beliefs of early people by reading myths and legends; about the similarities and differences among cultures by acting out folktales; and about the symbols and values of citizenship as part of a classroom community. In this socially interactive learning environment, children work together to hand-paint maps, create costumes of ancient civilizations, and dance to multicultural rhythms. They travel the globe, extending their knowledge from the home, to the neighborhood, to the world around them. The curriculum brings the story alive, giving students a good understanding of how people, places, and things relate in space and time.

Checklist for the Primary Academy Social Studies Program:

- ✓ Provides a socially interactive environment to promote democratic principles and social skills
- ✓ Presents social studies through hands-on, minds-on activities that integrate disciplines and incorporate technology and fine arts
- ✓ Focuses on history as a story to include myths, legends, folktales, biographies of leaders, and tales of great adventures of the past
- ✓ Highlights world and American history to include the study of Ancient Egyptian pyramids, explorers of the new world, and other key historical structures, events, and ideas
- ✓ Introduces people, places, beliefs, and traditions of other times and cultures
- ✓ Introduces people, places, beliefs, and traditions that tie us together as a nation
- ✓ Provides resources to explore current as well as past events
- ✓ Practices using maps, globes, and other tools of geography
- ✓ Promotes making wise choices and being good consumers
- ✓ Involves all students in simulations related to grade level theme
- ✓ Involves all students in service projects related to grade level theme

The Intermediate Academy Social Studies Program (Grades 3 - 5)

The Intermediate Academy Social Studies curriculum provides a multi-faceted picture of U.S. and world history. The past is chronicled as a compilation of stories and events that inspire the imagination. Students will learn to view the world from alternative perspectives as they create historical models and replicas, conduct seminars and debates, and investigate issues related to their school and community. As active and responsible members of the Intermediate Academy, these students play an important role in the design and implementation of service projects.

Checklist for the Intermediate Academy Social Studies Program:

- ✓ Provides an active learning environment with a variety of media resources
- ✓ Establishes a culture of inquiry where students study implications of social, political, and economic events as they impact the present and future
- ✓ Presents in-depth study of social studies topics in which students make choices about what they study and produce
- ✓ Focuses on significant issues and events of U.S. and history, the history and culture of diverse social groups, and the environment

- ✓ Develops historic literacy with exposure to key concepts related to history and geography
- ✓ Explores the dynamics of geography as it relates to people, places, and time
- ✓ Presents key concepts of state and federal government
- ✓ Introduces leaders from various fields, cultures, and times
- ✓ Introduces the fundamental concepts of economics as they relate to individuals, institutions, and societies
- ✓ Promotes collaboration and respect for others with project-based activities
- ✓ Practices the skills required for accessing information and presenting findings using current resources and technology
- ✓ Involves all students in class simulations related to grade level theme
- ✓ Requires participation in a service projects related to grade level theme

In addition to the core subject areas outlined above, The Charter School will include the following key elements as part of the daily learning and activities.

The Prep Academy Social Studies Program (Grades 6-8)

Imagine Schools prepares our learners for leadership in an interdependent global economy. The focus is on the processes that influence events and decisions at the local, state, national, and global levels. These include geographic, cultural, governmental, economic, and historical processes.

Sixth graders learn geographic concepts to deepen their grasp of the relationships between geographic conditions and human activities. As they deepen their understanding of the nature of our planet, Imagine Schools' students also learn to connect current cultures and significant historical events to geographic locations and influences.

Seventh graders focus on the attributes of the American political and economic system. As they learn the differences between American ideals of citizenship and other models practiced around the globe and throughout history, our students learn to see the significance of the American republic's values of free enterprise, democracy, and constitutional principles.

Eighth grade learners concentrate on the history of the people of the United States. Imagine's Chancellor Beacon students learn not only the traditional names and events of importance in a multi-cultural society, they study the processes and issues that have defined our nation and continue to be a significant part of the evolving American way of life.

Health and Physical Education Programs

The Charter School's Health and Physical Education curriculum focuses on health and physical fitness skills. As our students progress through the academies, they will participate in activities and experiences that emphasize the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Teachers and instructors work on the premise that a sound body is essential to a sound mind. When students are healthy

and active, they are more motivated to learn about the world around them. The Charter School will focus on building understanding, knowledge, and developmentally appropriate skills and practices related to health and physical fitness as students progress through the academies.

Health

Health topics are closely linked to science content as well as physical education. Concepts include:

- Basic hygiene and health habits
- Nutrition
- Functions of body parts and systems
- Disease prevention
- First aid and safety
- Dangers of substance abuse
- Benefits of exercise

Physical Education

The Physical Education program helps our students keep fit through a variety of organized activities that focus on:

- Control and coordination of movements
- Rhythm, agility, and balance
- Simple sports skills
- Basic games and exercise
- Fitness
- Respect for rules
- Sportsmanship
- Proper use of equipment
- Strategy
- Competitive and non-competitive sports
- Lifetime sports

VI. Enrichment Programs

Imagine's Chancellor Beacon Standards-Based Curriculum is designed to promote literacy in Reading and Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Enhancing the knowledge and skills acquired in each of these disciplines are the enriching experiences offered through Humanities and the Performing Arts, Health and Physical Education, Financial Literacy, Character Education, Technology, Media/Information Literacy and Languages other than English. Just as the core disciplines are standards-based, so are these enrichments, ensuring that each and every student is exposed to great ideas, great works, and great inspiration for a lifelong love of learning.

Humanities

From the universal ideas that provide the themes for Imagine's Chancellor Beacon Standards-Based curriculum to the content addressed in each of the subject areas, the humanities are integral to what our students and teachers experience in school each day. Leading works of literature provide the core of the language arts program, while the great ideas of scientists, mathematicians, and historians pervade the social studies, mathematics and science curricula. Our students will participate in activities and lessons that highlight contributions to human experience, and provide a strong foundation for cultural literacy.

The Performing Arts - Music, Art, Drama, Dance

Imagine Schools performing arts curriculum consists of activities in art, music, and drama that:

- Nurture creativity;
- Encourage productivity;
- Provide a link to the past;
- Promote appreciation of diverse cultures;
- Cultivate a love of beauty and great works.

Students in each academy will paint, sculpt, draw, sing, play instruments, dance, and perform. Participation in performance activities will enhance their ability to communicate with others in imaginative and creative ways. Masterpieces by great artists will be introduced and studied by students as a means of understanding themselves and others. Students will view, listen to, participate in, and discuss the performing arts and literary works from different periods and perspectives. Our students will gain a true appreciation of art, music, drama, and dance as important reflections of our past, present, and future.

Financial Literacy

Imagine Schools believes that Financial Literacy can be achieved through the teaching of personal financial management skills and the basic principles involved with earning, spending, saving, borrowing and investing. Integrating Financial Literacy throughout the curriculum will enhance the student knowledge in all content areas. Preparing young people to understand and actively participate in their own financial well-being is a vital personal skill. The economic stability of our communities and the resulting growth of our state's economy are influenced by personal financial literacy.

All grade levels have financial literacy standards that align instruction and create curriculum and activities designed to instill within students a desire to be financially literate. The standards are intended to help schools develop programs that provide the knowledge and skills to establish sound financial habits.

Character Education

Character education is an approach to learning, living, and engaging core values into one's every day life. In the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities, character development enhances the learner's capacity to make informed and responsible choices. It involves a shared educational commitment that emphasizes the responsibilities and benefits of productive living in a global and diverse society. Character education prepares students to come face to face with the realities of

life, equipped and capable of making ethically sound decisions and responsible choices in a world of challenge, opportunity, and change.

The vast majority of Americans share a respect for fundamental traits of character--honesty, compassion, justice, courage, generosity, perseverance, self-discipline, responsibility, respect, and caring. Yet, in contemporary culture, many of our youth face great uncertainties regarding issues of right versus wrong, and at an even higher level of decision making, ethical choices that involve issues of right versus right. Ambiguous actions on the part of youth and an inability to understand or care about relationships or the human condition are in themselves ethical dilemmas.

Lessons in character building provide principles and practices that have the potential to transform ethical ambiguity into ethical clarity. Students are encouraged to think critically and act responsibly. Instructional materials, methods, and strategies, when developed into interdisciplinary curricular themes, support the classroom teacher's efforts to engage students in authentic learning opportunities. Lessons in character development build into the existing curriculum time for student self-reflection.

The pursuit of understanding values through examining choices, consequences, and goals provides a framework for students to cultivate knowledge and skills into a purposeful synergism for productive living. Character education provides a foundation upon which the educational community can share in a commitment to the academic, emotional, and social well-being of young people. As we teach children what it means to live, learn, grow, and become the best of who they are, they will learn from our behavior as adults what is important, what is true, and what is good. Moral intelligence involves more than a recitation of a list of values classified in a specific manner. Emerson once said, "Character is higher than intellect." Character involves the choices we make. The choices students make with their acquired knowledge from within our schools and beyond will shape their character and their response to life.

Students will learn the responsibilities that come with choices as they observe the choices we make. They will choose to pay attention when we choose to meet their needs. They will learn to persevere as they become inspired by our courage; when we make them our priority in word and deed. They will give us their best when we celebrate their gifts and talents. They will learn to respect themselves and others as we place before them models of respectful behavior through our lives and our relationships with them and our peers. Unfortunately, they will disengage sometimes into desperate states of isolation, aggressive behavior, or into their own sense of truth when we remove our presence and attention from them.

Our task is to become fully proactive and responsible individuals in the lives of our children today. In order for our students to have an intellectual and moral foundation from which to build productive lives and healthy relationships, we must demonstrate through our values and the principles of authentic teaching and learning how to live and celebrate life.

Character education equips the learner with a moral lens for understanding and interpreting the ebb and flow of contemporary life. Providing directions regarding right and wrong is our task

and our responsibility. The following principles and standards form the basis by which faculty and administration can frame the task and assess the progress being made.

Technology

Imagine Schools students will learn about these advances through computer classes as well as through the integration of technological resources within their classrooms. The word technology is sometimes used to describe a particular application of industrial technology, such as medical technology or military technology. Each of the various specialized technologies has its own goals and its own tools and techniques for achieving those goals. Industrial technology enables people to live in greater security and comfort than ever before. Students will learn of the advances technology have benefited people in numerous ways, but our students will also understand that it has also created serious problems. Students will explore the social, ethical and human issues associated with the responsible and irresponsible use of technology systems, information and software.

Students will use technology tools to enhance learning, to increase productivity and creativity, and to construct technology-enhance models, prepare publications and produce other creative works.

Media/Information Literacy

Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning provides a conceptual framework and broad guidelines for describing the information- literate student. These standards consist of three categories, nine standards, and twenty-nine indicators. The core learning outcomes that are most directly related to the services provided by school library media programs are found in the three standards and thirteen indicators in the “information literacy” category. The other two categories—three standards and seven indicators for “independent learning” and three standards and nine indicators for “social responsibility”—are grounded in information literacy but describe more general aspects of student learning to which school library media programs also make important contributions. Taken together, the categories, standards, and indicators describe the content and processes related to information that students must master to be considered information literate. The standards and indicators are written at a general level so that library media specialists and others in individual states, districts, and sites can tailor the statements to meet local needs. These educators are the ones who know their student populations; their role is to apply these general statements in light of the developmental, cultural, and learning needs of all the students they serve.

Languages other than English (LOTE)

Building upon the experiences of children, and taking advantage of their natural facility for learning a new language, it is our goal to provide instruction in language/s other than English early on, and to continue the study of languages as students progress through the academies. Relevant materials and resources, state-of-the-art technology, and dynamic teaching methods will all enhance the language program.

Students will participate in multicultural experiences through the study of language that exposes them to the traditions and the heritage of cultures other than their own. They will learn about people, places, and times through high-interest activities. As students progress through the

academies, their lessons will become more sophisticated and allow for more diverse experiences. Communicating with native speakers in language circles where they practice conversing in real life simulations, students will be able to form connections between what they think, what they learn, and what they say.

I. Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students Programs

Students for whom English is a second language will be provided appropriate ongoing special assistance to develop English language skills and maintain academic growth. The Charter School will include individualized instruction in all classrooms that will be appropriate to developing language growth and academic content progress. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Curriculum Content in the Home Language (CCHL) will be offered at the Charter School, as appropriate.

To insure that classroom teachers are able to provide the appropriate individualization needed, all classroom teachers hired will be ESOL-endorsed or working towards ESOL endorsement through participation in workshops and classes. The concept of nurturing every child's potential will provide a foundation for each of the bilingual programs. Where classes for English as a Second Language are appropriate, teachers will be certified to teach English as a Second Language or will be working toward that certification until completed.

Today's classroom presents teachers with the challenge of educating students of diverse language backgrounds. To meet this challenge, the school will provide a variety of multimedia experiences for bilingual students and for students whose first language is not English. These learning experiences cover a range of interdisciplinary topics designed to help Limited English Proficient (LEP) students function in school and daily life. Audio and video features help students develop listening and reading comprehension as they build speaking and writing skills. Technology will assist ESOL students to "discover" English through entertaining animation, colorful graphics, and engaging audio. The development of language proficiency is the primary goal; the mission of the ESOL curriculum will focus on developing a successful bilingual, bicultural, and bi-literate student equipped to meet the challenges of our 21st century.

The bilingual programs will promote character education and will:

- Offer opportunities and activities to share language and culture;
- Raise expectations for language minority youth;
- Identify more LEP students for gifted and talented programs;
- Develop cognitive/academic language proficiency;
- View students as active learners;
- Develop communicative competence;
- Accept students' home language and extend it to the school environment;
- Use holistic approaches.

An initial identification procedure will be established at the Charter School in order to identify students that may need to receive additional instructional strategies and techniques to improve

their English proficiency. All students will be screened for language proficiency upon entry to the Charter School. Services for LEP eligible students will be provided in a timely manner and appropriate LEP plans will be established and maintained. An inclusion model will be the primary methodology. Self-contained programs will be provided where needed to meet students' learning needs. Teachers will be provided training in ESOL curriculum and instruction, ESOL testing and evaluation, ESOL methods, and applied linguistics.

Regardless of the delivery model, the Charter School will provide equal instruction for the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of non-English speaking students through the standards-based curriculum. The standards-based academic content will be taught in ways designed to make the content and performance expectations comprehensible to ESOL students.

The methodologies to be applied for ESOL instruction at the Charter School will include the following:

- Language experience approaches;
- Cooperative teaching and learning;
- Multi-sensory activities;
- Language drills;
- Dramatizations;
- Taped stories for listening centers;
- Visual aids;
- Brainstorming activities;
- Simplification of text;
- Follow-up guided reading activities;
- Predictable stories;
- Questioning techniques;
- Highlighting texts.

F. Financial Plan

I. Financial Management and Accounting

There are two Academy people responsible for the financial management of the Academy, with assistance from ISNP staff. These are the business manager and the principal. The financial responsibilities are as follows:

- Business Manager: accounts payable, payroll, general ledger, reconciliation of accounts, production of financial statements, preparations for audits, accounts receivable, financial data entry (lunch and after-school programs, etc.)etc.
- Principal: approval of purchases, signing of checks, budget planning and overall financial responsibility.

The Principal with the business manager will prepare and submit monthly financial statements to the Charter Board. The financial statements will include a balance sheet and a statement of

revenues and expenditures reflecting year-to-date comparison with the Annual Budget. The financial statements will include the Academy's actual expenditures and receipts, reported on a modified accrual basis of accounting. The Academy will submit monthly financial statements to Cobb County School District. The financial statements will be submitted no more than forty-five days after the close of each month's accounting/financial activities.

- The Academy will implement rigorous internal control policies based on the Imagine Schools' Finance Manual. These policies will be reviewed by the Governing board and principal to ensure that these policies address legal compliance, conflicts of interest, signature authorities, government access to records, accounting procedures, cash management, budget development, financial reporting, property management, and procurement.

The Academy will use a student information system like STI for its own internal management purposes. This is a proven software package designed to integrate the tracking of financial data with that of student data that is used by ISNP. In addition, the Academy plans to use this system to generate financial accounting data in the format required by the State of Georgia and Cobb County School District. All student records will be fully automated and available for audit as required. Cumulative files will also be available onsite for auditing purposes. In addition, the Charter School will comply as necessary with the Cobb County School District's requirements by using the student database for direct entry of student information into the Cobb County School District's mainframe or it will use SchoolMax. Imagine Schools Non Profit, Inc. uses MAS 200 which is an accounting software program that is password protected at the user level. ISNP, Inc. is the administrator of the automated financial system

Imagine Schools, Inc. will adhere to all of the statutory and regulatory requirements of managing federal funds and will comply with all financial and performance reporting requirements set forth in the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments and Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations. Any surplus funds remaining at the close of one fiscal year will be used to enhance the IAS's academic performance the following year. IAS will expect to receive all funds from the State and Cobb County School District to which it is entitled under the CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT OF 1998 (as amended July 1, 2005) and any other subsequent amendments. These will pertain to, but not be limited to, FTE funding, and all such funding for transportation, food, facilities and student life and encompass all sources and opportunities for funding available for public schools federally and in the state of Georgia.

The financial reports to the Cobb County School District may include, but are not limited to, the following information:

- Balance Sheet
- Income Statement
- Statement of Cash Flow
- BVA (Budget versus Actual)
- Notes regarding any extraordinary items

The Governing Board and Imagine Schools, Inc. will be responsible for establishing and maintaining a system of internal control in order to provide reasonable assurance that the Charter School's assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition, and that transactions are executed in accordance with management's authorization and recorded properly in the financial records. The Imagine School's Finance Manual will be used as the basis for establishing these controls. Individual's responsibilities in areas such as the following will be delineated:

- Financial Work Flow
- Finance Transition
- Segregation of Duties
- Segregation of Duties by Job Title
- Benefits Worksheet
- Corporate Invoicing
- Monthly Closing Checklist (includes the need to run FRX and review with personnel)
- Year-End Entries
- 1099's

Specifically, controls will be established in the following areas:

- Revenues, accounts receivable, and cash receipts;
- Payroll;
- Expenditures, accounts payable, and cash disbursements;
- Budgeting and financial reporting;
- Risk management;
- School inventory.

ISNP currently retains Marsh USA, Inc. as the company's insurance broker. Marsh USA is one of the largest insurance brokers in the United States. A risk profile is developed for each school and adequate insurance is provided to mitigate the consequences of identified risks. Risks include those arising in the construction and development stage through to the opening and operation of the school. The members of the Imagine Schools Non Profit operation team are trained in Employer Practices to mitigate those liabilities that may arise from inappropriate behavior. The ISNP operation team will continually monitor the operations of the school and will retrain the school's administrative staff and faculty on a regular basis.

Below is an example of some of the identified school-level risks and their associated methods of mitigation.

- Property Casualty: Insurance; Maintenance Program; teacher supervision
- General Liability: Administrator and teacher training; student supervision; Insurance
- Employer Practices Liability (including Teacher-Student Interaction): Administrator and teacher training and retraining; insurance
- Employee Theft: Background checks, fingerprinting and drug testing; bonding of employees who handle cash
- Financial Reporting Misstatement: Monthly internal budget vs. actual reviews; formal quarterly Imagine Schools Management Team meetings; annual external audit
- Attendance and Student Files Statistical Data: Random review and audit of student files; daily review of attendance reports; spot checking of class counts.

Any deficit occurring during or at the end of a fiscal year will be eliminated by an infusion of funds from the Imagine Schools Non Profit. **If the charter school has not eliminated the deficit by the end of the fiscal year, ISNP will continue to fund the school's deficit and work with IAS to provide a plan for eliminating the deficit within the next fiscal year.** This plan will be shared with the Superintendent or designee. While it is understood that it is a requirement of an application to show an understanding that “no CCSD funds will be allocated to the charter school for the next fiscal year until such plan has been approved”, this application specifically stipulates that ISNP will **continue to fund the school's deficit and work with IAS to provide a plan for eliminating the deficit.** ISNP is totally committed to funding the charter school through operating advances where necessary should the school find itself in need of such financial help. The Charter School will be solely responsible for all debts it incurs and will not contractually bind the Cobb County School District with any third party.

In the unlikely event that the charter school may cease operation, the board of the charter school will notify the CCSD immediately if the charter school is contemplating the cessation of operations, and will cooperate with the CCSD to the extent necessary to provide an orderly return of the students to their local schools. If the charter school ceases operations for any reason, the charter school personnel and its governing board will cooperate fully and be responsible for appropriately safeguarding and distributing the school's assets and winding up the school's business and affairs. Should this occur, and the charter school does not have sufficient funds to pay its entire bill at the time it ceases operation, the CCSD will not be responsible for the charter school's unpaid bills.

II. Plans for Audit

The Charter School's fiscal year will run from July 1st through June 30th. Within 180 days prior to the end of the charter school's fiscal year the Charter School will issue a Request for Proposals for independent accounting services licensed in the State, according to the same guidelines applicable to public school systems in Georgia. The cost of the independent audit will be borne by the charter school. This annual financial audit of the school's accounts and records will be completed within 3 months after the end of its respective fiscal year by an independent certified public accountant and copies of the audit will be submitted to the Cobb County Board of Education. The Independent Auditor's Report is intended to be included in the Annual Audit Report, which is submitted to the GADOE, Office of Charter School Compliance. If the Independent Auditor's Report is not available prior to the deadline set by CCSD, it will be sent to the CCSD as a supplement when available and included as an amendment to the Annual Audit Report. Cobb County School District will forward the Annual Audit Report to the GADOE, unless otherwise directed by the GADOE.

The Charter School is subject to audit by the Cobb County School District's (CCSD) Internal Audit Services. The Charter School understands that the Charter may be revoked or not renewed by the Cobb County Board of Education if the Board determines that the Charter School failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management as described by the CCSD Financial Services Division. The Charter School also understands a CCSD Internal Audit Report issued during the school year is to be included with the Annual Independent Auditors' Report when submitted to the GADOE, Office of Charter School Compliance. Once the Annual Audit

Report(s) has been approved by the CCSD's Superintendent and School Board, it will be forwarded to the GADOE by CCSD, unless otherwise directed by the GADOE.

III. Budgets

The financial plan for the first fiscal year presents a sound basis of funding for this start-up charter school. The Charter School will apply for and expects to receive the available federal charter school start-up implementation grant funding. The available federal start-up funds will provide for some of the costs prior to the school's first fiscal year. The Charter School will secure access to funds through Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc to cover all the rest of the start up costs. During the first year and as an ongoing part of its role with the school, Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc. will manage the cash flow by providing or securing a line of credit. In this way, the Charter School will be insulated from monthly volatility in real cash flow.

We have researched the current funding per student of comparable charter school programs in the Cobb County School District (Kennesaw Charter School) in order to estimate the funding available per student. Also, we have received expert help in deciphering the latest funding legislation by the State as approved on July 1st 2005. We expect and anticipate that the actual funding amount may vary from this projection based on exact FTE count of the Charter School and the composition of the student body in terms of qualification for ESOL, Special Education, and EIP funding as well as the CPI which informs the T and E of the teachers. Included in this variation from our projection is the categorical funding from the school district that will be applicable pending the approval of this application.

Please see budget attachment in Appendix A for the Financial Plan. This Attachment includes, on separate sheets, a financial plan for the first fiscal year and a ten year budget. The financial plan includes an estimate of all public and private dollars available per student; and a monthly cash flow projection. State, federal, and local funding will provide the primary sources of revenue for the Charter School, while short-term capital needs may be addressed based on the projected FTE revenues from such sources. Through the partnership with Imagine Schools, all start up capital, infrastructure financing, and real estate development costs will be assumed by Imagine and repaid through the revenues of the school in future years. In addition, the Academy will apply for a Federal Implementation grant of \$400,000 assist in funding the start up years of the school.

Please see budget attachments for the following:

- Financial plan for the first fiscal year
- Budget for the first five years of the charter

IV. Planned Fundraising Efforts

Imagine Schools, Inc. will endeavor to obtain revenue for the Charter School from such sources as grants, contributions, fees for use of the school facility, and fees for auxiliary programs at the school facility.

Upon approval of this application, the Charter School will apply for Title X and any other funding grants under the Public Charter Schools Program of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to cover planning and development expenses.

V. Working Capital and Assets:

The Charter School's working capital and assets will be limited to the Federal Start-Up Grant and any short-term financing vehicles accessed in anticipation of the delivery of the FTE funding, should any such additional funds be necessary. All other working capital needs are financed by Imagine Schools Non Profit.

G. Food Service

IAS intends to contract with a reputable food service purveyor other than CCSD to prepare meals off site and then deliver them to the school. The cost for this service will be borne by the school and expensed out to the participating families. Meals will be provided at a cost to the parents who choose to participate in the breakfast and/or lunch program. Since nutrition is important for high academic achievement, all food service operations, including breakfasts, lunches, morning and afternoon snacks, vending machines, student stores, school marketing classes, and fundraisers should offer food choices that provide the opportunity for students to select products that reflect the nutrition principles taught in the health curriculum. School meals will be wholesome, nutritious, and appetizing and will meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other federal nutrition requirements. Several vendors have been contacted and have given estimated cost to students ranging from \$1.80 - \$2.50 for breakfast and \$3.25 - \$4.50 for lunch. The vendor will be chosen once the charter is approved. If the student population falls within the guidelines to be eligible to participate in the federal free and reduced price lunch program, the school will explore doing so within all the guidelines stipulated by such participation.

IAS will feature a designated area for food service that will be architecturally designed to meet all applicable health regulations. Depending on the facility that is ultimately secured for the IAS, this area will be a multi-purpose room equipped with a warming kitchen and refrigeration.

IAS will make the food service area available for inspection by the Cobb County School District or County. The food service area will comply with all state and local policies, procedures and requirements.

IAS plans to participate in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program. IAS will submit its own application to the State Department of Education and will be responsible for accurately counting meals and submitting financial reimbursement claims to the State Department of Education for meals meeting specified nutrient standards. Forms that describe the program as well as an application for free and reduced meals will be included in the Student Enrollment Package.

H. Instructional Technology/Technology Infrastructure

Overview of Instructional Technology

We believe learning should primarily occur in a relational context; technology will be used as a tool in the school to enhance our efforts in teaching children. We believe technology is best used to reinforce classroom learning and for assessment. In addition to using technology to support learning, as age appropriate and specified in standards, students will learn how to master use of specific technologies. In higher grades, teachers will seek to ensure that students are taught how to exploit the potential of research oriented technology yet not abuse them to avoid developing solid research, critical thinking, and writing skills. This is both a technique issue as well as a character issue and will be addressed in both ways.

- *Technology Literacy:* Students will be engaged in mastery of the use of technology as a learning tool of the Information Age at all grade levels. Grade appropriate activities will be provided in each major strand of technology literacy:
 - Basic operations and concepts
 - Social, ethical, and human issues
 - Technology productivity tools
 - Technology communications tools
 - Technology research tools
 - Technology problem-solving and decision-making tools.
- *Internet access:* Classrooms will have computer workstations with Internet and worldwide web access, on-line access to reference resources, and access to the school's instructional software collection. All access for students will be in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act
-
- *Multimedia production for targeted objectives:* Teachers and students will develop multimedia lesson and projects in core academic disciplines. Students will have access to software to review information or to prepare individual and group assignments.
- *Individualized software supplementation:* Students are prescribed specific curriculum support software based on identified individual needs and each student's learning style and learning goals. Where possible, computer training for parents will be available.

Instruction Technology Plan Development

The development of an Instructional Technology Plan will provide specific direction for the support of a technology enriched school environment with technology integrated into the curriculum. This plan will be framed with in the rubric for technology plans provided by the Georgia State Department of Education (GADOE) and then submitted to the GA DOE for approval to make sure it has met the standards of the rubric. The protocol for all use of the internet will be compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

The development of an adequate instructional technology program depends, in part, on the infrastructure support provided to school and classrooms. To that end, the school will develop a comprehensive, standard local area and wide area network (LAN/WAN) plan, including wired and wireless network access. The school will :

- Provide each of the K-8 classrooms with an appropriate network access

Provide the inter-school, Imagine Schools, and Cobb County School District infrastructure connectivity that will interface with the school network(s) While the school will use STI as its data collection information system, all reporting to CCSD will be done through School Max or whatever system the CCSD requires. All faculty and appropriate support staff will be trained in the use of STI. Use and application of a high-bandwidth (broadband) Internet Protocol (IP) communications infrastructure may be used to facilitate intra-classroom and inter-classroom (for both inter and intra-school) cooperative and extended learning programs. Characteristics of cooperative and extended learning programs enabled through appropriate technology infrastructures may include:

- Two-way video teleconferencing – classes taught from one location while students “attend” the class from another school.
- Extended learning – the “home bound” student would be able to log into the classroom in “real time” – as the class is being taught.
- On Demand Learning – students will be able to log onto the system and take specific course(s) or course unit(s) at times including and other than during the normal school day. Courses and course units can be developed and stored on servers. The student will take an “on line” course or course unit by signing on to a website. The system will have the capability to “stream” video and other multi-media content.
- Professional Development On Demand – teachers will be able to log onto the system and take specific courses at times convenient for the teacher. Computers will be provided for teachers in their classrooms. Courses can be developed and stored on servers. The teacher will take an “on line” course by signing on to a website. The system will have the capability to “stream” video and other multi-media content.

It is critical to acknowledge that the infrastructure and the use of the resulting technology in classrooms will have a direct impact on the instructional program for the school. New and different methods for professional development will enable the school to provide opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills without removing them from their classrooms. Teachers will take what they have learned to a technology enriched classroom; integrate the technology into their curriculum and directly and indirectly enhance the students learning experience and improve student achievement. If the demographics of the school population render it possible, the school will apply to participate in the E-rate program. If not, the technology plan will be implemented using the discounts available through Imagine Schools corporate buying power made available by the high volume of purchases.

Curriculum and Learning Standards

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the National Education Technology Standards (NETS) publishes *Connecting Curriculum and Technology*. It is likely that the NETS standards will be included as a component of the schools Instructional Technology Plan. Additionally, the plan will align the schools student and teacher technology competencies with Georgia Performance Based Standards for Technology Integration.

Teaching and learning strategies, when coupled with technology, can prepare 21st century learners to make the transition from school to work successfully. Infusion of technology into the curriculum provides students with successful elements of learning including active, cooperative, interdisciplinary and individualized learning.

Technology Enhanced Learning Environments

The school will have a goal of attaining a ratio of at least one computer for every six students (6:1) for classrooms and learning environments at all levels. This level of technology access and availability is minimally sufficient for measurable gains in student performance.

A master procurement and allocation plan will be initiated. The efficient acquisition of the needed technology resources will provide all students and teachers access to current and appropriate information. It will ensure that the school receives maximum use of its technology investments. Coordination of vendor demonstrations and the negotiation of high volume purchases will assist the school in acquiring computers and software.

Professional development, including that delivered online, will help staff obtain specific technology competencies, thereby ensuring the effective use and application of the newly acquired equipment in student use settings (both in and out of the classroom). After establishing and communicating minimal standards of equipment, the school will research approaches for the purchase of additional computers for staff. The available approaches include:

- Payroll deduction for the purchase of computers should teachers require one in their homes in addition to the one provided for them at the school
- Software licenses expanded to enable loading onto staff computers
- Teacher computer loan programs
- Lease/purchase equipment options for teachers
- Free computers to teachers who acquire all staff technology competencies

Libraries and Information Resource Centers need to be identified and supported as critically important components of the schools goals. The libraries and resource/media centers of the 21st century must be equipped with the ability to deliver information from the media center to every desktop on the network. A comprehensive media management system and a uniform library automation system, delivered over the local area and wide area network (LAN/WAN) will increase student access.

Equipment may be available so that the WAN will be able to support a “voice/data/two-way video network” with high speed (broadband) access to the Internet.

Security and filter issues will be addressed. It is vital that the schools networks are protected from unwanted; outside intrusion and that authorized users (including students and teachers) are prevented from accessing unauthorized content.

Plan Implementation Considerations

At the conclusion of any plan, implementation procedures should be established. The creation of technology standards and policies will insure that the integration of technology in the school will have the desired effect. Communication of these policies and standards must be complete and consistent.

The school will develop a regularly budgeted technology acquisition plan. An effective centralized maintenance system for the computers in the school, with service level goals and standards for service may be developed. Definitions of obsolescence for instructional machines must be defined and updated continuously. Planned use for older equipment should be developed and a plan for the disposal of unusable equipment should be environmentally safe.

Many grants are available that can be used to enhance the technology environment at the school and provide additional funding for professional development.

For the most part, instructional technology resources will not be available for community members beyond the school day. However, there is a desire to improve family outreach. Increasing student access to computers, before, during and after school is important. After hours access may well be provided from a remote computer. STI enables this type of access by parents. By making such technology available to students “after hours,” the equitable distribution of technology in the homes of students begins to be addressed. Other implementation issues to be considered include:

- Procedural guidelines for the installation of new equipment.
- A policy for the acceptance of donated equipment.
- Budget-lines to ensure a systems approach to reach critical mass of a student to-computer ratio across throughout the school.
- Policies regarding ethical and appropriate use of technologies. These policies need to be reviewed and updated continuously.
- Compliance to the ethical and appropriate use policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school must monitor, evaluate and revise the Instructional Technology Plan for maximum effectiveness. Strategies for inclusion of this reflective process consist of ongoing data collection for selected performance measures, timely communication of data and analyses to key decision makers, and periodic reports that address both implementation and impact assessment.

All technology planning will be focused on what is required to advance student achievement for meeting performance goals based on established learning standards.

Initially the point of contact and support for the technology infrastructure will be the principal, who may then elect a staff member to fill this role. As the school grows, it is planned to have an in house IT point person. Until that time, the school will rely on contracted services from a provider used at other Imagine schools.

I. Insurance

The Charter School will arrange for all necessary and applicable insurance policies for the school it's employees and board members. Imagine Schools will procure these insurances in the following categories and amounts:

- Errors and Omissions Insurance - \$3 million
- Officers and Directors of Liability Insurance- \$3 million
- Fidelity Bonds - \$100,000 (crime insurance)
- Commercial General Liability Insurance - \$ 1 million per occurrence, \$2 million aggregate plus \$9 million umbrella
- Automobile Liability Insurance – Non owned auto \$1 million
- Employees Liability Insurance
 - Bodily injury by Accident - \$500,000
 - Bodily injury by Disease - \$500,000 (policy limit)
 - Bodily injury by Disease - \$500,000 (each employee)
- Property – Dependent upon facility and contents

The Charter School's administrators and governing board will be appropriately bonded. The levels of insurance and bonding described in the petition will remain in effect and in full force throughout the term of the charter, unless changed by a charter amendment. Proof of insurance will be provided to the Cobb County School District upon request. All workers compensation will be according to Georgia State statutes.

The insurance company providing coverage has a rating of "A" or better and financial size category of "VII" or better, according to A.M. Best Company. Complete policy binders detailing the terms and conditions of the policies will be provided to the School System upon request.

J. Legal Proceeding

Should a third party name the Cobb County Board of Education or the Cobb County School District as an adverse party in any legal proceeding arising out of any action or inaction on the part of the Charter School, its governing board, its employees, its affiliates, or any party with which the Charter School has contracted, the charter school shall consent to join that legal proceeding as a party alongside the Cobb County Board of Education. IAS will indemnify and hold harmless the Cobb County Board of Education, the Cobb County School District, and any officer or employee for liability for any action or inaction on the part of the charter school

K. Personnel

I. Hiring Process Standards

The Imagine International Academy of Smyrna intends to obtain the services of the finest teachers and administrators available for the Charter School. To accomplish this goal, IAS will disseminate materials in order to ensure that properly credentialed individuals apply for positions. Each applicant will be screened by a team of professionals trained to identify individuals suited to the philosophy of this institution. Extensive background reviews, including criminal background checks, will be performed to verify past experiences and to insure the safety of our students. This process will include the fingerprinting of all employees and others serving in an official capacity. The Charter School reserves the right to mandate whatever testing of employees that is deemed necessary to protect the students.

Imagine Schools Non Profit maintains an extensive database of qualified applicants and will be able to fill any mid-year vacancies at the Charter School in a timely fashion. In addition, ISNP's Georgia Regional Director has extensive experience in using the PYP and MYP to deliver the curriculum and is acutely aware of the training and experience necessary for this method to be a success. Recruiting of teachers will be done through ISNP job fairs, through cooperation with the International Baccalaureate office, through TEACH Georgia and by advertising in the media.

The qualifications of the teachers hired will be within the mandatory guidelines of section 3.2 of the SACS document Accreditation Standards for Special Purpose Schools. The teachers employed by the Charter School will be certified and the Charter School will comply with NCLB requirements for highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. It is possible that with the international approach to the curriculum, teachers with qualifications from other countries and experience in the PYP/MYP may be hired. One of the sources for finding such teachers would be through the well-known Visiting International Faculty (VIF) Program. Should this be the case the minimum qualifications of such personnel will be a Bachelors degree with extensive experience in the PYP/MYP.

The Charter School may employ or contract with skilled, selected non-certified personnel to provide instructional services (such as after school programs) or to assist instructional staff members as teacher aides. Non-certified personnel shall be considered "at will" employees and shall not be contracted for specific periods of time. Recognizing the significant need within the state of Georgia for ESOL programs, the Charter School will aggressively recruit teachers who are appropriately certified in ESOL. The Charter School will require all teachers to provide the Charter School with a copy of their teaching certificate. In addition, as part of the background check the Charter School will perform on all new employees, we will confirm that their certification is valid with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. The Charter School will work with the Cobb County School District to perform the necessary background checks. The Charter School will not employ an individual to provide instructional services if the individual's certificate or licensure as an educator is suspended or revoked by this or any other state.

Within the first three days on the job, new employees will be required to complete appropriate immigration and federal income tax paperwork. They will also be required to attend a benefits orientation. Employees will be given a copy of an employee handbook that is modeled upon the Imagine's Employee Handbook and will be required to sign a form indicating that they have received the handbook and will read its contents. The form will be kept in the employee's file. The Employee Handbook includes descriptions of the policies and procedures that will be utilized to ensure employee due process rights. The Employee Handbook to be used at the Charter School will comply with Georgia law. A copy of the Employee Handbook will be forwarded to the Cobb County School District upon its completion.

All Charter School employees will be required to submit to a criminal record check prior to employment. Criminal record checks are processed by Cobb County District School and forwarded to the Charter School. Copies of fingerprint cards will be kept in the employees' files.

The school will not violate the anti-discrimination provisions of any state or federal law.

The Charter School expressly reserves the right to discharge employees after exhausting an internal due process hearing. The school will include in the employment contract thorough, consistent, and even-handed termination provisions that include appropriate due process procedures.

The Governing Board of the Charter School has legal counsel available to provide information and guidance regarding employment issues. Additionally, Imagine Schools Non Profit has in-house legal counsel available to assist in such matters as necessary. There will be a comprehensive system put in place by the governing Board to address employment related issues, employee grievances and termination procedures.

II. Human Resource Policies

All Charter School employees will be privately employed by Imagine Schools Non Profit. Teachers' salaries will take into consideration their experience, degree, and past employment history. Guidelines for the anticipated salaries are set forth in the financial projections for the school. Staff will be hired on a year-to-year basis, with contract extensions recommended on an annual basis. The Principal will formally evaluate all teachers at the end of each school year to determine whether the quality of their performance is sufficient to continue as Charter School employees. The Principal and Imagine Schools, Inc. educational support staff will conduct frequent informal teacher observations to identify strengths and professional growth targets. Additionally, the Principal will formally observe teachers in the classroom annually or twice a year, depending on the teacher's level of experience. Informal collegial dialogue about systematic improvement of student work will be ongoing throughout the year. The Principal will be responsible for directing performance improvement or taking disciplinary action for Charter School employees. Imagine Schools Non Profit's educational experts will evaluate the Principal once a year.

Should the Charter School experience a decrease in enrollment that necessitates a reduction in staff, certain contracts would not be renewed for the following year.

Comprehensive health, dental, life, and disability insurance plans will be available as part of the benefits package that will be offered to employees of the Charter School.

All employees will be paid on a bi-weekly basis with a one-week waiting period. Imagine Schools Non Profit will use a payroll processing company to manage the processing of W-2 forms and paychecks for employees of the Charter School. Direct deposit will be offered to all employees. Imagine Schools Non Profit's staff will be responsible for processing the necessary paperwork for wage garnishments, 1099 forms, liens, student loan defaults, subpoenas and court appearances, and vacations. All employee files will be maintained by Imagine Schools, Inc. at the local school site. The Charter School will manage time sheets for employees who are hired on an hourly basis and process all information at the local school site.

As all Charter School employees will be privately employed by Imagine Schools Non Profit, Inc. they will not be subject to employee collective bargaining. All teachers shall be members of the Georgia Teachers Retirement System per Attorney General's opinion No. U99-4.

The appeals process to be used to resolve Charter School employee and stakeholder complaints or grievances will be based on the chain of command established at the school and will be clearly stated in the employee handbook. A teacher will meet with the Principal to address a concern; if necessary, the Principal will take the issue to the determined committee at the local school site for review. This may then go to the ISNP Regional Director or Governing Board. The policies and procedures for resolving complaints will be presented at orientation meetings, parent organization meetings, School Council meetings, and Open Houses. All complaints and grievances will be addressed in a timely fashion.

The Charter School will comply with the provisions of Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1903.2 (a)(1) and will place all the requisite Occupational Safety and Health Administration posters and related information in conspicuous areas, such as the Faculty Lounge and the main office of the Charter School.

III. Informing Parents of the Qualifications of the School Staff

It is planned that informational meetings be held to introduce parents to the Charter School and its staff. As staff members are hired, they may be introduced to parents at subsequent meetings or via the newsletters and teachers' names, areas of expertise, and certification information will be sent home in the Charter School's newsletters.

IV. Staffing Plan

The Charter School will have one fully certified teacher for each classroom. Class sizes will take the Georgia Department of Education standards as a maximum class size. There will be appropriate specialty teachers on staff to teach physical education and Special Education and other specialty classes where needed. A teacher's aide will be assigned to grades where necessary. Our Imagine Schools Non Profit's staffing plan also includes a Principal and a full-time counselor.

The anticipated number of staff members for the first year of operation is listed below. These numbers will fluctuate according to enrolment.

- 1 Principal
- 1 Business manager
- 1 Guidance Counselor
- 28 Classroom teachers
- 1 Special Education teacher
- 2 Special subject area teachers (physical education)
- 1 School Nurse
- 8 Teacher Aides
- 2 Administrative support staff
- 1 Media Specialist

The Charter School will secure the services of a Special Education Coordinator based on the percentage of enrolled students with Special Education needs.

Additional teachers and teacher aides will be hired each year as new classes are added. In the future, all positions are planned but may not necessarily involve full-time employees.

V. Professional Development

Opportunities for professional development will be an important component of the Charter School. Teachers will receive appropriate training prior to the start of the school year, with a focus on the delivery of the PYP or MYP approach as well as the Charter Schools' standards-based curriculum and the development of integrated content units. On-going training and support will be provided throughout the school year in response to needs assessments completed by teachers as well as needs identified by the Imagine Schools Non Profit staff. Teachers will also be trained to identify and respond to different learning styles. Knowing their own learning styles and those of their students will enable teachers to implement a variety of teaching strategies and assessments and will help to insure the academic success of all students. Staff will be able to avail themselves of the numerous national training opportunities afforded by ISNP such as the School of Excellence program, the Growing our Leaders program and the National Forum.

Objective

The objectives of the professional development program are to enable teachers to:

- Deliver the curriculum using the PYP or MYP framework
- Work effectively with all their students;
- Teach an integrated curriculum;
- Recognize and use different learning styles;
- Make productive use of all the resources that are provided to them.

Special emphasis will be given to teachers who are new to teaching.

Methods

The Charter School will schedule staff workshops, seminars, interest group sessions, and individual sessions as appropriate for the topic, the school, and the faculty. The Charter School will encourage and provide funds for teachers to attend professional conferences related to their teaching responsibilities. Imagine's expert educators and instructional leaders will provide support and guidance to the school site faculty on curriculum priorities and best instructional practices.

In the daily and weekly schedule, we the Charter School will strive to provide time for informal, collegial discussions of teaching and learning.

Topics

The professional development program will focus on:

- Building capacity for systemic improvement of teaching and learning within the PYP and MYP approach;
- Developing the instructional competencies essential to a standards-based curriculum;
- Creating a shared vision of a collegial learning community;
- Unity building for faculty;
- The methods of teaching and learning in an integrated curriculum;
- Recognizing different learning styles and planning lessons that incorporate them;
- Competencies, standards, and skills in the curriculum;
- Assessment: How to design and use assessment methods to determine if a skill has been learned, a standard has been met, and/or a competency has been mastered;
- Classroom management techniques for a productive classroom;
- The art of establishing productive relationships with parents.

In addition to professional development, the in-service training prior to the beginning of school will include an introduction to the rules, procedures, and policies of the Charter School and the applicable district, state, and federal rules and regulations that school-site personnel will need to know. The Principal will review the Faculty Handbook with the faculty and will discuss such issues as attendance procedures, classroom management, fire drill procedures, procedures for reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect, and "safety nets" for students with needs preventing success in school.

Schedule

Professional development will exist in the school throughout the year in formal and informal structures. During the two weeks before the first classes meet, half-day workshops will be scheduled to prepare teachers for the upcoming year while providing time for their individual needs in preparing their classrooms.

During the school year, professional development sessions will be conducted during scheduled professional development days. The sessions will offer follow-up on topics covered during the opening meetings, respond to needs for additional or new training, and cover special interests that emerge during the year.

At the end of the school year, sessions will be held to consider the previous year in order to determine the needs for and structure of professional development in the upcoming school year.

Imagine Schools Non Profit's faculty and staff will continually assess professional development needs and seek avenues to engage in the training and development required. Imagine Schools Non Profit. holds annual and regional conferences and workshops where some faculty and staff attend for further professional development. Participation in School of Excellence Teams also offer exceptional professional development opportunities.

L. Facility

I. Overview

Imagine Schools Non Profit in conjunction with Imagine International Academy of Smyrna LLC assumes the responsibility for finding a facility and is actively researching a specific location within IAS's primary attendance zone. Imagine Schools Non Profit will either lease or purchase a facility, which may in either case need to be renovated. ISNP prefers to own the facility to ensure that there is a permanent site for the school. ISNP expects to find space suitable for this purpose at market levels, perhaps lower, which it may then renovate to conform to its use and the applicable codes. If an existing building is not found, Imagine Schools Non Profit may build a new facility. Such purchases, leases, and the debt service on subsequent renovations are budgeted conservatively at roughly 15% of the gross per pupil revenues, a percentage that falls well within the norms for charter schools in Georgia and around the country. ISNP understands that the Cobb County Board of Education will not include start-up charter schools in its building program or provide charter schools with a facility, land for a facility, or funding for a facility.

The final determination of a school site will be based upon acceptance and approval of this charter petition. At such time, ISNP will be able to complete the necessary financial commitments to secure a facility and the necessary improvements and permits can be completed to obtain the Certificate of Occupancy.

No later than **the opening date of the school**, IAS will submit for review and approval the conceptual site and building plans for any school construction or renovation projects to be undertaken prior to the opening of school. It is recognized that failure to submit this information by **the opening date of the school** will result in the delay of the school's opening until the following school year. The CCSD staff will by appointment be able to inspect the facility prior to school opening and throughout the term of the charter.

If the facility undergoes construction or renovation prior to occupancy or during the term of the charter, ISNP will contract directly with, and pay for the services of, appropriate design professionals, i.e., architects registered in the State of Georgia and experienced in school design, and engineers registered in the State of Georgia and experienced in their respective disciplines, to:

- prepare schematic designs and complete construction documents meeting all applicable codes and the requirements of all applicable code-enforcing agencies having jurisdiction over the project;
- obtain full permits for land disturbance, erosion and sediment control, traffic control measures, civil, structural, architectural, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, mechanical and fire protection, etc., as required by the scope of work necessary to obtain from the appropriate jurisdiction a valid Certificate of Occupancy for the intended educational use;
- provide full "contract administration services," i.e., oversight of the construction project from conceptual design through issuance of the final Certificate of Occupancy

All construction and renovation projects undertaken prior to the opening of the school or during the term of the charter will be carried out by experienced and appropriately licensed and insured construction professionals who will perform all work in accordance with the construction specifications, drawings and other documents, as directed by the design professional.

The Charter School will obtain the Certificate of Occupancy, demonstrating compliance with all building code standards, regulations, and accessibility requirements; fire marshal's approval, and state environmental and safety approvals in no later than **the first day of school**. The certification shall include, but not be limited to, a valid Certificate of Occupancy for the intended educational use, endorsed by the local authority having jurisdiction in the political subdivision where the proposed facility is located. Failure to submit the required certification prior to **the first day of school** will result in the delay of the school's opening until the following school year. Additionally, the School System staff will be able to inspect the facility prior to school opening and throughout the term of the charter.

The estimated timeline for obtaining such facilities and providing this documentation is as follows:

- August, 2006: Facility identified and due diligence begins
- September, 2006: Facility purchased or leasing arrangement established
- **July 30, 2007**: Documentation complete and occupancy begins

Copies of deeds, leases, construction contracts, drawings and other documents relating to the facility will be provided to the CCSD within 5 business days of final execution.

II. Compliance with Codes

The facilities for IAS will meet all building codes, safety standards and other regulations applicable to public charter schools in Georgia. **The** petitioner will (a) provide certification from the appropriate government entities that the facility satisfies all requirements for fire, safety, and accessibility for the disabled; and (b) provide documentation of ownership or lease of the facility **no later than the first day of student attendance.**

III. Financing Plans for Facilities

The governing board for IAS LLC will work with Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc. to obtain their financing and complete the facility. The successful granting of the charter is key to this process.

M. School Governance

IAS will be subject to the supervision of the CCSD Board of Education in accordance with the Charter Schools Act of 1998, as amended and the Constitution of the State of Georgia. The Charter School has elected to utilize a governing board of managers other than the local school council as provided for in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-85, or another similar board, which shall be subjected to the provisions of O.C.G.A § 50-14-1, et seq. (Open and Public Meetings) and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70, et seq. (Inspection of Public Records). The Charter School will be organized and operated as an LLC non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Georgia. Meetings of the Charter School's Governing Board of Managers will be open to the media and public and will comply with the Georgia Open Records Law and the Open Meetings Law and related regulations unless confidentiality is required by law.

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna LLC is a Georgia-based nonprofit organization that is legally authorized to conduct education for Imagine International Academy of Smyrna. Within the organization, Imagine International Academy of Smyrna LLC's Board of Managers (The Governing Board) will be ultimately responsible for monitoring and reporting the financial and educational success of the school. The Governing Board for Imagine International Academy of Smyrna LLC will delegate all day-to-day operational and administrative responsibilities to the Principal, who like all the employees at the school, will be employees of Imagine Schools specifically hired to work at IAS.

The school's teaching and administrative staff will report to the Principal, who, in turn, reports at the scheduled board meetings of the Board of Managers. All paperwork and documentation required by charter school law to be delivered to the CCSD Board of Education will be written or

approved by the Board of Managers. IAS administrators will be strongly encouraged to develop and maintain the best possible working relationships with colleagues in other Cobb Public Schools. In keeping with the philosophy of ISNP and the petitioners, the principal will connect with other affiliates of ISNP for resources, experience, advice, operational guidance and oversight. The primary coordinator for such connections will be the Regional Director who carries the primary responsibility for ensuring that all Imagine Schools in his/her region uphold the six guiding principals of ISNP – shared values of justice , integrity and fun; academic excellence, positive character development, parent choice, economic sustainability and new school growth. It is important to understand that seeking advice, exchanging views and innovations, as well as serving as a sounding board for other school managers in the Imagine School Network is a vital part of the management philosophy of ISNP. Naturally as part of the Cobb County school district, the principal will already be in regular contact with other principals in the district. Principals of Imagine Schools report directly to their Regional Director with regards to matters connected to the core principals of ISNP – a significant portion of the Principal's evaluation will be the extent to which he or she embraces that philosophy as evident in the results of the school.

The organizational chart is below

Founding Committee

The IAS Founding Committee is comprised of individuals with a strong commitment to creating a rigorous, community oriented and financially sustainable school serving grades K-8. Committee members include Cobb Smyrna residents, and all share a passion for education reform and transformation in the community. The Founding Committee's primary role is to communicate the vision of the school to community members; provide input on educational, financial, and community support planning; and help select the Governing Board Members. See Appendix D for names of the Founding Committee members.

Forming a Governing Board

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna's Founding Committee will work carefully to select a Governing Board of Managers of Imagine International Academy of Smyrna, LLC. A Governing Board development committee will enlist the most qualified individuals, and make sure those individuals understand the extent of their responsibilities and gravity of the mission. Imagine International Academy of Smyrna and Imagine Schools Non Profit affirm that neither entity will discriminate against any candidate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, national origin, age or disability in its recruitment, selection, training, utilization, termination or other employment-related activities.

Some members of the Founding Committee will be selected for Governing Board membership. Over time additional qualified individuals from the local community will be recruited for Board membership. Each new Board Member will undergo an orientation to clarify the roles of each board member and establish board standards.

This structure provides Imagine International Academy of Smyrna the best opportunity to fulfill our goal of providing a high-quality education to the children of the area. The makeup and

structure of IAS's Governing Board will reflect the interests of all community interests, including parents and other stakeholders. We also believe that the school's affiliation with Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc enables us to run IAS in a way that is economically sustainable, giving us the chance to guarantee a long-term impact in the community. Thus through its affiliate relationship with Imagine Schools Non Profit Inc. the Governing Board Managers of Imagine International Academy of Smyrna LLC shall have the responsibility of governing the charter school as defined by the state laws of Georgia for non-profits and charter schools.

We propose that the Founding Committee select a Governing Board of Managers comprised of two members appointed by Imagine Schools Non-Profit and three members from the community (such as parents or other involved citizens of the community). As such the Governing Board will combine Imagine Schools Non-Profit's expertise in running schools with local knowledge and care from the community. The Principals may attend as ex-officio members. All Founding Board Members, with the support of Imagine Schools Non Profit are the applicants in this petition.

Governing Board community representatives will serve staggered three year terms to further insure that the continuity of the vision of the petition is maintained as outlined in the operating agreement. The Governing Board will serve as the governing body of IAS. Procedures for instituting and replacing Governing Board members are set forth in the Articles of Incorporation of the organization and by resolutions adopted by the organization. The Governing Board members will elect a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. Each member of the Governing Board will be fingerprinted. The Governing Board of Managers will not receive compensation from IAS for their services. No member of the Governing Board of the charter school shall sell, lease, or receive payment for providing textbooks, supplies, services, equipment, facilities, or land to a charter school or other public school in this District.

The Governing Board will focus on policy issues and entrust the day-to-day management of the school to the principal who will in turn be accountable to the Governing Board for the performance of the school and the teachers.

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Maintaining the mission and vision of Imagine International Academy of Smyrna
- Management of the business, property, and affairs of the LLC
- Approval of the Principal to administer and operate the Charter School
- Setting overall curricular policy (including veto control over all elements of the curriculum). Other curricular matters will be the responsibility of the Principal, teachers and other staff members who may enlist assistance from ISNP
- Measuring accountability goals and objectives
- Establishment of an overall policy for the Charter School;
- Approval of the annual budget of anticipated income and expenditures, and the causing of the preparation of the annual financial audit report
- Filing of an annual report to the School Board, to be made available to all parents of all students of the Charter School
- Review of the annual School Climate Survey and assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of the Charter School Improvement Plan

- Interaction with the School Council (see below) to address the concerns of teachers, parents, students, and community members with respect to Charter School affairs
- Communicate issues, concerns and suggestions to Imagine Schools regional and local school staff
- Maintenance of written records of attendance and minutes of its meetings
- Nominate community replacements when member terms expire
- Reporting to chartering authority

A School Advisory Council will be established with subcommittees for each division. The School Advisory Council will consist of parents, Principal, teachers and community members. The School Council shall be a link between the school, the community, and the Governing Board of Managers. The School Advisory Council shall serve to make recommendations and/or provide key information and materials to the Governing Board of Managers. The School Advisory Council will not have authority to dictate policies of the school nor issue directives. It is designed to give parents a voice in the operations of the school. Its function is to both provide advice to the school leadership and surface concerns from parents, and communicate with and mobilize the larger school community. It may include representation of parents at each grade level. They will meet to discuss topics such as the volunteer needs of the school, advice on issues regarding the educational program (e.g., curriculum, extended day, use of technology), or the school atmosphere and culture. It will also provide leadership on fundraising for the school but this will not be its primary function. In addition, the council may also coordinate "town forum" meetings twice a year to get parent input and serve need of parents for information or discussion.

It is the intention of the Governing Board to provide an effective avenue of communication directly between parents and the Governing Board in order to maintain adequate information exchange. The Governing Board of Managers will ensure in-service training for School Advisory Council members in the areas of duties, responsibilities, and the Georgia Open Records Law and the Open Meetings Law and related regulations (O.C.G.A § 50-14-1, et seq. and O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70, et seq.

Except for the appointment of the school Principal, the approval of the school budget, the selection and financing of the school facility, and the removal of a Manager, all of which shall require the consent of two-thirds of the Governing Board, and except as otherwise provided in the operating agreement of the LLC, the action of the Governing Board shall be by majority vote of all the Managers then in office.

Relationship with Imagine Schools Non-Profit

IAS LLC is affiliated with Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc., of Arlington, VA, a national not-for-profit that operates public charter schools. Imagine Schools Non Profit helps parents educate their children by operating schools that strive for academic achievement, positive character development, and economic sustainability. Its home office is in Arlington, Virginia.

Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc.'s role is that of an advisor, provider of resources, and monitor of implementation of Imagine Schools Non-Profit, Inc.'s shared values of integrity, justice and fun and other five operating principles of academic excellence, positive character development, parent choice, economic sustainability and new school development. Imagine Schools Non-

Profit, Inc. was founded by Dennis and Eileen Bakke to create learning communities of achievement and hope. (See Appendix E for the IS Annual Report)

Administration

The Governing Board with advice from the Imagine Schools Non Profit and the Founding Committee will select the school's founding Principal. The Principal will be the chief executive of the school as well as the instructional leader and will be overseen by Imagine Schools Non-profit's Regional Director. Teachers and staff members will be responsible to the Principal on all matters and in order to create the desired "community of learners," must model quality teaching in all circumstances. The teachers and other staff members will be the primary interface with parents. However, the Principal, Assistant Principal and the Chairman of the Governing Board will have responsibility to assist with special issues that go beyond teachers or staff members.

Governance of the school will be dictated by the Articles of Incorporation of the Governing Board of Managers.

The rules and policies for operation of IAS will be set forth in the school's Code of Conduct and Faculty Handbook. The Code of Conduct will be developed in the Spring by the Principal, in cooperation with the Governing Board. The Faculty Handbook will be developed and may be based on a model used in other Imagine schools.

The educators at IAS will work collegially to develop a school culture that promotes leadership at all levels. The Principal will encourage and enlist teachers in the school leadership process to create a more dynamic, effective, and democratic school environment. The school structure to be implemented at IAS will promote leadership and professional growth opportunities as an integral part of the vision and mission of the school. The principles which guide Imagine Schools Non Profit as set forth in "Joy at Work", the annual report and other documents will be fundamental to the practice in the school. An integral part of this will be site based management which encourages the participation of the whole school team and the advice process whereby decision makers can check with their peer group and others both regionally and nationally before taking action. Thus the Principal will have at his/her disposal the expertise of the LLC Governing board, and the ISNP Regional Director for Georgia and other ISNP administrators both in Georgia and nationally.

The Governing Board of Managers (LLC) is responsible for ensuring the Charter is implemented as submitted in this application. They will provide oversight of the Principal's management of IAS. A teacher representative will be invited to serve as an ex officio member of the Governing Board of Managers as well.

The charter school will comply with the constitutional rights of student including, but not limited to, due process, prohibition against unreasonable searches and seizures, and First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and religion. The charter school will meet state and federal requirements for student immunizations, food inspections, hazardous chemical, and other health and safety issues by regularly insuring that the school is in compliance by conducting monthly (at a minimum) appropriate inspections in these areas.

A School Climate Survey and a Shared Values survey will be performed annually and will allow parents, teachers and older students to provide input about the school and its management. The survey results will serve as a guide for improving school services.

School Management Contracts

IAS LLC will not enter into a contract with a school management firm as the school will be operated by the Governing Board of Managers. As part of Imagine Schools Non-Profit, IAS LLC will allocate 12% of its annual revenues to cover the costs of services, capacity building, and oversight provided by Imagine Schools regional and corporate staff (for a list of regional and corporate responsibilities, please see Appendix D). This arrangement is comparable to any school system or association in which a percentage of revenues is set aside to cover indirect costs and infrastructure. The Imagine Schools Non-Profit with local LLCs ensures that all Imagine schools are receiving sufficient support at the local, regional, and corporate level.

N. Special Needs Students

The goal of special education at the Charter School is consistent with the goal of regular education: to support students in developing the knowledge and skills they require in order to live meaningful, self-fulfilling lives with as much independence as possible in their communities. IAS will support the education of students with special learning needs within the regular classroom setting as the first choice of placement. Only when the regular classroom placement does not meet the needs of the students will alternative settings on a part-time or full-time basis be considered. IAS will ensure that students with disabilities will be provided state and federally mandated services. IAS recognizes that the school is obligated to provide a full continuum of services to disabled students to the same extent as other schools in the CCSD and will require its teachers and administrators to attend the CCSD's special education training programs to the same extent required of other schools in the CCSD as appropriate. If the school is unable to provide the full continuum of services to disabled students to the same extent as other schools in the CCSD they will refer them back to CCSD.

The Charter School will create public awareness of special education opportunities and will advise parents of the rights of children with disabilities. We will provide written procedures to assure that information regarding the rights of children with disabilities is made available in language and phraseology which will be understandable to parents, regardless of their ethnic, linguistic, or cultural background. IAS will implement the same identification, evaluation, placement, reporting, and due process procedures and use the same special education forms as other schools in the CCSD. IAS will submit the program for review by state and local officials to the same extent as is required of other schools in the CCSD.

The Charter School will document its annual efforts to create public awareness of special education and to inform parents of the rights of children with disabilities. When appropriate, we will initiate procedures to obtain a surrogate parent if there is no parent or guardian able to act as parent.

The Charter School will establish a Student Support Team (SST) and support team procedures. The SST will address student learning and/or behavioral issues that may place students at risk of failure. In the event that reasonable classroom interventions of sufficient duration have been attempted without success and that the issue's underlying cause is suspected to be a disability that cannot be resolved without special education services, the SST will refer students for evaluation according to the procedures outlined below.

The Charter School will identify those children who require special education and will provide an appropriate program for these children. Those students with existing Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) in place will be provided services consistent with their existing IEPs. Copies of all IEPs will be given to CCSD. If the IEP dictates that the Charter School cannot provide the appropriate services in the least restrictive environment an IEP meeting will be held to determine the appropriate placement of the student. A district representative will be invited to the IEP team meeting. If the IEP team determines that the appropriate placement for the student is the charter school, the school district will provide funding in accordance with state law. At the School District's discretion, it may provide direct services in lieu of funding when appropriate.

In the event that a parent or guardian of a student should issue a complaint with respect to any matter relating to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the student that results in a hearing and appeal, the Charter School's legal counsel will represent the Charter School during the proceedings.

Provision of State and Federally Mandated Services

Identification

The Charter School will disseminate information to its staff for identifying students eligible for special education, including guidelines for emotional disturbances, mental retardation, learning disabilities, and speech/language impairment. Identification will be completed for each kindergarten student and new student enrolling without appropriate records of screening, evaluation, and progress in school.

Evaluation

A. Initial Evaluation: After informed written parental consent has been obtained, an initial evaluation will be conducted by a multidisciplinary team composed of those personnel required by law. This initial assessment will serve to determine whether the student meets the criteria for disability in accordance with 20 USC Sec. 1400, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and its amendments.

B. Reevaluation: The Charter School will act in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 Sec. 614 (a)(2) and, after written parental consent has been obtained, will perform a reevaluation if conditions warrant a reevaluation or if the child's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation, but at least once every three (3) years.

Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)

The written individualized educational plan for each child will include a statement of the child's present levels of educational performance; annual goals; measurable short-term instructional objectives; the specific special education and related services to be provided to the child; a description of the extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular education programs and the extent to which the child will be able to participate with non-disabled children in nonacademic and extracurricular activities; the projected dates for initiation and the anticipated duration of services; objective criteria, evaluation procedures, and schedules for determining whether instructional objectives are being achieved on at least an annual basis. . Copies of all IEPs will be provided to CCSD.

Procedural Safeguards Notice

The Charter School will provide a copy of the procedural safeguards to the parents of a child with a disability upon initial referral for evaluation, each notification of an IEP meeting, reevaluation of the child, and receipt of a request for due process. The procedural safeguards notice will include a full explanation of all of the procedural safeguards available (e.g. prior written notice; parental consent; access to educational records; opportunity to present complaints to initiate due process hearings; and child's placement while due process hearings are pending).

Least Restrictive Environment

The Charter School will ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who are non-disabled, and that special classes or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment will occur only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. If the IEP dictates that the Charter School cannot provide the appropriate services in the least restrictive environment, the Charter School SST will work in conjunction with the District to determine the appropriate placement of the student. It is the intention of the charter school to work with CCSD to determine the very best placement of students with special needs. The charter school understands that it may not be the appropriate school for all students and will work with CCSD to find the right school. The charter school will indemnify CCSD in the event the District is held liable for the charter school's failure to provide eligible disabled students with the special education, related services, program accommodations, and due process to which they are entitled under state and federal law.

Certified Special Education Teachers

The Charter School will employ teachers who meet all licensure and/or certification requirements that apply to the area in which the individuals are providing special education.

Related Services Personnel

All personnel who provide related services (e.g., services provided by a speech-language pathologist; psycho-social counseling provided by a psychologist, social worker, or mental health professional) to students in the Charter School will meet all required licensure and/or certification requirements pertaining to their area of related service.

Screening Forms

The Charter School will develop screening forms to insure that all federal requirements are met regarding identification, referral, due process, evaluation, individualized educational plans, and procedural safeguards. The forms will incorporate guidelines for assisting staff and parents to understand the nature of disabilities.

Treatment of Student Records

The Charter School will adhere to all confidentiality requirements and parent and student rights provisions specified in federal laws. Upon request, we will provide parents with a list of the types and locations of education records collected, maintained, or used in our school. A parent who believes that information in the education records collected, maintained, or used is inaccurate or misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of the child may request the information be amended. The Charter School will decide whether to amend the information in accordance with the request within a reasonable period of time of receipt of the request. If the Charter School refuses to amend the records, the parent will be notified in writing of the refusal and advised of the right to a hearing.

The Charter School will designate an official custodian of student records who will be responsible for ensuring the confidentiality requirements. Employees who will utilize the records will receive instruction regarding the procedures for handling and managing confidential material, and the custodian will maintain a listing of employees with access to the records and a logbook of each individual who has had access to the records. Student records will be available for audit at any time during the year to ensure that funds are properly allocated. The Charter School will require a request in writing at least one week in advance of the audit to ensure that the custodian and the Principal are available to assist with the files. We will also require auditors to provide proper identification and sign the logbook.

Referral

The Student Support Team may refer students for evaluation. If the identification process for kindergarten and transfer students indicates a possible disability, the regular classroom teacher or other personnel or parent will submit the name of the child to the administrator for referral for evaluation or other appropriate services. The referral of a child for an evaluation for possible placement in a special education program will be made under the direction of the administrator after documenting that the parent has received written information pertaining to rights regarding comprehensive evaluation, and following receipt of the written consent of the parent. The written request for the parent's permission to evaluate will be in the primary language of the home.

Release of Information

The Charter School will not release information from education records to participating agencies without parental consent unless authorized to do so by federal law. Parental consent will be obtained before personally identifiable information is disclosed to anyone other than officials of participating agencies collecting or using this information in accordance with state and federal laws.

Methodology

Modification of classroom instruction will provide students with additional support to understand the materials and skills that are being presented. Various techniques will be utilized to allow students to make the connections and enhance success when being exposed to new skills. These will include the following:

- Visual aids;
- Hands-on learning;
- Role-playing;
- Multi-sensory techniques;
- Read-alouds;
- Guided questions;
- Step-by-step questions;
- Key words.

Language Development

The Charter School will comply with all federal and state requirements concerning bilingual services. Teachers will be trained in state-of-the-art instructional methods for individualizing instruction and dealing with the needs of students with limited English proficiency. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Spanish for Spanish Speakers (Spanish S), Spanish as a Second Language (Spanish SL), and Curriculum Content in the Home Language (CCHL) will be offered at the Charter School as appropriate. An overview of the educational program for limited English proficient students is provided in the Instructional Program section of this application.

The methodologies to be applied for ESOL instruction at the Charter School will include the following:

- Language experience approaches;
- Cooperative teaching and learning;
- Multi-sensory activities;
- Language drills;
- Dramatizations;
- Taped stories for listening centers;
- Visual aids;
- Brainstorming activities;
- Simplification of text;

- Follow-up guided reading activities;
- Predictable stories;
- Questioning techniques;
- Highlighting texts.

O. Student Conduct

I. Safety, Order, and Student Discipline

To prepare children to meet the needs of the 21st century, the following learning environment characteristics will be developed and nurtured:

- There will be a warm, caring climate built on trust and communication;
- The school will be a safe place, drug and violence free;
- Students and staff will be treated with courtesy and respect;
- The school will foster a sense of community in each classroom;
- Students' creativity and curiosity will be encouraged;
- Students will have time to summarize and reflect;
- Students will be involved in thinking skills that examine, relate and evaluate all aspects of a situation or problem;
- Students and staff will work in an environment that promotes high academic standards;
- Teachers and staff will have a genuine concern for students;
- Teachers will be trained in conflict resolution/peer mediation techniques;
- Selected students will be identified and trained to serve as mediators;
- Students will be encouraged to teach their peers.

It is the intention of the charter school to use unique or innovative behavior management methods suggested through the PYP and MYP approach which may include a “Peace Table”, peer mentoring and debate techniques and in particular any successful strategies employed by teachers in other international schools.

The Charter School will adopt all current Cobb County Board of Education School District’s discipline policies, including those dealing with due process, and implement them to their fullest capacity, reserving the right to go beyond their scope as the need arises. The Charter School will adopt and abide by all current student policies (“J Policies”) set forth by the Georgia Board of Education.

The Charter School will follow the Cobb County School District’s procedures for recording student attendance in the Cobb County School District’s mainframe computer system. When truancy issues arise, we the Charter School will follow the current Cobb County Board of Education School District’s discipline policies and take the appropriate steps to correct unacceptable behavior. Class rosters will be posted on the classroom doors and a complete set of rosters will be forwarded to the District. When a student is subject to long-term suspension

(more than ten (10) school days) or expulsion, the Charter School will follow the procedures set forth in the current Cobb County Board of Education School District's discipline policies and will notify the Cobb County School District of its intention to proceed with the disciplinary action. If a hearing is requested, the Charter School will request assistance from the Cobb County School District in establishing a hearing panel; if this is not possible, the Charter School will contract with retired administrative judges from the community to serve as third-party mediators on the hearing panel. None of the panel members will be employees of the Charter School or will have a student enrolled at the Charter School.

Behavioral as well as academic conditions will be required for student participation in extracurricular activities. Special needs students will be disciplined according to their IEPs and modifications will be made in school activities if applicable. Newsletters, interim reports, report cards, and e-mail will be used to assist teachers and administrators in maintaining communication with parents and families. In addition, student behavior will be monitored through day-to-day interaction with peers, teachers, and administrators.

The safety and security of students and staff will be ensured through the proper implementation of the Cobb County Board of Education discipline policies and through effective staff training in the processes and procedures for maintaining a safe and orderly school environment. The Charter School will have its entire staff available to monitor the classrooms, hallways, and school grounds before, during, and after school.

The Charter School will be in full compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations.

The Charter School will be in full compliance with all fire safety codes and regulations and the building will have proper accessibility to emergency exits. Evacuation drills will be conducted for students and school staff on a regular basis. The building will be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of Rehabilitative Act of 1973, and other applicable federal, state, and local laws.

The Charter School will comply with the provisions of Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1903.2 (a)(1) and will place all the requisite Occupational Safety and Health Administration posters and related information in conspicuous areas, such as the Faculty Lounge and the main office of the Charter School.

II. Counseling Services

An integral part of the Charter School will be the school guidance counselor. School must be a safe place for the students. They will attend school not only to learn but also to find a warm place where they can feel safe and happy, a place that contributes to their ability to learn. The goal in each classroom will be to have a caring community of learners.

The counseling program at the Charter School will provide social, emotional, physical, and moral support to all of its students. The counselor will have contact with all students, whether in

groups or during individual counseling. Different programs will be provided for students from kindergarten to fifth grade depending on their needs. Small groups will cover topics such as:

- Feelings
- Anger
- Grief
- Behavior problems in class
- Absenteeism
- Children of divorced families
- Children of alcoholic or drug abusing parents

The counselor will facilitate parent involvement and assist parents in locating and utilizing resources in the community. Parents and staff must work together to ensure every child's potential.

Programs and activities such as "Red Ribbon Week - Say No To Drugs" will be supported with activities organized by the counselor.

P. Transportation

The Charter School does not plan to provide general transportation. Parents will be encouraged to carpool or have their child walk or ride (via bicycle) to the school. We intend to locate the school accessibly and market the school in the surrounding areas of the school site. We are therefore confident that most students will either live close to or have convenient access to the school and will not necessarily need a school bus to attend. If demand exists in future years, transportation will be considered by the Governing Board of the charter school.

With consent from our parents we will help formulate a carpool program prior to school starting.

IA Smyrna will meet the needs of students whose IEPs include provisions for transportation. School operating funds have been allocated to meet this anticipated need.

Although transportation is not planned at this point in our timeline, we plan to be sensitive to the needs of our parents. During our marketing campaign we plan to ascertain the needs of our parents as it relates to transporting children (through demographic studies of proximity to the campus and expressed desires from parents). Although we have not set a threshold, should we determine that a majority of our interested population is traveling distances not conducive to walking or parents dropping off, the Governing Board will then look at the feasibility of instituting a program.

Q. Waiver of State and Local Provisions

The Imagine International Academy of Smyrna seeks to be exempted from all local and State Board of Education rules, policies, regulations and procedures and or from provisions of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated except where it has been noted within the Petition or that are not allowed by law as established by the “blanket waiver” amendment re-established July 2005 for charter schools.

The Imagine International Academy of Smyrna recognizes that State law does not allow the following provisions to be waived:

- (a) the Charter Schools Act (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2061 through §20-2-2071);
- (b) the accountability assessment program (O.C.G.A. § 20-14-30 through §20-14-41);
- (c) the Open Meetings Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 through §50-14-6) and the Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 through § 50-18-79);
- (d) federal, state, and local statutes, rules, regulations, and court orders relating to civil rights; special education; insurance; the protection of the physical health and safety of students, employees, and visitors; conflicting interest transactions; and the prevention of unlawful conduct;
- (e) laws relating to unlawful conduct in or near a public school;
- (f) laws prohibiting the charging of tuition or fees to attend a public school, except as may be authorized by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-133;
- (g) the reporting requirements of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320; and
- (h) the brief period of quiet reflection provision of O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1050.

The request for a blanket waiver including facilities ensures that IAS will have the maximum flexibility for the administration to make local decisions to meet the needs of the students as well as to use a facility optimum to the requirements of the charter school. The autonomy afforded to the school via this blanket waiver will help the school increase student achievement.

The benefits of the requested waivers will be measured based on the outcomes of the assessment program and the successes of the school improvement plan. Details of the school’s assessment program can be found in section B. Accountability and Evaluation.

These waivers do not undermine the state rules and regulations for public schools because the school does not intend to create class sizes in excess of state mandates. Also, the charter school intends to hire and retain the most appropriate highly qualified teachers and staff for its students and programs. The Charter School also understands that the No Child Left Behind Act requires certified teachers and will comply with all applicable laws. The teachers hired will be within the mandatory guidelines of section 3.2 of SACS document Accreditation Standards for Special Purpose schools.

The petitioners for the International Academy of Smyrna believe that the proposed charter school program cited in the petition could not be achieved through application of the CCSD educational program as there are no PYP or MYP schools available, nor are there ones which incorporate the principles that the school will espouse of ISNP’s shared values of justice, integrity and fun, academic excellence, positive character development, parent satisfaction, economic sustainability and school. While there are CCSD schools which offer languages other than English, the language is not offered to every student in the school on a daily basis. Furthermore,

the balanced calendar with more time on task will assist in the successful delivery of the curriculum and attaining the academic gains for students.

R. Annual Report

IAS will provide an annual report to parents/guardians of students attending the charter school, the local board, and the State Board of Education. The charter school shall make copies of the annual report available to the community. The annual report will indicate the progress made in the previous year in meeting the performance-based goals identified in this charter and include all state-mandated assessment scores and state-mandated accountability indicators. In addition a copy of the ISNP annual report will be available for all stakeholders.

S. Start-Up Charter Schools

I. Parental and Community Involvement

a. Community Involvement in Development of Petition

Imagine International Academy of Smyrna (IAS) had its beginnings in Imagine International Academy of Mableton (IAM) another proposed charter school, when a concerned parent contacted Imagine Schools about the possibility of opening a charter school in Mableton. On November 17th, 2005 an informational meeting was given at the Kennesaw Charter School. Several parents of children from the school were there and spoke about the benefits they have found in being a part of the charter school in their community. Approximately 30 parents from our communities were represented at that first meeting.

Word began to spread, primarily by way of the internet and word of mouth. Three weeks later, the first community meeting was held in a neighborhood clubhouse. Over 150 families were represented at that meeting from both the Smyrna and Mableton communities.

On February 23rd 2006, the next community meeting was held and there was an overwhelming response. Over 400 families were present at the meeting. It became very apparent that more than one school was needed to support the interest of the communities. Imagine Schools announced that they would fund two schools, the International Academy of Mableton and the International Academy of Smyrna.

There is considerable community support for Imagine International Academy of Smyrna. Currently more than 450 families have registered with IAS. These families have approximately 344 children interested in beginning the 2007 school year at IAS and an additional 267 to follow in subsequent school years as they become eligible for kindergarten. That is a total of 611 children. These families are seeking an alternative to the current public schools in the city of Smyrna.

The City of Smyrna known as the “Jonquil City” has developed a reputation for smart growth and revitalization and was recently awarded the Urban Land Institute’s Award for Excellence.

The City of Smyrna, for more than a decade, has been in the business of reinventing itself and setting the standard for community and the International Academy of Smyrna will continue in that tradition by setting the standard in education. Smyrna has also long been an integral part of the growth and development of Cobb County and is recognized as one of the most desirable places to live in the entire Metropolitan Atlanta area. It offers a “small town” atmosphere which is desirable for families seeking to raise a family. As a result the city has experienced tremendous growth over the past decade and has attracted a diverse population. Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will be well positioned to meet the demands of that growth and the diversity.

It is our greatest desire to create a community school where the community members are an active part in the development and decision making of IAS as much as possible. The community was invited to be an active part of the development of this charter from the onset. Approximately 30 parents attended an information session in November 2005 where it was decided that we would partner with Imagine Schools.

Additional community meetings were held on December 8, 2005 with over 150 families represented, then again on February 23, 2006 with over 400 families represented. Several committees were formed at the December meeting to distribute necessary tasks in creating the school including the Planning, PR/Marketing, Curriculum, Technology, Land Acquisition, Data Collection, Fund Raising, and Grant Writing with approximately 100 members serving from the community.

A Yahoo group (group name: IASmyrna) was started to communicate information and allow for discussion and comments from interested families. This site features:

- * About 227 families as members
- * Approximately 105 messages posted by the community
- * Several chats and polls were conducted to gauge community opinions to decide on issues such as balanced calendar, transportation, and uniforms.

The Yahoo group was recently closed and members of the group were directed to a website (www.iasmyrna.org) created by the technology committee where interested families may obtain information regarding developments in the school. Some of the site features are a FAQ section, information about the founding board members, a section where families can express their interest by registering on the site, links to charter school information and forum where families may post questions.

Members of the PR/Public Speaking committee spoke to small groups and continue to do so, such as mom’s clubs and the Mableton Improvement Coalition. PR/Marketing members also posted informational flyers throughout the community at local businesses inviting families to get involved in the development of this charter. Community members have also contacted committee members by personal email and phone throughout the development of the school.

We are confident that the petition presented represents the needs and desires of a majority of the individuals in our Smyrna community. We are excited about the opportunity to create such a collaborative effort. Note worthy is that we are drawing families from the following groups

- Private school attendees
- Home school attendees
- New people moving into Smyrna in the hopes of having an international charter school
- Parents choosing to remain in Smyrna rather than move to another area in the hopes of having an international charter school
- Parents of other Cobb County schools

b. Further Recruitment for IAS

Recruitment and further publicity will begin as soon as the charter application is approved by the school board. IAS will assume full responsibility for the recruitment of its students. In order to ensure that all of Smyrna's various population groups are informed about the Charter School, IAS will continue to broaden its community outreach. As is fitting with public schools and more specifically with the international well-rounded focus of this particular Charter School, IAS is committed to open recruitment regardless of race, disability, ethnicity, or gender. This recruitment will be conducted in both English and Spanish, as well as other languages as needed. It is our belief that diversity will add to our strength. IAS will continue to host community informational meetings at various times and locations throughout Smyrna. Application forms will be made available both at these informational sessions as well as in various community locations. We hope to further accomplish broad reaching publicity by utilizing local newspapers, radio and television as well as various community newsletters. In addition, we will continue to canvass neighborhoods, attend community functions, post informational flyers, and update our Charter School website. IAS will make every effort to both populate and celebrate a diverse school family.

II. Continued involvement of parents

Vital to our students' success will be the involvement of their parents. Research has shown that students attending schools with strong parental involvement perform better and achieve more. As such, parents and/or legal guardians will be expected to contribute at least 30 hours (two adult caregiver household) or 15 hours (single adult caregiver household) per household, per school year to the students and school's success through both "in" and "out" of school volunteer opportunities. IAS will ensure that these opportunities are varied and available during the day, evening and weekends to accommodate the busy schedules of our families.

Additionally, IAS plans to establish a PTA or PTO to encourage parent participation and advocacy. The organized structure of the PTA or PTO will provide program ideas, resources, support and volunteer leadership training. IAS, through the PTA/PTO, will establish consistent, communication channels between parents, teachers and administrators using a variety of proven techniques and methods. All parents and guardians will be encouraged to participate in the PTA or PTO to make sure that the needs of the students and their families always come first.

Finally, student achievement will also rely on the joint efforts and teamwork of the entire Smyrna community. Neighborhood businesses, local residents and others interested in our

students' success will be welcomed partners at IAS. IAS will maintain close relationships with local business and civic groups to serve as Partners in Education. IAS will encourage community volunteers including local high school students and senior citizens to support our students in their quest for excellence. It is our belief that diversity adds to our strength, so significant efforts will be made to ensure the school is an inclusive environment for those who want to participate. Our goal is to design programs that create a sense of cooperation, trust and shared experiences that will transcend life at school and help to improve the entire community in which we live.

III A non profit organization

The Imagine International Academy of Smyrna will be organized and operated as a separate nonprofit corporation formed under the laws of Georgia. This will be operated by the Imagine International Academy of Smyrna LLC. Please see Appendix B for a copy of the Articles of Incorporation of the nonprofit corporation. The name of the primary contact for the petitioner is:

Mrs. Cheryl Wilson
1507 Wedmore Court
Smyrna, GA 30080
770-437-9460 (h)
678-556-9898 (o)
770-757-1415 (c)

The operation and support of the charter school will be the sole function of the Imagine International Academy of Smyrna LLC, and the corporation will not raise funds for any other purpose.

All the petitioners for this charter and each member of the nonprofit corporation's board agree to be fingerprinted and to have a criminal record check prior to the Cobb County Board of Education's approval of the petition.

IAS acknowledges that the school is responsible for providing its own legal services and cannot use the CCSD's attorney unless agreed upon by the Board and the charter school.

Appendix A. Budget

Appendix B. Articles of Incorporation

Appendix C. Founding Committee Members

Appendix D. Imagine Schools Scope of Services

Appendix E. Imagine Schools' Annual Report

Appendix F. International Baccalaureate PYP and MYP

Appendix G. Letters of Support