THE SCHOOL BOARD OF SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA
Office of Charter Schools
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CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE
FINAL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
September, 2008

Imagine School at Palmer Ranch

Attached are the final findings from the district Charter Review Committee (CRC) related to the application of Imagine Charter School at Palmer Ranch. School Board action is scheduled for September 16, 2008.

The following timeline has been used in the receipt and review of this application:

June 11, 2008	**Orientation session for all new charter applicants**
August 1, 2008	**Application received from Imagine School at Palmer Ranch**
August 8, 2008	**Applicant presentation to CRC (taped)**
August 15, 2008	**Initial CRC review response shared with applicant**
August 19, 2008	**School Board workshop with applicant**
August 28, 2008	**Revisions to application received by the district**
September 2, 2008	**CRC review of revisions shared with applicant**
September 3, 2008	**Final revisions to the application received by the district**
September 4, 2008	**All materials reviewed by the CRC**

The CRC determined at the initial review of the application that 10 of 19 standards were completely met, 8 were partially met and one standard was not applicable (the applicant states that they do not use an Educational Service Provider). Upon review of the revisions and supplemental materials submitted by the applicant, the CRC has determined that all of the partially met standards have now been fully met. The applicant has met all deadlines related to the application process.

The attached documents are those reviewed by the committee. The applicant's first revisions are included in bold in the evaluation instrument. Additional responses to questions are included as well and follow the evaluation.

IMAGINE SCHOOL AT PALMER RANCH
Florida Charter School Application Evaluation Instrument
Final Review with Additional Information

Each section presents criteria for a response that meets the standard, and these criteria should guide the overall rating for the section. The Strengths and Weaknesses boxes provide space to identify data and other evidence that supports the rating. The rationale for each rating is important, especially if some of the data or evidence does not fit neatly into the criteria provided.

The following definitions should guide the ratings:

Meets the Standard: The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and demonstrates capacity to open and operate a quality charter school. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation and presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate.

Partially Meets the Standard: The response addresses most of the criteria, but the responses lack meaningful detail and require important additional information.

Does Not Meet the Standard: The response lacks meaningful detail; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant's understanding of the issue in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice

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OVERALL ASSESSMENT – COMPLETE THIS SECTION LAST

General comments:
The Charter Review Committee believes that this application is comprehensive and clearly-written. The Committee feels that the applicant at this time has fully met 10 of the 19 standards, partially met 8 and has one standard that is not applicable. Most of the standards rated "partially met" need minor clarifications or small items addressed in order to be complete. Significant feedback has been given by the reviewers to guide the applicant in making any revisions. The school has secured a site in the community and has a budget that appears to contain most of the necessary components. Organizational issues relating to the parent organization have been discussed in a previous application by this school but the status of the 501 (c) 3 application needs to be clarified.

It is recommended that the applicant provide more detail or clarification in several sections of the document.

APPLICANTS GENERAL RESPONSE: Thank you for the opportunity to clarify our application. In an effort to make our responses more accessible to the Charter Review

Committee, we have provided each response after the Comments and Additional Questions Section after each standard and numbered our responses to correspond with the relevant numbered question or comment. Please feel free to contact us if you believe additional clarification would be helpful.

The IRS provided us no explanation for the extended review of our 501.3(c) status. We have responded to all of the questions and requests for information from the IRS and there are no pending issues with our application. The IRS informed us earlier this year that the reviewer assigned to our case was expected to complete her report before the end of the summer, but we have not received any confirmation that this has occurred. We have requested the opportunity for a face-to-face meeting in an effort to expedite the process but have been informed that face-to-face meetings are only granted in cases where the application is likely to be rejected. We have interpreted this as a positive sign and an indication that our application is being viewed favorably despite the duration of the process. We expect a favorable determination before the end of this year. For more details, see our response to this question under the Governance standard.

Final Comments from Charter Review Committee;
Upon review of additional information, the Charter Review Committee finds that all standards are met.

I. Educational Plan
The education plan should define what students will achieve, how they will achieve it, and how the school will evaluate performance. It should provide a clear picture of what a student who attends the school will experience in terms of educational climate, structure, assessment and outcomes.

1. Mission, Guiding Principles and Purpose
The Mission, Guiding Principles and Purpose section should indicate what the school intends to do, for whom and to what degree.

Statutory References:
s. 1002.33(2)(a); s. 1002.33(2)(b); s. 1002.33(2)(c); s. 1002.33(6)(a)(1); s. 1002.33(7)(a)(1)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- A compelling mission statement that defines the purpose and values of the school.
- A set of priorities that are meaningful, manageable and measurable, and focused on improving student outcomes.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X ☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Mission statement addresses the most important attributes of any school.	Page 2; paragraph 1
Both the mission statement and priorities are articulated with clarity, utilizing consistent and meaningful language.	Pages 2-12
Concerns and Additional Questions	**Reference**
1. Could you be more specific about how the academic program will address all areas (social studies and science) of the curriculum standards, not just reading, writing and math. 2. Could you be more specific on the character ed program? Who will coordinate it? How will it fit in the schedule? Which program will be used?	Page 2

Applicant Response:

1. **The Project CHILD delivery model provides that science and social studies are integrated within the reading, writing and mathematics blocks (p21-23). In many cases, teachers of mathematics also teach science, and writing teachers also teach social studies.**

2. **At the heart of Imagine Schools' school culture is a strong concern for character. In keeping with Imagine's commitment to giving autonomy to each of its local schools, the character education curriculum is selected at the school site and the selected curriculum will be infused with activities that promote values and ethics, moral reflection and the discussion of issue and answers. As one of Imagine Schools' six measures of excellence, character education is an approach to learning and living that engages core values into one's everyday life, and part of the foundation of developing responsible citizens who demonstrate good character.**

   The program and implementation at the School is determined by the School's Character Education Task Force. The task force identifies and selects a program for the school, informs the staff and coordinates the implementation. Programs adopted and used by existing Imagine Schools include Character Counts, the Chicago Model and Character Education Partnership. With the teacher a caregiver and mentor, parent and community involvement, and the classroom as a democratic community, the emphasis on character education is an integral part of each school day. Character education opportunities extend to conflict resolution and to service learning. Below are just some of the integrated opportunities that model conflict resolution and character development for teachers and students in real world settings on a daily basis.

   Reading Language Arts: Students read, analyze, discuss, role play and illustrate literature relating to multicultural understanding, getting along with others, self-esteem, respect, cooperation and responsibility.

Mathematics: Students design Venn diagrams dealing with solution sets for problems, conflicts and solutions: design bar and line graphs to exhibit what solution work in resolving classroom conflicts.

Science: Students participate in a nature walks to examine and analyze other life forms and conflicts of nature; develop charts, bulletin board sand projects about the cooperation and communication necessary in the chain of life.

Social Studies; Students practices and role play alternatives to conflict; learn about leaders and peacemakers; compare how local, state, national and international communities deal with conflict and relate this to class and school.

2. Target Population and Student Body

The Target Population and Student Body section should describe the anticipated target population of the school and explain how the school will be organized by grade structure, class size and total student enrollment over the term of the school's charter.

Statutory Reference(s):

s. 1002.33(10)(e); s. 1002.33(6)(b)(2); s. 1002.33(7)(a)(1); s. 1003.03

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- An understanding of the students the charter school intends to serve.
- A manageable plan tied to enrollment projections that will allow the school to meet its constitutional class size obligations.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Comprehensive budget plan for targets.	Appendices

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. What method and/or data were implemented/reviewed to determine the future enrollment projections? The spread between enrollment numbers for each year appears wide.	Page 13

Applicant Response:

1. **In developing our enrollment projections, we have relied upon local demographic data, recent experience in Sarasota County and surrounding communities and our general experience in similar schools around the state and around the country. As a general rule, we expect to achieve 40-50% of our maximum enrollment in our first year, 65-75% in our second year, and 95-100% in our third year.**

3. Educational Program Design
The Educational Program Design section should describe the educational foundation of the school and the teaching and learning strategies that will be employed.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(2)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present an educational program design that:

- Is clear and coherent;
- Is based on effective, research-based educational practices, teaching methods and high standards for student learning;
- Aligns with the school's mission and responds to the needs of the school's target population; and
- Presents evidence that the proposed approach will lead to improved student performance for the school's target population.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final X☐	Preliminary X☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Vertical teams provide structure and continuity for students. School-based Reading Leadership Team will support reading as a focused effort at the school.	Page 14
There appears to be valid and substantial research that supports and promotes the correlation between high student achievement and Project CHILD.	Page 18 and 20
The school's adopted reading materials are employed, thus ensuring the requirements of a high-quality and research-based reading program.	Page 20

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. Please provide the research base on Project Child effectiveness. The website listed gives mostly anectodals. 2. Please list the textbooks that will be used K-6. 3. Please provide the curriculum maps that teachers will use to ensure integration of science and social studies into weekly lesson planning. 4. How will your interdisciplinary teaming model for middle grades actually work in terms of state requirements for teacher certification by subject area, and the state requirements for passing grades in course codes specifically tied to content areas (lang arts, math, social studies and science) Could we see a sample schedule? 5. Research cited on page 20 refers to grade 3 retention rates in	Pages 14-17

non CHILD classrooms as 14% Could we see this study?	
6. SRI is an assessment not a curriculum.	Page 3
7. As you support effective interventions, consider that the neediest students are best served by the most highly-trained personnel. 8. Even though Project Child offers a structure for the reading block, it needs to be used in conjunction with a comprehensive core reading program that will address the Sunshine State Standards as well as the five components of reading. Consider the programs from the newly recommended reading list. 9. It is important that you included the principles of differentiated instruction.	Page 17 Page 20, 48 Page 48
10. Is strategic ability grouping by class for reading a sound instructional practice? 11. Services needed for certain ESE students, and perhaps ELL students, (part of the school's target population) are not clearly defined. For example, what if a student enrolls with an IEP dictating a separate class placement? What processes are in place to ensure this student's needs will be met? Or language acquisition instruction for ELL students?	Page 21 Page 22

Applicant Response:

1. In 1988 Dr. Sally Butzin began to develop the CHILD model at Florida State University under the acronym Computers Helping Instruction and Learning Development. The model was field-tested for two years at two Florida sites, and then expanded to nine diverse sites throughout Florida.

In 1992, CHILD was validated as an effective program by the National Diffusion Network (NDN) and received subsequent NDN developer/demonstrator funds for three more years. During those years, CHILD was disseminated through the Daniel Memorial Institute in Jacksonville, Florida.

Numerous internal and independent evaluations have shown CHILD to be an effective teaching model that gets results. CHILD has been validated by the Florida Department of Education and the Georgia Department of Education. A partial bibliography of evaluations includes:

1991 - Evaluating Restructured Elementary Classes: Project CHILD Summative Evaluation, Cornelia Orr
1992 – An Evaluation of Project CHILD, Sally Butzin and F.J. King
1993 – Evaluation Report, Project CHILD 1992-1993, Ora M. Kromhout
1994 – Windy Hill Elementary School, Jill Leinhauser

1995 – Project CHILD Middle School Follow-up Evaluation, Barbara Gill
1999 – Suwannee Elementary East, Jeff Robinson
2000 – Georgia Innovation Program Evaluation, Michael McKenna
2000 – Florida TaxWatch's Comparative Evaluation of Project CHILD, Phase I
2001 – Using Instructional Technology in Transformed Learning Environments: An
      Evaluation of Project CHILD, Sarah M. Butzin
2001 - Florida TaxWatch Comparative Evaluation of Project CHILD, Phase II
2002 - Florida TaxWatch Comparative Evaluation of Project CHILD, Phase III
2005 - Florida TaxWatch Final Report Phase IV
2006 - Third Grade Retention Report

Three research reports were sent to Deb Metheny to share with staff: An Evaluation of Project CHILD's Impact on Academic Achievement in 19 Schools (Dec.2007), a Retention Prevention Strategy (Oct. 2006), and a Research Summary. All reports can be found on the Institute for School Innovation's website: **www.ifsi.org** .

2. Textbooks to be used at the School will be determined by the Principal with input and advice from the West Florida Region Imagine Schools' team. The textbooks ordered for the August 2008 schools in West Florida were from Harcourt Educational (merge of Harcourt Brace and Houghton Mifflin). All textbooks are on the Florida State approved list. Page 123 in the application references the proposed timetable of February-July 2009 for the determination of instructional materials.

3. The three teachers from each cluster meet weekly to plan and determine integration activities for the next week. The Imagine Schools' Curriculum Guides are aligned with the Florida Sunshine State Standards to support planning. Pretest data and ongoing assessment are utilized to drive instruction. A weekly cluster meeting form is completed by the cluster teachers each week that provides the curriculum map for the following week.

The delivery of social studies and science through CHILD is supported through the Guides provided through the Institute for School Innovation. This strategy ensures the integration of science and social studies. Another is for clusters to plan a unit (science or social studies) together: read about it in reading, write about it in writing and utilize graphing, data collection, measurement, mapping, in math.

4. Teachers in the middle grades will utilize the same planning format as in #3 above. These teachers will be certified to meet the state requirements of integrated curriculum, or content area certification. Pretest data and ongoing assessment will help drive the instructional planning. Students will receive the required content area instruction with intentional connections made across the curriculum.

A sample schedule for middle grades will include a homeroom with time for advisement, and either a 6 period day or a 90 minute A day, B day block schedule. Both formats will provide the required instructional minutes.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30 – 8:40	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom
8:40 – 9:35	1.Science	1.Science	1.Science	1.Science	1.Science
9:38 – 10:33	2.LangArts	2.LangArts	2.LangArts	2.LangArts	2.LangArts
10:36 – 11:31	3.Elective	3.Elective	3.Elective	3.Elective	3.Elective
11:33 – 12:30	4.Reading	4.Reading	4.Reading	4.Reading	4.Reading
12:33 – 1:03	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:05 – 2:00	5.Math	5.Math	5.Math	5.Math	5.Math
2:03 – 3:00	6.SocStudies	6.SocStudies	6.SocStudies	6.SocStudies	6.SocStudies

Block Schedule

	A Day	B Day
8:30 – 8:40	Homeroom	Homeroom
8:40 – 10:30	1. Science	4.Reading
10:30 – 1:03 (Lunch)	2.Language Arts	5.Math
1:05 – 3:00	3.Elective- PE, Fine Arts, Foreign Language	6.Social Studies

5. The Retention Prevention Strategy Research paper was sent to Deb Metheny along with two other reports. All reports can be found on the **www.ifsi.org** website under Research. See # 1 above.

6. SRI was incorrectly listed as a curriculum in the application. It is an assessment tool.

7. The more highly trained teacher is generally the more effective instructor. In the formative years in a start up charter school, the reading specialist may be assigned a classroom, and be available to assist the neediest children.

8. A core reading program will be purchased for the school and utilized in whole group instruction as well as station activities. As stated on page 45, the program purchased will be on the Florida State Adopted Instructional Materials List. The five components of reading instruction will be the focus of instruction. The CHILD Planning Guide and Activities Guide are designed around the five components of reading. Activities for stations are divided in the Guide into sections that match these components and the index in the back of the Guide correlates each station activity to a SSS benchmark.

9. **Within the CHILD classroom, instruction is differentiated in many different ways: content, process and assessment to name a few. Station Task Cards are written to address the multiple levels of learners within each grade level, by having a Challenge activity on each card. Teachers are taught in CHILD training how to look at the benchmarks across the 3 grade levels they will be teaching and to address one common skill on a Task Card, providing practice at three levels. Differentiation occurs by the set up of stations that address the multiple ways that students learn: hands-on, paper/pencil and use of technology. A CHILD Assessment Guide helps teachers differentiate assessment by providing rubrics, checklists, and other ideas to review student progress.**

10. **The term ability grouping within the application is intended to be based on ever changing abilities of children. There will be constant changing in groups based on individual needs of children. Grouping will be by skill, development, supplemental need, challenge need, etc. Students will work with others in the classroom on different levels. CHILD encourages teachers to group students in different ways throughout the instructional period. Teacher Station offers a chance for the students to have small group instruction on common skills that they might be struggling with. Other stations offer students of various abilities to work together. Dale Edgar's Cone of Learning theory states that content retention is greatest when students are "teaching others," thus encouraging the idea of mixed ability grouping within the instructional period as well.**

11. **ESE students at the School will be serviced through the inclusionary model. Should the inclusionary model not provide the supports needed by the student, the School will work with the District to determine next steps and proper placement. Many of the accommodations dictated on an IEP or for ELL students are built into the CHILD model. A few are: paired learning, small group instruction, differentiated activities, extended time, different modality activities, and alternative assessments. In addition, the teacher and ESE teacher plan together in light of IEP goals and state standards. Language acquisition for ELL students will occur through the inclusionary model with strategies and supports outlined in the district ESOL plan.**

4. Curriculum Plan
The Curriculum Plan section should explain not only *what* the school will teach but also *how* and *why*.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(6)(a)(2); s. 1002.33(6)(a)(4); s. 1002.33(7)(a)(2); s.1002.33(7)(a)(4)
A response that meets the standard will present a curriculum plan that:

- Provides a clear and coherent framework for teaching and learning;
- Is research-based;
- Is consistent with the school's mission, educational philosophy and instructional approach;
- Will enable students to attain Sunshine State Standards and receive a year's worth of learning for each year enrolled; and
- Will be appropriate for all students at all levels.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final X☐	Preliminary X☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Emphasis on basic skills educational design.	
Supports a Character Education and Financial Literacy curriculum/program. The sample organizational chart of the curriculum is helpful and informative. Standards are aligned to the Sunshine State Standards for each grade level. Compliance with the mandatory 150 minutes per week of physical education. (K-5) Giving the SAT 10 as a pre and post assessment.	Page 26
elementary program	

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. How will electives such as foreign language, career technical education, band/orchestra be handled in middle grades? What will be offered? Could we see a sample schedule of a student week? 2. How will middle school students who are failing a core class engage in state-mandated course recovery activities? 3. (C/SPA), an advisory committee to the superintendent makes recommendations regarding arts education based on national standards. While not mandatory, C/SPA recommends 45 minutes of art each week and 45 minutes of music each week for elementary students taught by certified, qualified arts teachers in sequential courses. They do not show time in the schedule, a staffing model or budget that would support these recommendations. Arts integrated into the curriculum is a positive step, but it is not a substitute for sequential classes taught by	

teachers certified for that subject area. Is this an area that the school could work on in the future?	
4. Could you be more specific about how the academic program will address all areas (social studies and science) of the curriculum standards, not just reading, writing and math. 5. Could you be more specific on the character ed program? Who will coordinate it? How will it fit in the schedule? Which program will be used?	Page 2
6. Are the reading stations a venue for application of the learning in the Teacher Station (p.50)? 7. Providing all grades 6-8 students with a reading course will support strength in reading. 8. Will you be using the District's Comprehensive K-12 Reading Plan? If so, you can access it at http://www.justreadflorida.com or the template for opting out and writing your own can be found at https://app1.fldoe.org/Reading_Plans/Examples/rbrpg_memo.pdf Please contact the District reading specialist if assistance is needed.	Page 51 Page 55
9. Curriculum mapping is a very in-depth and timely process. What does the timeline look like for Curriculum Task Force to generate the curriculum maps and pacing guides for each grade level? Will teachers be an integral part of this process? 10. Will teachers receive intense professional development regarding best instructional practices (Kagan, Marzano, CRISS, etc)? 11. What criteria will be utilized to determine if a student is placed within the Preparatory class? 12. It would be helpful to mention the physical education requirements for the middle school grades within the Overview of Health and Physical Education Programs. 13. Is there a music and/or arts curriculum? It appears that there will be no music or art teacher. This is a concern, as music and arts are vital components of a balanced education. 14. How are the standards taught for the Media and Information Literacy Programs? 15. What is included within the Conflict Resolution curriculum? Will there be a specific program utilized as a teaching resource? 16. Does flexible grouping mean that students will be grouped according to ability? If so, would the following be an accurate statement: differentiation is done via ability grouping? 17. Are the activities at the CHILD Reading Stations differentiated?	
middle school: CTE components, A++ legislature requiring successfully completion of core courses and a career planning with ePEP submitted	

Applicant Response:

1. Throughout Florida and around the country we are finding that the parents of our elementary students consistently want small middle schools (grades 6-8) as a continuation of instruction at our K-5 sites. In our application, the middle grades are comprised of 66 sixth grade students in three classrooms year one, 164 sixth and seventh grade students in year two, and at capacity 330 students (grades 6-8) in 15 classrooms. Obviously these smaller middle schools desired by our parents are not able to offer the "bells and whistles" of the much larger middle schools typically found in the school districts we serve. The school has budgeted for specialty teachers to deliver instruction in the elective areas of physical education, music, art and foreign language. In the formative years, we anticipate that some of these positions will be part time. By year three, the school will be at capacity and the specialty positions will support a full elective program. The career technical elective requirement is proposed to be met through the grade 8 social studies course- United States History and Career Planning. See sample school schedules in Section 4, question 3.

2. Supplemental Academic Instruction (SAI) revenue is utilized to provide a remediation program for students that have failed core classes.

3. The arts integration into the curriculum is in addition to the fine arts elementary and middle school curriculum offered by budgeted specialty teachers. These specialty teachers are budgeted on the input pages within Appendix F in the table labeled staffing model.

4. The Project CHILD delivery model provides that science and social studies are integrated within the reading, writing and mathematics blocks (p. 21-23). In many cases, teachers of mathematics also teach science, and writing teachers also teach social studies. The Imagine Schools' Standards-Based Curriculum for each grade level and content area is aligned with the Sunshine State Standards.

5. Please see Section 1, question #2 for a detailed explanation of the character education focus at the School.

6. No, Stations focus on the concepts taught during whole group instruction. Teachers are trained to organize station activities to reflect learning in the five components of reading. The teacher station provides for small group instruction based on individualized student skill need.

7. All students will be enrolled in a reading course at the middle grade level.

8. The School intends to utilize the District Comprehensive Reading Plan, and will be contacting the Reading Department for more specific information.

9. Teachers are an integral part of the ongoing development of curriculum maps. Teachers will develop focus calendars based off pre test data and benchmark results

in September. This year-at-a-glance will provide the roadmap for more in-depth curriculum mapping during each **9** week term. The maps will be continually updated and modified to ensure these living documents meet the needs of the students.

10. Yes, Teachers will receive training in research, best practices, strategies and implementation of instruction, classroom management, etc.   The **10** days of preplanning, as well as ongoing in-service through the year will be the venue for this training. In addition, the school will have a professional development coordinator identified to assist staff in obtaining their in-service points for recertification.

11. Within Imagine Schools. all students enrolled in grades **6-8** classes are identified as Preparatory

12. **We will provide** additional information on physical education requirements for the middle school grades prior to the September 3rd deadline.

13. The Imagine Schools Standards-Based Curriculum includes Art and Music. Please see Section 4, question #3 for its implementation at the School.

14. The media specialist will be the primary instructor of the media and technology literacy standards. In the formative years the classroom teacher will incorporate these standards into the core content areas. Additionally, the CHILD stations support students learning and implementing technology on a regular basis within the classroom.

15. Please see Section 1, #2 for a detailed description of character education and conflict resolution. We will provide additional information prior to the September 3rd deadline.

16. Yes, differentiation is partially accomplished with grouping by skill ability. The term ability grouping within the application is intended to be based on ever changing abilities of children. There will be constant changing in groups based on individual needs of children. Grouping will be by skill, development, supplemental need, challenge need, etc. Students consistently work with others in the classroom on different levels.   CHILD encourages teachers to group students in different ways throughout the instructional period.   Teacher Station offers a chance for the students to have small group instruction on common skills that they might be struggling with. Other stations offer students of various abilities to work together. Dale Edgar's Cone of Learning theory states that content retention is greatest when students are "teaching others," thus encouraging the idea of mixed ability grouping within the instructional period as well.

17. Yes, the stations are differentiated. During training, CHILD teachers are taught how to differentiate stations by 1) reviewing benchmarks over multiple grade levels to identify common skills, 2) writing Task Cards that reflect different ways to

practice skills (hands-on, paper/pencil and use of technology), and 3) providing a variety of assessments (i.e. rubrics, checklists, authentic, portfolios, etc.). The CHILD Activities and Planning Guides provide a wealth of resources, activities and information on differentiating learning in the Reading classroom.

5. Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation
The Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation section should define what students attending the school should know and be able to do and reflect how the academic progress of individual students, cohorts over time, and the school as a whole will be measured.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(6)(a)(3); s.1002.33(7)(a)(3); s.1002.33(7)(a)(4); s.1002.33(7)(a)(5)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- Measurable educational goals and objectives that set high standards for student performance.

- Promotion and graduation standards that are based on high expectations and provide clear criteria for promotion from one level to the next, and for graduation.
- Evidence that a range of valid and reliable assessments will be used to measure student performance.
- Assessment activities that are sufficiently frequent and a detailed plan to determine whether students are making adequate progress.
- Evidence that data will inform decisions about adjustments to the educational program. –
- Plans for sharing student performance information that will keep students and parents well informed of academic progress.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final X☐	Preliminary X☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Comprehensive approach to testing and student progress monitoring.	
The assessment plan is well balanced and includes a wide variety of standardized and classroom assessments. The section (bottom p. 62) proposes a sound plan to monitor student progress.	.
One measure of educational goals is based upon the FCAT-SSS. Following the District's Student Progression Plan. The specific information regarding the development of the SIP.	Page 58

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. Has enough funding been budgeted to cover the expense of all the testing planned?	
2. Would like some clarification on the following statement: "At least a 10% annual increase in the amount of students in the lowest performing group demonstrating learning gains on the reading/math portion of the FCAT-SSS."	Page 58
3. Will the PMP only be created for, "Students who are identified as needing additional assistance?"	Page 62
4. Will assessment only be, "expressed as feedback?"	Page 65

5. The organization and presentation of the material impedes the reader's ability to evaluate the degree to which the criteria are met. Many sections/text provide duplicated information (example: info on page 5 and page 52, page 59 & page 57). Some paragraphs are actually duplicated **verbatim** on different pages. "Text-book" style narratives about assessment in general are unnecessary and detract from the presentation – for example: the explanation of what the FCAT is on page 60, the description of school grades, types of item formats on page 67, and so on. The information on pages 59 – 67 is repetitive and fragmented and difficult to follow and could easily be consolidated onto 2 pages.	
6. Measurable educational goals and objectives that set high standards for student performance. OK – but need clarification- 　　Goal 1- Given that the state discontinued the FCAT NRT program (SAT-10) and the district has discontinued the grade 1 SAT-10, the applicant may wish to re-consider using a pre-post NRT method to evaluate the program's success. The RAE staff is available to discuss other measurement methods and/or to provide assistance in setting measurable goals. 7. Goals 2 & 3 – please clarify the statement: "when we reach 80% of these indicators" is this 80% of …..or 80% proficiency? 8. The last section on page 58 – I'm not sure what is being proposed here???? 9. Promotion and graduation standards that are based on high expectations and provide clear criteria for promotion from one level to the next, and for graduation. OK 10. Evidence that a range of valid and reliable assessments will be used to measure student performance. OK 11. Assessment activities that are sufficiently frequent and a detailed plan to determine whether students are making adequate progress. OK 12. Evidence that data will inform decisions about adjustments to the educational program. OK – one suggestion regarding the section on page 62 about using data to evaluate and inform instruction. The 3 paragraphs (bottom of page 63) do not belong in the section about using data to evaluate and inform instruction; rather, this information relates to evaluating the school's goals 13. Plans for sharing student performance information that will keep students and parents well informed of academic progress. **Not addressed.** The information under this	

section discusses accountability /school grade criteria and types of assessments???? What is the process by which parents will receive information, how often, and in what format?	

Applicant Response:

1. **Assessment costs have averaged $10 per student for the purchase of materials, and the scanning/reporting of SAT 10 by Imagine Schools for the fall administration of grades 1-8 and the spring administration of kindergarten through grade 2. The State's decision to eliminate the spring administration of the NRT for grades 3-8 will increase this per pupil cost. The increased amount will be determined and the budget modified to reflect this increase.**

2. **The intent of the goal is to expect at least 10% of the lowest performing quartile in one year to demonstrate learning gains. The wording could be revised for the charter to ensure clarity for the reader.**

3. **Yes, the proposed application identifies Progress Monitoring Plans for students in need of remediation.**

4. **Assessment provides data (feedback) that is analyzed to determine next steps in the instructional process. The assessment results (data) are utilized to drive the instructional planning in order to maximize student academic progress.**

5. **We agree and are aware that the charter application requests information that may need to be repeated to satisfy different questions. It has been our experience that some districts expect the applicant to demonstrate an understanding of the state assessment program by including basic FCAT information within the narrative. We understand that this is not fully necessary for all district staff.**

6. **Individual learning gains is the foundation of Imagine Schools' belief in identifying academic progress. The School will continue to administer the baseline SAT 10 within the first few weeks of school, and administer the SAT 10 in the spring (different form) to calculate learning gains. Any assistance from the Assessment Department of Sarasota School District is much appreciated and respected.**

7. **We will provide clarification and additional information from our testing coordinator prior to the September 3rd deadline.**

8. **We will provide clarification from our testing coordinator prior to the September 3rd deadline.**

12. **The paragraphs will be reviewed and moved to the appropriate area of the application.**

13. **Parents will receive information about their child's progress in a number of ways. Baseline testing provided within the first few weeks of school will provide individual student reports in hard copy for the parents. In addition, many different kinds of reports can be printed to assist the cluster teachers in planning. Benchmark testing done 3 times during the year will provide information for teachers to share with the parents during a parent conference.**

    In addition, each CHILD Planning Guide includes a composite assessment system for the subject level. The assessment materials include guidelines for assessing skills and content in a variety of ways, along with rubrics and recordkeeping forms. Each student's assessment profile includes: Content Knowledge, Skills, Strategies, Progress and Effort. Students complete Passports on a daily basis and do a self-assessment on understanding. Parent teacher conferences include these Passports to monitor progress.

    Mid-term and 9 week report cards will be distributed to parents. Year end testing also provides a hard copy of their child's academic testing results. All results are utilized to analyze and determine next steps in the instructional process.

6. Exceptional Students

The Exceptional Students section should demonstrate an understanding of the requirements of the school to serve all students and provide a concrete plan for meeting the broad spectrum of educational needs and providing all students with a quality education.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(16)(a)(3)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- Demonstrated understanding of state and federal requirements regarding the education of exceptional students.
- Demonstrated a commitment to serving the full range of needs of exceptional students.
- Sound plans for educating exceptional students that reflect the full range of programs and services required to provide all students with a high quality education.
- Demonstrated capacity to meet the school's obligations under state and federal law regarding the education of exceptional students.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final X☐	Preliminary X☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
The school seems to focus on the mastery of basic skills and the ability of the classroom model to individualize instruction for all learners. This will be very attractive to parents with ESE students.	
Requiring teachers and administrators to attend the District's special education training programs.	Page 68

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. The model's usage of classroom stations may not be particularly suited to SLD and EBD students who need more teacher-directed instruction. How will your staffing model of 1 ESE teacher going to be able to meet the needs of possibly 25-30 ESE students on several different teams?	
2. Can clarification be provided for the following statement: "Students working below grade level will be able to work on the appropriate levels of instruction the same way." (ESE students are referenced two lines prior to this sentence.) Does this mean that a modified curriculum will be in place for below level and ESE students? Or will the students be working on the same curriculum, with appropriate accommodations?	Page 57
3. Concern with how they are going to provide SDI when all students are placed in a general education classroom. How and by whom are students that need SDI going to be	

serviced if they have greater needs?	
4. Budget does not reflect/align to ESE projections.	

Applicant Response:

1. **Students enrolled at the School are anticipated to be successful within an inclusionary model. Their IEP will outline accommodations needed, with no modifications to the expected mastery of Sunshine State Standards. The CHILD model and the middle schools teaming model provides differentiated activities at each station (K-2, 3-5 and 6-8), and the structure provided by this delivery model has proven effective for most ESE students. The staffing model is based on Level 1 ESE needs for Guaranteed ESE Funding. In addition, the base case budget provides contingency for additional ESE staffing to meet the needs of the students.**

2. **ESE students will be provided accommodations and scaffolding as they work towards mastery of skills. Students will participate in all classroom activities in the same way as non ESE students (rotating through stations and working in small groups with the Teacher), but their tasks/activities will be tailored to ensure an instructional level and not a frustration level. The classrooms are designed to provide a range of materials for at least 3 instructional years. The students will be expected to meet the SSS, but their growth rate may differ.**

3. **The IEPs of our exceptional students will indicate that they can be successful in general education classrooms. Specially designed instruction (SDI) for children with disabilities is a requirement under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). SDI refers to the teaching methods and strategies to instruct students with learning disabilities and other types of learning disorders. Classroom teachers and parents work together to analyze student work and any other available data to determine the student's strengths and weaknesses and to develop appropriate specially designed instruction. Based on the inclusionary student's unique learning needs, strategies are developed. Teachers continue to measure students' progress and make changes in instruction as needed. If the student requires more service, a staffing would be scheduled to include District representation so that planning and potential placement will be determined.**

4. **Budget includes one ESE teacher with benefits. A separate line item under Other Direct Educational Services includes the cost for outsourcing speech/language, occupational therapy and physical therapy. The projections are based on trends for percentage of students identified at our Florida Imagine Schools. Contingency dollars provide for an increase in services as needed.**

7. English Language Learners

The English Language Learners section should demonstrate an understanding of the requirements of the school to serve English Language Learner students and provide a concrete plan for meeting the broad spectrum of educational needs and providing all students with a quality education.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(16)(a)(3)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- Demonstrated understanding of state and federal requirements regarding the education of English language learner students.
- Demonstrated a commitment to serving the full range of needs of English language learner students.
- Sound plans for educating English language learner students that reflect the full range of programs and services required to provide all students with a high quality education.
- Demonstrated capacity to meet the school's obligations under state and federal law regarding the education of English language learner students.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final X☐	Preliminary X☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Recognizing the need for ESOL endorsed teachers.	Page 75
Charter states that "that an initial identification procedure will be established in order to identify students that may need to receive additional strategies and techniques to improve their English proficiency." Students will be screened in accordance with the META Consent Decree. Charter states that "all classroom teachers will be either ESOL endorsed or working towards ESOL endorsement." ESOL curriculum used will be equal in scope, sequence and quality to the regular core curriculum offered to all students.	p75

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. How will the school provide parent communication to non-English speaking families? Does the budget provide this need to perhaps hire translators? Will pertinent forms be translated? If so, by whom?	
2. The charter states that it will establish an identification procedure according to the META Consent Decree as part of their ELL Plan although they do not establish what	

language assessment test they will use. The identification process entails other subsections which the charter ELL plan does not completely elaborate. The charter does not establish a plan for the remaining section of the Florida Consent Decree.The *Equal Access to Appropriate Programming* section, not only entails equal access to curriculum but also adherence to a District ELL plan which the charter does not mention. The section concerning *Personnel* identifies various subject areas that teachers must have as part of their endorsement, this charter mentions all but one of the required areas of study as required by the Florida Consent Decree. The sections on *Equal Access To Appropriate Categorical and Other Programs for LEP Students, Monitoring* and *Outcome Measures* need to be developed. The charter does not provide a complete and concrete plan that meets educational needs of the students it will be serving.	
3. It appears that not all of the Consent Decree components are represented within the ELL section.	

Applicant's Response:

1. **The Sarasota School District identified three primary languages in the County- English, Spanish and Ukraine. The existing Imagine School in North Port has accessed the assistance of residents who have volunteered to assist with translations. The church leader of the Ukrainian Church in the area has been especially helpful in this regard. The budget does not have this allocated as a line item at this time, but contingency dollars are reserved for unanticipated costs such as these. Some school forms will be translated by friends of the School, while other district forms may be appropriate for usage as is.**

2. **And 3. The School intends to the follow the Sarasota School District's ELL procedures. Additional language to explain the process is noted below:**

   ESOL Plan

   The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program at the Charter School will be designed to provide academic, social, cultural, and support services to students who are English Language Learners (ELL). The School will recognize the linguistic and cultural diversity of its students, and will encourage all students to preserve their native cultures while developing an awareness of U.S. culture.

   The primary goal of appropriate programming is to develop each student's English language proficiency and academic potential effectively. Programs should enhance self-esteem, promote cross-cultural awareness, and provide equal educational opportunities. Appropriate programming decisions will be based on on-going programmatic assessments.

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The School will follow the District Guidelines developed in response to implementation of the Consent Decree found in Section 1003.56, F.S. *English Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient Students* and Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 6A-6, *Programs for Limited English Proficient Students*.   District forms developed as part of the ELL Plan currently in effect will be utilized as required.

Section I: Identification

The Home Language Survey
The Home Language Survey (HLS) is administered at the School as a part of the enrollment process. Home language assistance is provided at registration where feasible. The HLS is not an integral part of the Student Registration form. Adults registering students will complete, with assistance in their language where feasible, the Home Language Survey containing the three questions required by Rule 6A-6.0902, found in the registration packet (unless the student's cumulative records contain a recently completed HLS from a previous school in the School District). If there is an affirmative response to any of the three questions on the HLS, the registrar will explain to the parents or guardians that an ESOL evaluation/assessment will take place. A HLS with any affirmative response will be referred to the School's ESOL contact person without delay. The programmatic assessment process begins at the time of registration with the guidance counselor or administrative designee and continues with the school-based ESOL Liaison.

Demographic Data
The school data entry person or administrative designee enters the student demographic information from the student's registration form and ELL Student Plan into the School District's data collection system (TERMS).

Guidelines for Registration & Placement
The School will establish registration procedures to ensure that foreign-born students are provided equal access to free and appropriate schooling. These procedures will include the identification of staff responsible for the registration of these students.

The School will not request or require documentation of the student's immigration status nor inquire about the immigration status of the student. The School will not require any evidence of United States citizenship for enrollment. Social security numbers of students and families are not required in order to complete the registration process.

Parents/guardians will be given a complete registration packet. Translated versions of registration forms, free and reduced lunch applications, and general school information will be made available in other languages where feasible. Where feasible, a bilingual staff member assists with translating or interpreting documents related to transportation and other pertinent school information.

Placement for foreign-born students will be "age-appropriate," and based upon the student's prior academic experience.

Section II: Assessment

Proficiency Assessment
The ESOL Liaison/Teacher is responsible for the English language assessment of potential ELLs .

Procedural Safeguards - Aural/Oral
These procedures and safeguards will be implemented to ensure that the Aural/Oral test is administered within 20 school days of registration. Students whose HLS has an affirmative response will be screened with an aural/oral language proficiency assessment within two weeks of school entry.

Assessment/Placement Procedures (K-3)
Any grade K-3 student who scores non-English speaking (NES) or limited English speaking (LES) on the Aural/Oral assessment instrument will be designated LY and receive ESOL services appropriate to their level of English comprehension.

Any grade K-3 student who scores fluent English speaking (FES) on the assessment will remain in the regular program. Classroom teachers will be advised by the ESOL liaison that they should request an ELL Committee meeting should any concerns arise.

Assessment/Placement Procedures (4-8)
Students in grades 4-8 who score non-English speaking (NES) or limited English speaking (LES) will be entered into the ESOL program.

Students in grades 4-8 who score fluent English proficient (FES) will remain in the regular program with administration of the reading and writing assessment taking place within twenty school days of the aural/oral test. . If follow-up is not done within the 20 school days, parents will be sent a "Delay in Testing" notification and complete the testing as soon as possible.

Instruments Used
The following instruments and scoring criteria will be used for assessing ELL students for receipt of ESOL services:
> **Listening & Speaking:**
> > *Idea Oral Language Proficiency Test, IPT* **– NES/LES**
> **Reading & Writing:**
> > *Idea: Reading and Writing, IRW* **- National Percentile 50**

ELL Committee Entry Decisions

A student may be classified as ELL and services may be provided in accordance with the District ELL Plan, or the ELL Committee may confirm his/her ELL status. The ELL Committee may determine a student to be ELL or not to be ELL according to consideration of at least two of the criteria listed in the Consent Decree in addition to the test results. Meeting minutes, including topics discussed and recommendations will be documented on the ELL Committee Form.

Academic Assessment

Once students are identified and assessed as ELL, the following process will be used to determine appropriate placement.

K-5

Responsible Person: ESOL liaison/Administrative Designee.

School personnel, usually the ESOL liaison, the guidance counselor, and/or other administrative designee, will document that they have conducted a programmatic assessment, which will be placed in each student's cumulative folder with other assessment data. Teachers will also conduct and document assessments of the data and may conduct further assessments of students to assist them in making appropriate instructional planning decisions. The following apply:

- Age Appropriate
- Documented Prior Educational Services
- ELL Committee
- Assessment - Diagnostic/placement test
- Parent/Guardian and Student Interview

6-8

Responsible Person: ESOL liaison/Administrative Designee.

School personnel, usually the ESOL liaison, the guidance counselor, and/or other administrative designee, will document that they have conducted a programmatic assessment , which will be placed in each student's cumulative folder with other assessment data. Teachers will also conduct and document assessments of the data and may conduct further assessments of students to assist them in making appropriate instructional planning decisions. The following apply:

- Age Appropriate
- Documented Prior Educational Services
- ELL Committee
- Assessment - Diagnostic/placement test
- Parent/Guardian and Student Interview

ELL Student Plan Development

The ESOL liaison, in conjunction with the ELL Committee where feasible, is responsible for developing the ELL Student Plan. The information is documented on

the **ELL Student Plan**, and the data entry person enters the ELL Student Plan information into the student database system.

Annual Update Procedures
The ELL Student Plan will be updated by the ESOL liaison every time there is any change made to the plan.

Parent Notification
Parent (guardians) will be notified of the placement of the ELL student in ESOL Program through a standard letter used by all schools.

Section III: Comprehensive Program Requirements and Student Instruction

Instructional Approach
These are the instructional approaches implemented to ensure comprehensible instruction:

- English for Speakers of Other Languages and/or Basic subject areas instruction delivered using ESOL strategies
- Inclusion with ESOL strategies

The model at our School will be mainstream/inclusion.

Progress Monitoring
The following progress monitoring tools will be used to ensure that all ELL students are mastering the Sunshine State Standards and benchmarks: Student Portfolios, FCAT Practice Tests, NRT.

Process & Timelines
Instruction provided to ELL students will be equal in amount, sequence, and scope to that provided to Non-ELL students. Basic ESOL time is proportional to the Language Arts time received by non-ELL students. All ELL students will be given equal access to appropriate programming and core academic subject s including intensive instruction in the English language and instruction in the basic subject areas. The schedule on the ELL Student Plan will reflect the minutes per week in each of the students' classes.

Strategies Documentation
Each teacher will develop daily lesson plans using ESOL strategies for all subjects taught. The plan will reflect the teaching of Sunshine State Standards for the appropriate language proficiency level of the student. ESOL strategies will be documented using the ESOL Strategies Checklist and so noted in the lesson plans. The principal or designee will check lesson plans regularly to ensure that comprehensive instruction is occurring.

Student Progression Standards
The standards and procedures for promotion, placement, retention, and reporting ELL student's progress will follow the District's Student Progression Plan.

Mandatory Retention Exemptions
ELL students who received instruction in an approved ESOL program for two years or less may be exempted from the mandatory retention in third grade. The Good Cause Policy is included within the District's Student Progression Plan.

ELL Committee & Retention
The ELL Committee and Child Study Team will complete a case review for students who are being considered for retention. The Principal, with input from the ELL Committee and/or Child Study Team, may waive the promotion requirements or may exempt ELL students from mandatory retention for "Good Cause" conditions defined by the school board in the District Student Progression Plan. Parents will be notified.

Statewide Assessment
All ELL students will participate in the statewide assessment programs. Only ELL students who have received ESOL services for less than one year may be considered for exemption from statewide assessments by a majority decision of an ELL Committee on an individual basis. If exempted, alternative assessment in accordance with State requirements will be conducted, documented and reported.

Accommodations
The test coordinator at each school is responsible for making sure that all accommodations for statewide assessment have been offered to ELL students. A letter will be sent home to parents explaining the accommodations available for their children. Documentation of test schedules and location for testing will be kept at the Charter School.

Section IV: Exit Criteria and Procedures

Criteria & Procedures For Exit
Students will be eligible for exit only after they have been determined to be fully English proficient.

Aural & Oral Proficiency
The Listening and Speaking Proficiency Assessment is the Idea Oral Language Proficiency Test, IPT.

Reading & Writing Proficiency
Students in grades 4-8 must score at or above the 50th percentile on the IPT reading test, FCAT, or other norm-referenced reading assessment. Students in grades K-12 must score at or above the 50th percentile on the IPT writing test. The ELL Committee will review the data and formally document any exit determination.

The Reading and Writing Proficiency Assessment is the Idea: Reading and Writing, IRW. The ESOL liaison and/or administrative designee will be the school-level person administering the reading/writing test.

Parental Notification
Upon meeting the exiting criteria, parent notification of their child's exit determination will be retained as part of the ELL Student Plan.

ELL Exit Data in ELL Student Plan
The ESOL Liaison at the School is responsible for notifying the parents of the test results and records the exiting data on the ELL Student Plan. Exiting data will be entered into the district data system (TERMS).

Section V: Monitoring Procedures

Responsible Parties
The ESOL Liaison/Teacher will be responsible for conducting the required two-year monitoring follow-up of former students once they have exited the ESOL Program.

Progress Documentation
The student's progress is documented in the student's ELL Student Plan. The information will then be entered into the ELL student database (TERMS). The following documentation will be used to monitor the student's progress:
- report cards
- test scores
- classroom performance
- teacher and/or parent input

Monitoring will take place as follows from the date a student exits the program:

- First Review- First full grading period after exit
- Second Review- End of first full semester after exit
- Third Review- End of the second full semester after exit
- Fourth Review- Two years from the exit date

Procedures For Progress
When the performance of former ELL students is satisfactory, the School will continue to monitor the student.

When the performance of former ELL students is unsatisfactory, the following procedures will be followed. The ELL Committee will convene whenever an exited student shows any consistent pattern of under-achievement as shown by report card grades, alternative assessments, and/or achievement test performance. Parents or teachers may also request an ELL Committee meeting. The committee will discuss viable solutions/options, including the necessity of re-entering the ESOL program

Reclassification/Re-entering ESOL
When former ELL students are reclassified as ELL and re-enter the ESOL program, the ELL Committee will be responsible for initiating a new ELL student plan, updating the student data and ensuring the appropriate placement. The ELL Committee makes the final decision regarding appropriate placement, and the results of the meeting will be documented and a copy given to parents.

The program delivery model and additional intervention strategies will be determined by the needs of the student.

Section VI: Parent/Guardian/ Student Notification & Rights

Assistance In Heritage Language
The School will provide assistance to parents/guardians of ELL students in their heritage language, (unless clearly not feasible), at time of registration, ELL Committee meetings, and Parent/Teacher conferences.

Parent Notification
The Charter School will assure that parental notification is provided as required for:

- **testing for eligibility of services**
- **temporary placement**
- **delay in testing**
- **test results**
- **program placement**
- **program Delivery Model Options**
- **Teacher Out-of-Field**
- **state and/or district testing**
- **accommodations for testing**
- **annual testing for language development**
- **growth in language proficiency (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing)**
- **exemptions from statewide assessments for students classified ELL for**
- **one year or less by date of test**
- **retention/remediation**
- **transition to regular classes**
- **extension of ESOL instruction**
- **exit from ESOL Program**
- **post-reclassification (LF) monitoring procedures**
- **reclassification of former ELL student**

Code of Conduct
The School will inform parents, guardians, and ELL students of the Code of Student Conduct and students' rights and responsibilities. The Code of Student Conduct may be made available in a language other than English, if translated and available through the School District.

Parent Advisory Council
The role of the council is to provide a voice for ELL parents, to discuss school issues and make recommendations to school and program officials. Parents are encouraged to become active participants on school committees, for example, PTA/PTO, and the School Advisory Council(SAC).

Section VII: Functions of the ELL Committee

Composition of ELL Committee
The composition of the ELL Committee is Administrator or Designee, ESOL Teacher and/or ESOL Liaison, Guidance Counselor, Parent or Parent Designee, and Other personnel, as appropriate.

Elements of Student ELL Plan
The elements of a Student ELL Plan are:
- **Student name**
- **Instruction by program, including programs other than ESOL provided**
- **Amount of instructional time/schedule**
- **Date of ELL identification**
- **Assessment data used to classify or reclassify as ELL**
- **Date of exit and assessment data used to exit student as English proficient**
- **Post monitoring data**

When & How Plan Is Updated
The ESOL Liaison updates the ELL Student Plan whenever any information in the existing plan is revised. Any changes to delivery of ESOL instruction, or related to the student's ELL condition that are intended to improve the student's language proficiency and academic achievement, will involve the participation of the ELL Committee and the parent(s).

Functions of ELL Committee
The functions of the ELL Committee are:
- **Concerns/decisions regarding initial placement of student in K-3 who scored FES, but progress in conventional class is viewed as inappropriate.**
- **Reclassification of former ELL students**
- **Placement decisions for students in grades 4-8 scoring FES on aural/oral and at or below 50th%tile on reading/writing assessment.**
- **Review of instructional program, progress (after one semester)**
- **Retention/promotion decisions**
- **Parental concerns**
- **Exempting students classified as ELL for one or fewer years from statewide assessment program**

- **Review of instructional program of LF students during 2 years post-reclassification period with consistent pattern of under-performance academically**
- **Consideration of exiting a student who scored FES on aural/oral assessment, but at or below the 50th %tile on reading and writing assessment**
- **Referring an LF student being considered for reclassification to appropriate compensatory, special and supportive services, evaluations and programs, if necessary.**
- **Referring an LY student being considered for extension of services to appropriate compensatory, special and supportive services, evaluations, and programs, if necessary.**
- **The notification for the ELL Committee meeting is sent to parents and all parties involved. After the committee has met, a written record of the meeting, including signatures and the recommendations, is sent to parents. A minimum of three signatures is required: 1) the administrator or administrative designee, 2) the ESOL teacher or ESOL liaison, 3) the guidance counselor.**

Section VIII: Personnel Training

Notification - Training Requirements
All employees of the Charter School will be required to adhere to the training requirements and/or endorsements required by the State of Florida as a condition of employment.

In-service Training
The Charter School staff will participate in ESOL training provided through the School District and at other locations as available.

8. School Climate and Discipline
The School Climate and Discipline section should describe the learning environment of the school and provide evidence that the school will ensure a safe environment conducive to learning.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(7); s. 1002.33(7)(a)(11); s. 1002.33(9)(n)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:
- A school calendar and schedule that meets the minimum statutory requirements.
- An approach to student discipline that creates and sustains a safe and orderly learning environment.
- Legally sound policies for student discipline, suspension, dismissal and recommendation for expulsion.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X ☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Aligning the school calendar to that of the District's. The adoption of the Student Code of Conduct, discipline, and dismissal procedures.	Page 77
Same school calendar as district. Follows district Code of Conduct procedures. Refers to zero tolerance for drugs, alcohol and weapons. Special needs students' discipline in line with IEPs.	

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. What provisions are made to provide campus security?	
2. How many early release days for staff planning are anticipated? 3. Will a contract be utilized to ensure compliancy of the satisfactory academic and behavioral of those students wanting to participate in extracurricular activities? How will the criterion for the above be created and monitored?	Page 78

Applicant Response:

1. **Campus security is provided with a fence around the playground, adult supervision, and limiting access to the building with a buzzer/lock admittance system. In addition, many of our schools utilize the Raptor system to screen visiting adults who may be restricted from having access to school sites.**

2. **The School will follow the School District's calendar, and provide the same number of early release days as the district schools. In addition, instructional staff participates in ten days of pre-planning each year.**

3. **The School will follow the Sarasota County's Student Code of Conduct to comply with students wishing to participate in extracurricular activities. In areas where Sarasota's code of student conduct is not specific on policies for students participating in extracurricular activities, the Principal will determine the need and bring this analysis to the Governing Board for the development and approval of a policy.**

II. Organizational Plan

The Organizational Plan should provide an understanding of how the school will be governed and managed. It should present a clear picture of the school's governance and management priorities, what responsibilities various groups and people will have, and how those groups will relate to one another.

9. Governance

The Governance section should describe how the policy-making and oversight function of the school will be structured and operate.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(15); s. 1002.33(16)(5)(b)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- Documentation of proper legal structure of the governing board.
- Adequate policies and procedures for board operation.
- Evidence that the proposed governing board will contribute to the wide range of knowledge and skill needed to oversee a charter school.
- A clear, sensible delineation of roles and responsibilities in relation to governance and school management.
- A plan for the meaningful involvement of parents and the community in the governance of the school.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Offering internet in-service training to parents.	Page 86

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. Please provide an update of your tax exempt status from IRS. Page 79 states that the application is still pending.	
2. Who is Jason Hughes relative to this school? Will this individual be involved with on-campus activities?	
3. Who is the regional Vice President who will decide appeals in student discipline cases? Where is this position located on the flow chart?	
4. Will any of the officially selected members of the Governing Board be selected based upon the perceived need for an individual to have an education background?	Page 79 & 84
5. What if parents do not have the necessary resources at home to access the internet (computer, internet service, etc)?	Page 86

Applicant's Response:

1. The length of time the IRS has taken to come to a determination on our 501.3(c) tax exempt has been puzzling to say the least. Over the past two years we have responded to all of the questions and requests for information from the IRS and there are no pending issues with our application. The IRS informed us this summer that the reviewer assigned to our case had set a personal deadline of end of July to complete the final report in connection with our application, which would then be forwarded to the reviewer's supervisor for review. It is our understanding that once the supervisor has reviewed and approved a report, the last step would be to issue our determination letter granting our tax exempt status. To date we have not received confirmation that our reviewer met this self-imposed deadline. We have requested the opportunity for a face-to-face meeting in an effort to expedite the process and have been told that face-to-face meetings are only granted in cases where the application is likely to be rejected. We have interpreted the IRS refusal to grant an audience with IRS reviewers as a positive sign and an indication that our application is being viewed favorably despite the duration of the process and we continue to expect a favorable determination before the end of this year.

2. Jason Hughes is a member of the Founding Board for the Imagine School at Palmer Ranch. He has a strong history of supporting public schools in Sarasota County and has been actively involved in mobilizing support for Sarasota County's referendum on educational milage. In addition, his expertise as a financial consultant will be beneficial to the oversight of the School. Founding board members will not be involved in the day-to-day operations of the School.

3. Fred Damianos is the Regional Vice President who speaks with parents who wish to speak to someone beyond the Principal. The flow chart includes individuals located within the School, and not the additional Imagine Schools and Sarasota District staff available to support the School.

4. The selection of individuals on the Board is based on need, interest and alignment with Imagine Schools' mission and vision. Our Imagine board members are represented by persons with educational, legal, financial and business backgrounds. In developing the founding and governing board, we strive to include individuals with a variety of expertise.

5. Parents who don't have access to internet at their homes will be encouraged to utilize their local library, the School's computers or other internet-based locations available to the general public.

10. Management

The Management section should describe how the day-to-day administration of the school's operations will be structured and fulfilled.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(9); s. 1002.33(7)(a)(14)
Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- A management structure that includes clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities for administering the day-to-day activities of the school.
- A sound plan for the recruitment, selection and evaluation of the school leader.
- A viable and adequate staffing plan.
- A sound plan for recruiting and retaining qualified and capable staff.

Meet the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X ☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
The job descriptions listed Appendix C.	
Common planning time.	Page 93
School of Excellence Review Teams	Page 94

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. If, "the point of contact and support for the technology infrastructure will be the principal," how will the school ensure via the hiring process that this individual will have the skills necessary to perform this task?	Page 45
2. It may be helpful to include Imagine Schools' People Policies and Charter School Faculty Operations Handbook for review.	Page 93

Applicant's Response:

1. **The School's Principal is initially the point of contact and support for all aspects of school start up and operations. As part of the Principal hiring process, we look for qualified individuals with strong leadership skills and educational management capabilities along with the wisdom and humility to seek advice and support on technical issues for which he or she lacks expertise. Although the principal is the point of contact for technology infrastructure, and may have this level of expertise (as is the case with Justin Matthews, our principal at North Port) the Principal is not expected to be an expert in technology. The Principal the option to hire a staff member with IT expertise, or she my rely upon a large team of Imagine advisors, locally from the West Florida regional team and its six area schools and nationally from imagine corporate experts and schools around the country to assist with**

identifying and advising on needs and solutions for technology infrastructure as well as every aspect of school operations.

2. **The People Policies Handbook and the Table of Contents for the draft faculty handbook are included in Appendix E.**

11. Education Service Providers

The term "education service provider" (ESP) refers to any number of organizations that contract with the governing board of a school to provide comprehensive services. The three major types of ESPs that serve charter schools are education management organizations, comprehensive school design providers, and virtual school management organizations. The Education Service Provider section should describe, if applicable, the contractual arrangement between the school's governing board and such a provider.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(9)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- A persuasive explanation of the reasons for contracting with an education service provider.
- A persuasive explanation that the proposed relationship with the ESP will further the school's mission and program.
- A clear description of the services to be provided by the ESP.
- A clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities between the school's governing board and the ESP.
- A clearly defined performance-based relationship between the school's governing board and the ESP.

Not Applicable	Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X ☐	☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference

12. Employment

The Employment section should define the policies and procedures that frame the school's relationship with its staff.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(14); s. 1002.33(12)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- A compensation plan that will attract and retain quality staff.
- Policies and procedures that hold staff to high professional standards.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final X☐	Preliminary X☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
The adoption of the School District's screening of all potential school employees.	Page 102

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. Benefits and salaries do not seem to be competitive with county schools as stated in the application. Cost of living increases "may" be considered. Employment at will philosophy seems to be at odds with the educational philosophy of retaining staff so children can have the same teacher for three years. In good economic times, this goal seems unlikely to be realized under the current organization.	
2. What does the internal due process hearing look like and who is on the committee?	Page 102
3. Harassment policy needs to include the information about reporting directly to the EEOC.	Page 6
4. What criterion constitutes a teacher's, "exemplary performance" for bonus pay? How will this be documented?	Page 102
5. What does an, "internal due process hearing" look like?	
6. Are Governing Board members accountable to the identical set of hiring standards as staff members?	

Applicant's Response:

1. **In the history of the company, we have not had difficulty recruiting or retaining high quality teachers and staff. Our base case assumptions of benefits and salaries are commensurate with the district's starting salaries and we offer experienced teachers compensation commensurate with their experience. We also offer an attractive benefits package which includes a generous health insurance package and**

a 401(k) retirement program with Imagine matching. In addition, our budgeted contingency provides for merit pay and other adjustments to our base case assumptions. Cost of living increases are budgeted at 3%*, but are individually negotiated with each staff member. Consideration for cost of living increases are dependent on changes in revenue (state level hold backs), and an assessment of teacher performance by the Principal. We find that many teachers are attracted to the intangible benefits of working in a charter school environment. For example, the unique culture of Imagine that encourages teachers to be innovative and offers them the opportunity to be involved in a wide range of operational decisions in their classrooms and in the entire school is a very attractive benefit that appears to more than compensate many teachers for any differentials in financial compensation or perceived job security.

*There is a small error in the proforma in that the substitute teacher compensation was not escalated by the referenced 3%, but this is a small oversight that does not significantly affect the staff compensation budget.

2. Any employee that is recommended for dismissal is entitled to due process. The principal coordinates the fact-finding as part of the due process. The findings are shared with peer principals, Region VP, legal counsel, and the Executive VP for advice. The principal makes the decision, based on advice, for termination. The employee has the right to appeal to the Region Vice President.

3. The School's faculty handbook will include additional information on reporting any harassment directly to the EEOC.

4. Teacher bonus pay expectations and standards are developed by the principal and reviewed by the governing board based upon the recommendation of a faculty "Merit Pay" task force, and based upon the availability of funds.   Bonus pay can be the result of pre-determined targets or in response to performance in any of our six measures of excellence that provided greater benefit to the School than expected or targeted.

5. See Item #2 above.

6. Governing board members are volunteers and are not held to hiring standards as staff members, but are held to the standards of behavior outlined as identified in State Statute.

13. Parent and Community Support and Partnerships

The Parent and Community Support and Partnerships section should describe how parents and the community will be engaged in the operations of the school.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- Meaningful partnerships with parents and the community that further the school's mission and programs.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final X☐	PreliminaryX☐	☐

Strengths	Reference

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. By what means are parents able to evaluate the programs at the school each year? What measures will be in place to modify a program if the data indicates a particular program is not being seen as effective?	
2. This section appears to be somewhat vague. Perhaps including some specific community partnerships would assist with clarification.	Page 104
3. What happens if the third step used for resolving disputes between parents and the school is unsuccessful?	

Applicant's Response:

1. **We strive to develop a culture that encourages parent feedback. We evaluate parent satisfaction by tracking the re-enrollment rate, the annual administration of a Parent Climate Survey, and the ongoing feedback from the parents, PTO, School Advisory Council and the Governing Board. The effectiveness of any program is communicated to parents with the actual data gathered. The results of this data will be used to implement modifications to existing programs that are seen as ineffective or need improvement.**

2. **Community partnerships are generated during the start up phase of the School's development. Some examples of community partnerships in other Imagine Schools are businesses, civic groups, neighborhood associations, Chamber of Commerce etc. For example, our newly opened school in St. Petersburg has already teamed up with its neighborhood association, the Grand Central Neighborhood Association, to do a community open house and scavenger hunt, which introduced parents to community businesses who in turn provided free school supplies to our students participating in the scavenger hunt.**

3. **Every effort will be made to resolve disputes with parents. The steps outlined in the application ensure that concerns are communicated, and resolved by the Principal. The region Vice President can be contacted when the parent is dissatisfied with the Principal's response or continues to disagree with the School's position.   The purpose of this recourse is to ensure that all due process/compliance/common sense steps have been taken. Unfortunately, there are times that the needs and desires of the parents cannot be accommodated within the school of choice, resulting in the parent choosing to leave the School, but as a school of choice, we recognize that parent satisfaction is of primary importance and we always strive to be reasonably accommodating to parent feedback while honoring our commitment to our other measures of excellence.**

14. Student Recruitment and Enrollment
The Student Recruitment and Enrollment section should describe how the school will attract and enroll its student body.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(7); s. 1002.33.(7)(a)(8); s. 1002.33(10)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- A student recruitment plan that will enable the school to attract its targeted population.
- An enrollment and admissions process that is open, fair, and in accordance with applicable law.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X ☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Parent orientation nights.	Page 109
Exit interview for students leaving school.	Page 110

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. What newsletters will be used to recruit students? 2. What neighborhoods will be canvassed? 3. How will the measures described within this section for student recruitment ensure equal access?	Page 106

Applicant's Response:

1. **Newsletters include those attached to the School's website or print materials. In addition, developments and neighborhood associations typically have a newsletter that Imagine Schools has successfully accessed in the past.**

2. **Neighborhoods to be canvassed are determined proximity to our facility, by parent input and pre-enrollment applications. Parents have sponsored neighborhood coffees to assist in sharing information about Imagine Schools with other potential parents.**

3. **As stated in the application, Imagine School at Palmer Ranch is committed to enroll students so that it reflects the demographics of the community. Marketing mailings are sent to all residents within the identified communities (at a minimum of a 4 miles radius). We also strive to hold our information meetings in forums that are equally accessible to diverse community groups (public libraries), as well as using diverse locations that may be more accessible to some community minority groups (diverse community churches, synagogues or community centers). Our goal is to make the effort so that minorities in our communities are informed about our school as a choice and feel welcomed to join our school family. However, as a school of**

choice, we are ultimately limited by parents actually choosing Imagine School. Nevertheless, our goal is to ensure that language and culture are not a barrier, and to demonstrate our desire to develop a school with diversity.

III. Business Plan

The Business Plan should provide an understanding of how the charter operators intend to manage the school's finances. It should present a clear picture of the school's financial viability including the soundness of revenue projections; expenditure requirements; and how well the school's budget aligns with and supports effective implementation of the educational program.

15. Facilities

The Facilities section should provide an understanding of the school's anticipated facilities needs and how the school plans to meet those needs.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(13); s. 1002.33(18)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- A realistic plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's program and targeted population.
- Evidence that the school has access to the necessary resources to fund the facilities plan.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Meets standard. Currently negotiating on a lease for the school.	Page 112

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. How will it be ensured that the timeline for finding a back-up facility, if necessary, doesn't have an adverse impact upon any student recruitment completed?	Page 112

Applicant's Response:

1. **A lease has been executed for a new facility to be completed by July 2009 and we are optimistic that all permit approvals will be obtained by December of this year. We do not expect to begin marketing until late January or February 2009 when all facility approvals have been obtained and construction of the facility has commenced. In the event that facility approvals or construction are delayed, we would not begin marketing unless an acceptable temporary facility has been identified. In the event that we do not have a high level of confidence on the**

availability of a facility for the opening of school in Aug. 2009 by the February 2009, we would not attempt to open in 2009 and would request a planning year from the district and plan to open school in Aug. 2010.

16. Transportation and Food Service
The Transportation and Food Service section should describe how the school will address these services for its student body.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(20)(a)(1)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- A transportation plan that will serve all eligible students.
- A food service plan that will serve all eligible students.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
Final X☐	Preliminary X☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
May use district services	Page 113
Understands requirements for food service program.	

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. Statement that the school will transport students from a 2-4 mile area conflicts with prior statement (page 12) that the school will accept students "residing in Sarasota County". 2. Statements related to partnering with houses of worship, etc may indicate a use of non-compliant vehicles. Statement needs clarification.	Page 113
3. Is equal access for all populations being given if students are only eligible for transportation within a four mile radius of the school site? 4. Have all liability possibilities been investigated if the school helps, "formulate a carpool program prior to school starting?"	Page 113

Applicant's Response:

1. **The School will be open to all students residing in Sarasota County, but transportation is not guaranteed for all students. Following state statute, transportation will be provided within a "reasonable distance" from the school site, based upon our experience we believe that is the 2-4 mile radius in our application represent this**

reasonable distance. Kindergarten distance will mirror the district guideline of 1.5 miles. Further distances for depot pick-up/drop-off (with adult supervision required) will be determined based on density of need to provide access to bus transportation to as many students as possible. We will also provide transportation to any pregnant students consistent with statutory requirements and district standards.

2. The School will not provide any means transportation to students other than bus transportation that meets State standards. The reference to partnering in the use of alternative forms of transportation was intended to mean that we would assist parents in finding creative alternative forms of <u>parent provided transportation</u> in order to be accessible to as many students in the County as possible. However, we will not be making any arrangements for alternative transportation for students whose parents choose a method of transportation other than the School sponsored buses.

3. As stated in #1 above, providing transportation to students for further distances will be determined based on the School's economic ability to transport students from a point outside the four mile radius. A charter school's revenues are enhanced by the higher enrollment, but offset by a higher expenditure on transportation. Areas that have a higher density of enrolled students are routinely assessed for bus transportation.

4. See the answer in #2 above.

17. Budget

The Budget section should provide financial projections for the school over the term of its charter.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(6)(a)(5); s. 1002.33(6)(b)(2)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present:

- Budgetary projections which are consistent with all parts of the application, including the school's mission, educational program, staffing plan and facility.
- A realistic assessment of the projected sources of revenue and expenses that ensure the financial viability of the school.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Meets the standards for this section.	
Comprehensive budget plan.	Appendices

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. Page 116 needs to be corrected to add to $250,000	
2. What is contingency/merit pay?	Appx F
3. Could you explain about the cost of transportation for two buses being listed as $40,146 (Yr 1) on the first page and $68,000 on next page. 4. Playground equipment budgeted at $35,000 is that sufficient to buy and install an actual playground? 5. Please explain how cost of living increases in personnel expenditures have been figured in. For example teacher salary increases. The price of a substitute seems to be budgeted as $90 for the next 5 years. Are the other salaries not expected to increase?	

Applicant's Response:

1. Typo on page 116 - <u>Other $76,21338</u> in original application has been corrected below:

Start up Cost Projections		
January 1st through June 30th		
Item	Cost	Explanation
Principal	$40,000	Half year salary
Business Mngr	$15,000	Half year salary

49

Misc Employees	$27,350	4 employees @ four months
Employee Benefits	$20,587	25% of salaries
Office Space	$9,000	6 months @ $1500 monthly
Phone/Internet	$1,150	6 months @ $250 set up / 150 monthly
Temp Furniture	$3,000	To be added to final lease on furniture
Supplies	$1,500	6 months @ $250 monthly
Temp Technology	$5,200	May be added to final lease on technology
Copier	$6,000	May be added to final lease on technology
Copy supplies	$2,000	Monthly charge on per copy cost est.
Marketing	$38,000	Taken from past marketing budgets
Recruiting	$5,000	Taken from past recruiting budgets
Other	$76,213	See Assumptions Below
Total Expenses	$250,000	

2. **Contingency/merit pay is dollars budgeted for unallocated expenses and reserves. The proforma makes reasonable estimates on our projected revenues and expenses based upon information currently available, but the School's budget will certainly have line items greater and lesser than those projected. This contingency line item provides for eventuality that in the case that the net result of these variances increases expenses there will be funds available to cover such increased expenses, however, in the likely event that such variances do not result in significant cost increases the contingency line item is available to provide for merit pay for staff members.**

3. **Transportation calculations include state reimbursement (revenues) of approximately $40,146. However, state reimbursement is not sufficient to cover the actual expenses. The estimated expense is based on operating two school-owned busses and is projected at $68,000 annually. This includes payment on the promissory note financing the purchase of the bus, insurance, maintenance, fuel and drivers for 4 hours daily. However, based on our arrangement with the School District at our North Port school, we hope to be able to contract with the school district for transportation services which will cost slightly less. .**

4. **Playground equipment is budgeted as a basic set of equipment that provides for the opening of a new school. Additional equipment could be purchased through the budget or through parent fundraising. These decisions will be made at the school site.**

5. **Cost of living is built into the budget at a rate of 3%.**

18. Financial Management and Oversight

The Financial Management and Oversight section should describe how the school's finances will be managed and who will be responsible for the protection of student and financial records.

Statutory Reference(s):

s. 1002.33(6)(a)(5); s. 1002.33(7)(a)(9); s. 1002.33(7)(a)(11)

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will present:

- A fiscal management system that is appropriate, follows generally accepted accounting principles and properly safeguards assets.
- Evidence of proper insurance coverage.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X ☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
Have internal audits from oversight company	

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. Since the business manager is responsible for AP, payroll and bank reconciliations, would recommend principal open bank statements	
2. It may be helpful to include the Imagine School Finance Manual for reference.	Page 119

Applicant's Response:

1. **We agree, and it is our practice that the Principal opens the bank statements.**

19. Action Plan
The Action Plan should provide a clear roadmap of the steps and strategies that will be employed to prepare the school to be ready to serve its students well on the first day of operation.

Statutory Reference(s):
s. 1002.33(7)(a)(16)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will present an action plan that:

- Provides a thoughtful and realistic implementation plan that covers major operational items and provides flexibility for addressing unanticipated events.

Meets the Standard	Partially Meets the Standard	Does Not Meet the Standard
X☐	☐	☐

Strengths	Reference
The Action Plan is clear and concise.	Page 123

Concerns and Additional Questions	Reference
1. For planning purposes, separate ELL and ESE students— different needs and requirements.	

Educational Program Design

1. Can you please clarify the school's middle school plan to address all of the new statutory requirements—ie, career guidance, specific courses, etc.

The information below addresses the Middle School Reforms and are a compilation of information included in the application, as well as further clarifications. If there is additional information needed, please don't hesitate to ask.

Implementation of the A++ Plan

The following information is based on our understanding of compliance with the current Florida Statute. The Charter School recognizes that if the statute changes, the School is required to meet any legislated requirements.

❖ **Reading Initiative**

Reading allocation in FEFP
Imagine School at Palmer Ranch will follow the district's Comprehensive Reading Plan. (pages 10, 47 and 55)

❖ **Secondary School Initiatives**

Middle School Promotion and Requirements
As stated on page 59 of the Charter Application, the School intends to follow the District's Student Progression Plan.

A student completing the middle grades program at the Charter School will complete:
- Three courses in English (emphasizing literature, composition, and technical text)
- Three courses in mathematics
- Three courses in social studies (including the study of state and federal government and civics education)
- Three courses in science
- One course in career and education planning to be completed in 7th or 8th grade. (S. 1003.42, F.S.) . (A career and academic plan will be initiated for every eighth grade student.)

❖ **Proposed Student Programming**

Students in grades 6-8 will be enrolled in six courses per semester.   The scheduling will ensure that instructional hours will meet or exceed the 135 hours of instruction for a year-long course.

Social Studies   (Page 39-41)
Grade 6
- The proposed course of study will be Eastern Geography (Course #2103030).

The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - o -historical perspectives-culture and ethnicity
  - o -society: roles, customs, and conflict
  - o -impact of law and politics
  - o -landforms and vegetation
  - o -demographics
  - o -religion
  - o -transition and change
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Grade 7- Social Studies
- The proposed course of study will be Geography- Europe and Americas (Course #2103040). The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - o -historical perspectives
  - o -culture and ethnicity
  - o -society: roles, customs, and conflict
  - o -impact of law and politics
  - o -landforms and vegetation
  - o -demographics
  - o -religion
  - o -transition and change
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Grade 8- Social Studies
- The proposed course of study will be United States History and Career Planning (Course #2100015). The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - o Political, economic, technological, and social development of the United States from the Exploration period through Reconstruction with special emphasis on Florida's role
  - o Time-space relationships
  - o Impact of expansion on the development of America
  - o Political, social, and economic conflicts and compromise
  - o Influence of diverse groups on cultural development of the United States
  - o Key concepts of the U.S. Constitution and other historical documents
- In compliance with FL statute, the Charter School will mirror the district's

model of incorporating 1 semester of Civics within the Social Studies program. It will include State and National Government.

- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Career Exploration and Decision Making (Page 42)

- Instruction will be offered which meets the requirements of the Career and Academic Planner Program including a broad orientation to career clusters to assist students in focusing on academic and career goals (Section 1003.4156 F.S.).
- Students in grade 8 will be introduced to the FACTS.org website, Florida's official online student advising system. At this time, the implementation will occur as part of the Grade 8 Social Studies course. The course provided for grade 8 will include the Career Planning within its course code description. Students will complete the ePEP and utilize the FACTS website as a resource in addition to the teacher-directed career planning activities.
- Oversight of Career Exploration will be initially provided by the Social Studies teacher. It is anticipated that the oversight will be turned over to the guidance counselor once the school's enrollment can support this position.

Science   (Page 38 and 39)

Grade 6

- The proposed course of study will be M/J Comprehensive Science 1 (Course #2002040). The purpose of this course is to provide opportunities to study concepts of life, earth/space, and physical sciences, and their applications to everyday life. The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - o   The nature of science
  - o   The nature of matter
  - o   Energy
  - o   Force and motion
  - o   Processes that shape the Earth
  - o   Earth and Space
  - o   Processes of life
  - o   How living things interact with their environment
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Grade 7- Science

- The proposed course of study will be M/J Comprehensive Science 2 (Course

#2002070). The purpose of this course is to provide opportunities to study concepts of life, earth/space, and physical sciences, and their applications to everyday life. The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - o The nature of science
  - o The nature of matter
  - o Energy
  - o Force and motion
  - o Processes that shape the Earth
  - o Earth and Space
  - o Processes of life
  - o How living things interact with their environment
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Grade 8- Science
- The proposed course of study will be M/J Comprehensive Science 3 (Course #2002100). The purpose of this course is to provide opportunities to study concepts of life, earth/space, and physical sciences, and their applications to everyday life. The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - o The nature of science
  - o The nature of matter
  - o Energy
  - o Force and motion
  - o Processes that shape the Earth
  - o Earth and Space
  - o Processes of life
  - o How living things interact with their environment
  - o This is the third course in a three-year course sequence, and the goal is to give exposure to a variety of science disciplines through participation in exploratory experiences and activities. It may not be possible for all topics to be covered each year. Students will have the opportunity to achieve all Science benchmarks for grades 6-8 by the end of the third year.
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Mathematics (Page 33-36)
Grade 6
- The proposed course of study will be M/J Mathematics 1 (Course #1205010).

The purpose of this course is to continue the development of mathematical concepts and processes that can be used to solve real-world and mathematical problems. The content will include, but not limited to, the following:

- o structure and properties of rational numbers, including whole numbers, integers, fractions, mixed numbers, and decimals
- o equivalent representations of numbers, including fractions, decimals, and percents, numbers with exponents, and absolute value
- o operations and problem solving with rational numbers
- o number theory, including primes, factors, multiples, and number sequences
- o measurement techniques including choice of appropriate instruments, conversion of units, scale drawings, and derivation of simple geometric formulas for perimeter and area
- o geometric terminology, properties, and relationships-transformational geometry, including flips, turns, and slides
- o algebraic thinking: analyzing and expressing patterns and relationships in various ways, including words, manipulative, tables, graphs, number sequences, algebraic expressions, and geometric formulas
- o statistical methods for collecting, organizing, analyzing and displaying data, including measures of central tendency
- o introduction to probability, including comparison of experimental and mathematically expected results
- o basic calculator skills

- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.
- Remediation/Intervention- Students in grade 5 who score at Level 1 or 2 on FCAT Mathematics will receive remediation/intervention the following year in grade 6. This remediation will occur within the regularly scheduled 100 minute block of instruction. The differentiated instruction will be provided by small group instruction, instructional technology, learning centers focused on providing practice and ongoing assessment of student learning.

Grade 7- Mathematics
- The proposed course of study will be M/J Mathematics 2 (Course #1205040). The purpose of this course is to continue the development of mathematical concepts and processes that can be used to solve real-world and mathematical problems. The content will include, but not limited to, the following:
    - o structure and properties of rational numbers, including whole numbers, integers, fractions, mixed numbers, and decimals
    - o equivalent representations of numbers, including fractions, decimals, and percents, numbers with exponents, and absolute value
    - o operations and problem solving with rational numbers

- o number theory, including primes, factors, multiples, and number sequences
- o measurement techniques including choice of appropriate instruments, conversion of units, scale drawings, and derivation of simple geometric formulas for perimeter, area and volume
- o geometric terminology, properties, and relationships-transformational geometry, including flips, turns, and slides
- o algebraic thinking: analyzing and expressing patterns and relationships in various ways, including words, manipulative, tables, graphs, number sequences, algebraic expressions and equations, and geometric formulas
- o statistical methods for collecting, organizing, analyzing and displaying data, including measures of central tendency
- o introduction to probability, including comparison of experimental and mathematically expected results
- o basic calculator skills
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.
- Remediation/Intervention- Students in grade 6 who score at Level 1 or 2 on FCAT Mathematics will receive remediation/intervention the following year in grade 7. This remediation will occur within the regularly scheduled 100 minute block of instruction. The differentiated instruction will be provided by small group instruction, instructional technology, learning centers focused on providing practice and ongoing assessment of student learning.

Grade 8- Mathematics

- The proposed course of study will be M/J Mathematics 3 (Course #1205070). The purpose of this course is to continue the development of mathematical concepts and processes that can be used to solve real-world and mathematical problems. The content will include, but not limited to, the following:
  - o structure and properties of rational and irrational numbers
  - o equivalent representations of numbers, including fractions, decimals, and percents, numbers with exponents, and absolute value
  - o operations and problem solving with rational and irrational numbers
  - o number theory, including primes, factors, multiples, and number sequences
  - o measurement techniques including choice of appropriate instruments, conversion of units, scale drawings, and derivation of simple geometric formulas for perimeter, area and volume
  - o geometric terminology, properties, and relationships-transformational geometry, including flips, turns, and slides
  - o algebraic thinking: analyzing and expressing patterns and relationships

in various ways, including words, manipulatives, tables, graphs, number sequences, algebraic expressions and equations, geometric formulas and algebraic inequalities
- o statistical methods for collecting, organizing, analyzing and displaying data, including measures of central tendency
- o introduction to probability, including comparison of experimental and mathematically expected results
- o basic calculator skills
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.
- High school course provisions- The A++ Plan requires that the Charter School provide students the opportunity to take at least one high school credit class while in the Middle Grades. The course(s) available to students will be determined based on the needs of the students. It is anticipated that an Algebra I course is most likely. The course(s) can be provided in a variety of ways, including the Florida Virtual School, at the Charter School with a certified teacher, and a possible arrangement with a district high school.
- Remediation/Intervention- Students in grade 7 who score at Level 1 or 2 on FCAT Mathematics will receive remediation/intervention the following year in grade 8. This remediation will occur within the regularly scheduled 100 minute block of instruction. The differentiated instruction will be provided by small group instruction, instructional technology, learning centers focused on providing practice and ongoing assessment of student learning.

Language Arts (Page 31 and 32)

Grade 6
- The proposed course of study will be M/J Language Arts   (Course #1001010). The purpose of this course is to provide integrated educational experiences in the language arts strands of reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking, language, and literature. The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - o Using the reading process to construct meaning from a wide range of literary, informational, and technical texts
  - o Using the writing process to communicate information and ideas
  - o Using listening, viewing, and speaking strategies,
  - o Understanding the power of language and using language in authentic contexts
  - o Understanding the common features of a variety of literary forms
  - o Responding critically to visual, oral, and written texts
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.

- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Grade 7- Language Arts
- The proposed course of study will be M/J Language Arts 2 (Course #1001040). The purpose of this course is to provide integrated educational experiences in the language arts strands of reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking, language, and literature. The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
    o Using the reading process to construct meaning from a wide range of literary, informational, and technical texts
    o Using the writing process to communicate information and ideas
    o Using listening, viewing, and speaking strategies,
    o Understanding the power of language and using language in authentic contexts
    o Understanding the common features of a variety of literary forms
    o Responding critically to visual, oral, and written texts
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Grade 8- Language Arts
- The proposed course of study will be M/J Language Arts 3 (Course #1001070). The purpose of this course is to provide integrated educational experiences in the language arts strands of reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking, language, and literature. The content will include, but not be limited to, the following:
    o Using the reading process to construct meaning from a wide range of literary, informational, and technical texts
    o Using the writing process to communicate information and ideas
    o Using listening, viewing, and speaking strategies,
    o Understanding the power of language and using language in authentic contexts
    o Understanding the common features of a variety of literary forms
    o Responding critically to visual, oral, and written texts
- The instructional materials will be chosen from the Catalog of State Adopted Instructional Materials: Grades 6-8
- The district adopted materials will be reviewed as an option for use.
- The timelines for instruction posted on the District website as Curriculum Maps will be reviewed as the School develops its Pacing Guide.

Reading (Page 55 and 56)
As stated previously, all middle school students will be enrolled in a reading course. Students scoring at Level 1 and 2 will be enrolled in an Intensive Reading Course as

required. The Intensive Reading course will diagnose each student's individual reading needs. Progress monitoring and continual assessments will be ongoing throughout the school year. Student progress will be shared with the students and their parents. All reading courses will be designed and offered pursuant to Pasco's Comprehensive Reading Plan required by S.1011.62 (8).

Enrichments (Page 56)

The enrichment course opportunities at the Charter School are in the planning phase. Physical Education will be offered to comply with state requirements. Additional options could include art, music, foreign language, career education and technology.

Parent Meeting (Page 56)

The Charter School will hold at least one parent meeting in the evening to inform parents about school's curriculum and activities each year. (S. 1003.4156 (1) (a) 5, F.S.)

Statewide Grading Scale

The Charter School will utilize the following grading scale for the middle and elementary grades: A= 90-100%, B= 80-89%, C= 70-79%, D=60-69%, F=0-59% (S.1003.437, F.S.).

❖ Principal and Teacher Initiatives

Professional Development

The Professional Development Program for the School will provide instructional and support personnel with a variety of opportunities that include offerings at the School, the West Florida Imagine Region, and through the district as available. Professional development will be tailored to meet the annual needs of the school as a whole, the primary and intermediate clusters, and the middle grades. In addition, a mentoring program will ensure that beginning teachers are supported by their assigned mentor and other colleagues throughout the network of Imagine Schools.

Paper Reduction

The School is aware that Progress Monitoring Plans have replaced Academic Improvement Plans and Personalized Middle School Success Plans.

❖ School Improvement Initiatives

School Improvement Plans

The School's Plan will follow the Legislation's intent to focus more on student achievement and academic-related matters. The Plan will be facilitated and written by the School Advisory Council with input and collaboration with parents and teachers.

Progress Monitoring Plan

The School will develop and implement a Progress Monitoring Plan (PMP) for all students in need of remediation. The PMP will be written in collaboration with the

student and their parents. Current IEPs will be utilized in place of the PMP for identified students.

2. **Will Imagine plan to use pull out services for those students with IEPs that demand services beyond the inclusionary classroom model?**

Yes, under limited circumstances when inclusionary services are not effective, pull out will be provided. IEPs are developed to provide ESE students with the appropriate level of support within the least restrictive environment. Students' IEPs are reviewed when the child registers, and a discussion about the child's strengths and weaknesses follow. In most instances, pull out services provided for a student in a traditional classroom are not required for that same student in the CHILD classroom. The use of small group and differentiated instruction provides for the implementation of accommodations needed by most students with IEPs. Pull out services will be limited to specific services provided through speech/language, occupational and physical therapy. It's anticipated that counseling services might also be best delivered with a pull out individual and/or small group session.

The goal is successful students within the least restrictive environment.   Pull out services are only the appropriate placement when the services and accommodations provided within the classroom are unsuccessful.   The School anticipates that the inclusion model will be the appropriate placement for students with mild to moderate learning disabilities. Students whose educational program is determined to require an alternate curriculum with modifications of the State's instructional expectations require a more intense alternative program that will be discussed by the school staff, the parents, and a representative from the School District in order to determine appropriate placement.

Curriculum

1. **Could you provide the committee with the curriculum guides that are mentioned in the document? A sample of one for reading, Language arts, social studies, and science is requested.**

In response to the request to view the guides, the curriculum for the core areas for grade six are attached. Updates to the math and science alignments are anticipated to be completed this fall. If more information is needed, please let us know.

In addition, several of the pages from the curriculum guide are embedded below .

Imagine Schools Curriculum Guide
Table of Contents

- I -   Grade Six

Interdisciplinary Thematic Planning

The Imagine Schools Curriculum is delivered through universal ideas or themes, at each grade level. Teachers follow a scope and sequence that presents content in four nine-week interdisciplinary units. Content is related through overarching grade level themes to build a sense of connections and significance into students' learning experiences. The themes are broad enough to allow for creative connections across subject areas, so that essential skills in reading and language arts, mathematics, science and social studies are energized and enhanced by the infusion of humanities, the arts, technology and problem solving. *The themes are an essential element in the integrated curriculum providing the seed from which content, performance activities, and projects take root and grow.* Students are encouraged to explore and question as they master content standards at each grade level.

PREP ACADEMY THEMES

*Grade 6 – Relationships
Linking up to a world of knowledge

In what literary environments might we share and present our work?
How might we model a native plant environment on our school grounds?
What data exists on the animal and plant populations of our local natural environments?
In what ways have environmental influences affected people over time?
What environments exist beyond those that are natural?

Grade 7 – Patterns

How have weather patterns affected our planet over time?
Are there certain societal patterns that determine our civic responsibility?
What geometric patterns might we identify in works of art?
How might we develop an original pattern of prose?

Grade 8 – Universes

What microscopic universes can we observe using scientific technology?
What universal ideas can we explore through events of our county's past? Present?
In what ways might we describe a particular "universe of thought?"
In what ways are algebraic equations used to measure distance and time in the universe?

UNIT SAMPLE

Title:	The Cartography Project: Where am I?	
Role of Student:	*Students assume the roles of cartographers.*	
Description:	*Students take on the role of cartographers, ultimately mapping a local park. En route, they build accurate globes from various polyhedral, create contour maps of their faces, and study the journey of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark as they mapped the Northwest Passage. They also study biodiversity and apply knowledge of local plant life to the creation of the large map.*	
Assessments/ End Product(s):	*Students will create a large, permanent map of Lime Quarry to display in the front of this conservation area.*	
Standards:	*Social Studies:*	*Mathematics:*
	Language Arts:	*Science:*
Portfolio Connection:	*Work from this unit can represent expository and narrative writing in language arts, use of graphic representations in math, and understanding of specific content objectives in social studies and science.*	
Duration:	*The unit should take from 6-9 weeks to effectively address standards and student learning. The following are unit products:* *Week 2: New Globe* *Week 4: Facial Topography* *Week 6: Nature Narrative* *Week 8: Lewis and Clark Assessment* *Week 9: Large Map completed*	
Outside Audience:	*Invite other classes in to view products on display. Present to members of the local community that use Lime Quarry.*	
Unit Culmination:	*Celebrate learning with a field trip, or a Geography Fair where products are displayed for all to see.*	
Parent/Student Signatures:	x_____ x_____	

PROJECT SAMPLE

School:	Imagine Schools		Grade:	6
Discipline(s):	Social Studies, Mathematics		Duration:	10 Classroom Hours

Role of Student: *The role can be anything, except, "student."*

Individual		X	Pairs		Small Groups		Whole Class	

Make sure that you hold each student accountable for work, regardless of the grouping you choose.

Title (Project):	Creating a New Globe

Content:	Pull from as many disciplines as are appropriate, making sure the content addresses the standards selected during unit planning. Don't pick any content that you don't plan to assess.	

Application:	Each student will create a new model of a globe – in any 3-dimensional shape – *except* for a sphere. Students will also write expository essays detailing the steps they took to build the new globe, and explaining the significance of what the globe features represent.

Required Student Tasks:	Build a globe model. Create a key that explains any symbols. Write a document that explains exactly how they built the globe and decided what to put on it. Write a document that explains the features of the globe and what the globe represents. Edit rough drafts of both the model and the essays, using rubrics and peer feedback. Assess their final products using rubrics.

Assessment Tools/Methods:	Essay Rubrics Globe Rubric

Materials/ Resources Needed:	Metric rulers, compasses (both kinds), heavy paper, protractors, world maps and atlases, colored pencils, scissors, craft materials and supplies, scissors.

Exceptional Students

1. **In addition to those services provided to ESE students in the regular classroom, are pull out services provided?**

    Please see the response to Question #2 in the Education Program Design section above.

2. **Who designs, implements and monitors the specially designed instruction for those students that require this service?**

    Specially designed instruction is utilized at the pre-referral stage, and when a student is identified in need of an IEP.   In both cases, the ESE teacher collaborates with the cluster teachers to assist in the design and implementation of instruction, and the evaluative aspect of monitoring student progress.

Exceptional Students

4. Curriculum Design

15. What is included within the Conflict Resolution curriculum? Will there be a specific program utilized as a teaching resource?

The following piece was contributed from our Imagine School at North Port to demonstrate an example of how conflict resolution is implemented at the school site:

The teaching of conflict resolution skills is infused in our strong Character Education initiative. We utilize the Six Pillars of Character from the Character Counts program to teach our students a shared vocabulary of positive character traits, and use the "Caught Being Good" stickers to positively reinforce children displaying those traits. In this way, students learn what good character looks like *in action*. Very often, character is shown in times of conflict, so we use these opportunities as teachable moments in the classroom and all areas of the school. Our faculty and staff work together as teachers pull in the Counselor, A.P., Principal, ESE Teacher, etc. as resources in working with students experiencing conflict. Our School Wide behavior plan stresses our philosophy that discipline is a teaching method rather than an opportunity to punish. We utilize planned discussion, parent communication, counseling, and again, positive reinforcement, to stress what we want to see our students do, rather than lecture on what we want them to avoid. We have a strong proactive anti-bullying policy in our school wide behavior plan, which was highlighted and explained to all parents and families who attended our orientation.

Why Try is a research based program I intend to use this year with small groups of children of all grades to teach goal-setting, and help at-risk students broaden their understanding of available choices, think about their obstacles, and recognize support systems in their lives that will help them. This program helps students who feel overwhelmed with conflicts at home, school, or with peers. We will celebrate the International Day of Peace next month as a school wide event . We are also going to use peer mentoring and hopefully, peer mediation, to give students the opportunity to be leaders and models in conflict resolution skills. Finally, our in house professional development will offer workshops on topics like building positive classroom dynamics and dealing with bullying in the classroom.

The Character Education standards included in the Imagine Schools Standards-Based Curriculum are embedded below.

IMAGINE SCHOOLS STANDARDS-BASED CURRICULUM

CHARACTER EDUCATION
6th -8th grade

STRAND	STANDARD
Character Education	CE1: Students promote core ethical values as the basis of good character.
	CE2: Students advocate for policies or programs that are in the best interest of society and are intended to enhance character and engage families and community members as partners in the character-building effort.
	CE3: Students promote character development within the school and address issues that impact personal, family, community, state, national, and world character.
	CE4: Students effectively communicate beliefs, ideas, and information about character.
	CE5: Students analyze the influence of culture, media, technology and other factors on ethical behavior.
	CE6: Students apply interpersonal and social skills in relationships that lead to individual growth, maturity and good character.
	CE7: Students know how to use goal setting and decision making that enhance character and avoid behaviors that pose a threat to him/herself and/or others.

** Adapted from *The Character Education Partnership*, © 2000 and Character Counts

5. Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation

1. Goals 2 & 3 – please clarify the statement: "when we reach 80% of these indicators" is this 80% of …..or 80% proficiency?
2. The last section on page 58 – I'm not sure what is being proposed here????

We propose that the goals for Imagine School at Palmer Ranch mirror the goals approved for Imagine School at North Port:

Over the period of the charter, the School will meet the following objectives:

<u>Grades 1 and above</u>

- The median growth from fall to spring in reading and mathematics will be at least 1 yr as evidenced by the outcomes from the fall and spring administrations of the Stanford 10.
- The academic growth rates in reading and mathematics for students at our Charter School will meet and/or exceed the national growth rates

Grades 3 and above - Reading, Math, Writing and Science

- The school will meet and/or exceed the overall performance of the district as evidenced by the amount of students demonstrating an annual learning gain in the reading and mathematics sections of the FCAT-SSS.
- The school will meet and/or exceed the overall performance of the district as evidenced by the amount of students meeting high standards in the reading, mathematics, writing and science sections of the FCAT-SSS

Grades 3 and above – Lowest Performing in Reading and Math

- The school will meet and/or exceed the overall performance of the district as evidenced by the amount of students in the lowest quartile making learning gains in the reading and mathematics sections of the FCAT-SSS

From: Karl Huber [Karl.Huber@imagineschools.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2008 2:51 PM
To: Metheny Deborrah
Cc: Melissa Gross-Arnold; Isabel Berio; Fred Damianos; Kathy Helean
Subject: Board Concerns over Imagines School at Palmer Ranch Operating Agreement and Florida Sunshine Law

Importance: High
Deb:

I followed up with our counsel on the concerns raised by several Sarasota school board members that there was a conflict between the provisions of our operating agreement and the Florida Sunshine Statue with respect to electronic/telephonic board meetings. Our counsel explained that the reason the language is drafted the way it is in section 6.5 of the Operating Agreement is that the Board of the LLC is not subject to the Florida Sunshine law until a charter agreement is approved and executed between the district and the LLC. At that time the Governing Board becomes subject to the Sunshine law and the law's requirement of public notice and public access to board meetings, which would limit telephonic board meetings would be applicable. Therefore the Operating Agreement was drafted to permit more flexibility in the meeting until the time that the Charter goes into effect and the Sunshine law applies.

So, as I tried to explain on Tuesday, there is no conflict. However in the interest of clarity, we will be adding the following provision to the Imagine School at Palmer Ranch Operating Agreement and arranging for approval by ISNP and the Board of Managers in the next few days:

6.5.6 Application of Sunshine Act. In the event that the LLC enters into a contract for operation of a public charter school, to the extent required by such laws, rules and regulations as govern the operation of such public charter school, all meetings of the Board of Managers will be noticed and conducted in accordance with the Sunshine Act (Section 286.011, Florida Statutes).

I believe this should satisfy the concerns of the Board. Please let me know if further clarification is required.

Best Regards,

Karl Huber
Director of Development, West Florida
Imagine Schools
P: 941-587-6109
F: 941-955-7360

Project CHILD Research Summary
A snapshot from 1991-2006

Validated as an effective program by:
U.S. Department of Education (National Diffusion Network)
Florida Department of Education
Georgia Department of Education

October 11, 2006
Effectiveness of Project CHILD on third grade retentions in 15 schools in 9 districts
99% of the CHILD students who had been in CHILD classrooms prior to third grade passed the FCAT reading test, compared to 86% statewide for all third graders. CHILD sample represented schools ranging from 9%-86% free and reduced lunch. Special needs students were included in the CHILD classrooms as well.
Source: Institute for School Innovation, Tallahassee
(click on link)

May 2, 2006 (FCAT scores just released – one teacher's testimony)
"I have exciting news for everyone! Here is a true testimonial to the power of CHILD! I have just been informed (and I can't tell my students until tomorrow darn it!) that my students have the highest FCAT Reading scores for 3rd grade and the 2nd best Math scores for our entire school!!! And these are the students who are 'problem children' and 'low income.' Over half my class is on free or reduced lunch, so no one can tell me that CHILD doesn't work for every child! Anyone is welcome to look at my class demographics and see I have the 'typical' class. The only child that failed is one that is going to be retained because he wasn't supposed to be in third grade in the first place. The rest of my students passed with 3,4,5- no 2's!!!! I also had 2 perfect level 5's! All I can say is CHILD continues to rock for my students and every year they get better at their jobs of learning! I LOVE IT!"
Source: Rebecca Malchow, Partin Settlement Elementary School, Kissimmee, FL
(unsolicited e-mail message used with permission)

2004-2005
Effectiveness of Project CHILD on third grade retentions in 27 schools in 12 districts
93% of the CHILD students in predominantly high poverty schools passed the FCAT reading test and were promoted, compared to 89% statewide passing rate for all students. A subgroup of CHILD students at 6 schools who had participated in CHILD classrooms prior to third grade had a 96% passing rate.
Source: EPPC Management
(click on link)

2002-2004
Closing achievement gaps in six Marion County schools
On the SAT-9 and FCAT reading tests for Grades 1- 5, African American CHILD students performed better than the control group on 9 out of 10 comparisons. Hispanic and White CHILD students performed better on 8 out of 10 comparisons. Economically disadvantaged CHILD students performed better on 9 out of 10 comparisons.
Source: Florida TaxWatch
(click on link)

2001-2004
National School Change Award Winner
Using Project CHILD as its instructional model, South Heights Elementary School in Henderson, KY improved over four years from being a targeted assistance failing school to a national award winner.

CHILD students' reading, math and science index scores all increased at least 30 points in 2004, exceeding the state expectations.
Source: The Education Innovator, U.S. Department of Education
(click on link)

2001-2002
FCAT comparative evaluation (Phase III Final)
Windy Hill Elementary (Duval County): CHILD students in grades 3, 4, and 5 outperformed the comparison school across the board in reading and mathematics. Math was at the 0.05 level of statistical significance for grade 3, and in both reading and math in grade 4 at the 0.01 level of significance on all parametric and nonparametric test results.
John D. Floyd Elementary (Hernando County): CHILD students in grades 3, 4, and 5 outperformed the control school on all reading and mathematics comparisons. Scores were statistically significant at the 0.01 level by all tests applied.
Source: Florida TaxWatch
Research Report, October 2002, www.floridataxwatch.org

2000-2001
Comparative evaluation in five diverse Florida schools (Broward County, Duval County, Hernando County, Lake County, Sarasota County)
CHILD students scored higher in 75% of subtests for reading and mathematics in grades 1-5 than did the control group, even with 30% larger class sizes than the control group.
Source: Florida TaxWatch
Research Report, October 2001, www.floridataxwatch.org

2000
Comparative evaluation in two Title I schools (Camden County, GA and Thomas County, GA)
CHILD students in grades 1-5 scored higher in reading, writing, and math than the control groups.
Source: Georgia Department of Education Innovation Program
McKenna, M. Georgia Southern University, October 2000.
(link to letter)

1998
Comparative evaluation in two "technology rich" schools (Miami-Dade County, FL).
CHILD students scored higher on all test comparison in reading and mathematics than the non-CHILD students.
Source: Journal of Research on Computing in Education
Volume 33, No. 4, Summer 2001, pp 367-373.

1997
Longitudinal follow up for CHILD students in middle school (Hernando County, FL).
Middle school CHILD students had higher NCE and percentile scores in reading, math, language, and the total battery than non-CHILD matched sample.
Source: Institute for School Innovation, Tallahassee
Gill, B. February 18, 1998.

1994
Longitudinal follow up for CHILD students in middle school (Okaloosa County, FL).
Middle school CHILD students were 5 and 10 percentiles higher than matched samples of non-CHILD students for reading, math, and total battery. 41.6% CHILD students enrolled in advanced math compared to 25.5% non-CHILD.
Source: Daniel Memorial Institute, Jacksonville
Gill, B. July 24, 1995.

1993

Integrating computers into the elementary school curriculum: An evaluation of nine Project CHILD model schools

Mean standardized test scores for CHILD students were compared to non-CHILD students at each school. Effect size was determined by subtracting the mean non-CHILD scores from the mean CHILD scores divided by the pooled standard deviation. 12 positive effects for CHILD students, 2 negative effects. Large positive effects for long-term CHILD students.

Source; Journal of Research on Computing in Education

Volume 26, No. 1, Fall 1993.

1991

Comparative evaluation in 9 diverse schools throughout Florida

(Dade, Hernando, Okaloosa, Pasco, Volusia, Walton)

Composite effect sizes for CHILD students for reading, language arts, mathematics were compared to non-CHILD students. 15 positive effects for CHILD students; 0 negative effects.

Source: Florida Technology in Education Quarterly

Vol. 4, No. 4, Summer 1992.

An evaluation of project child's impact on academic achievement in 19 schools

December 2007

Executive Summary

This report compares Project CHILD® students' achievement in reading and mathematics with the achievement of students not in Project CHILD as measured by the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). This 2007 Project CHILD Evaluation Report continues the commitment of the Institute for School Innovation (ISI) to track and document Project CHILD student achievement across multiple sites.

Project CHILD is a transformational instructional system that restructures the traditional elementary school that is noted for single grade and single teacher instruction. CHILD on the other hand, employs a triangulated design with three teachers working as a team across three grade levels with three years to work with students. CHILD also moves beyond textbook teaching to incorporate technology and hands-on active learning at differentiated learning stations.

This report examines FCAT scores for 19 Florida elementary schools for students in grades 3-5. The total population of Project CHILD students included in this study is approximately 2,442, with approximately 7,326 non-CHILD students.

Overall there were 90 favorable comparisons for CHILD classes, and 14 favorable comparisons for the non-CHILD classes. Of these there were 45 favorable reading comparisons for the CHILD classes, and 6 favorable reading comparisons for the non-CHILD classes. There were 45 favorable mathematics comparisons for the CHILD classes, and 8 favorable mathematics comparisons for the non-CHILD classrooms.

These positive outcomes for CHILD students in 2007 add to the historical record of more favorable academic performance for the hundreds of thousands of CHILD students tested since 1989. The CHILD model continues to pass the test of time as an effective teaching and learning system.

2007 Project CHILD Evaluation Report

This report compares Project CHILD® students' achievement in reading and mathematics with the achievement of students not in Project CHILD as measured by the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). The FCAT is given annually in March to all Florida elementary students in grades 3-5. It is graded on a scale of 1-5, with 3 considered being on grade level.

The FCAT is a high stakes test, in that school grades (A-F) that result in monetary awards or sanctions are tied to FCAT results. Furthermore, third grade students who score Level 1 on the reading portion of the test may not be promoted to fourth grade, and must be given intensive remediation to try to catch up.

This 2007 Project CHILD Evaluation Report continues the commitment of the Institute for School Innovation (ISI) to track and document Project CHILD student achievement across multiple sites. For a summary of research since 1989, visit the ISI website at www.ifsi.org, or contact ISI to request a printed report.

About the Institute for School Innovation

The Institute for School Innovation (ISI) is a private nonprofit educational organization located in Tallahassee, Florida. Founded in 1995, its mission is to redefine classroom instruction through technology and active learning. Its vision is to create and sustain a commanding network of innovative CHILD educators whose students will achieve academic success and cultivate lifelong personal growth.

The primary focus of its work to date has been to disseminate and support Project CHILD (Changing How Instruction for Learning is Delivered), an innovative instructional model that dramatically improves student achievement in grades K-5. For 15 years, ISI has been quietly building a network of innovative teachers and school leaders who are creating world class learning environments that fundamentally reshape the status quo in elementary schools.

ISI is governed by a volunteer board of directors, including faculty members from Florida State University and Florida A&M University, as well as business and community leaders. Dr. Sarah (Sally) Butzin is the founder and serves as President & Executive Director. A former classroom teacher, she is the developer of the Project CHILD system and continues to serve as the senior author. Her book titled *Joyful Classrooms in an Age of Accountability: The Project CHILD Recipe for Success*(1) reflects Dr. Butzin's philosophy that teachers and children will thrive in classrooms where there is joy and pride in success.

ISI supports educators through an annual conference, regional workshops, an interactive web site (www.ifsi.org), awards & recognitions, and various publications that help CHILD teachers connect and share ideas. ISI also provides opportunities for CHILD teachers to enhance their professional status and earn supplemental income by training to become ISI consultants who serve as the coaches and mentors for new CHILD teachers.

About Project CHILD (Changing How Instruction for Learning is Delivered)

Dr. Butzin conceived and designed the CHILD instructional model in 1988 at Florida State University as a framework to bring technology and active learning into elementary classrooms. The model continues to survive and thrive, which is highly unusual for innovative educational projects which historically have a three to five year life span.

One reason for its longevity is that Project CHILD moves beyond theory and platitudes by providing teachers with a replicable model of best practices, called the CHILD 20 Essential Components (2)**.** ISI provides extensive professional development and coaching along with the tools and techniques that enable teachers to successfully engage today's students. Over the years, ISI has developed and refined a wide array of materials for teachers and students alike. ISI continues to update and refresh the model and materials each year. The most recent innovation incorporates a technology-based personalized assessment system for reading, writing, and mathematics.

Project CHILD enhances and extends a school's existing curriculum for reading, writing, and mathematics in grades K-5. Project CHILD transforms the temporal, social, and physical aspects of the standard classroom -- traditionally comprised of one teacher teaching all subjects to a single grade of students for one year, using a predominantly textbook-driven delivery system.

The standard approach also limits articulation between grade level teachers, and precious learning time is squandered each year as each new group of students and teachers settle in. More learning time may be lost as well at the end of the year after "the test" as many teachers go into relax mode, knowing that the students will soon be moving on to a new teacher.

Project CHILD is different. Three teachers work together as a team clustered across three grade levels. A primary cluster consists of a K-2 team, and an intermediate cluster for grades 3-5. Each teacher in the cluster picks a subject in which to specialize and intensify – reading, writing, or mathematics.

Each cluster classroom offers 6 differentiated learning stations to keep students actively involved in a variety of learning modes…

Teacher Station for small group instruction;

Computer Station for using instructional software, Internet resources, and projects;

Exploration Station for creative learning;

Challenge Station for activities in game formats;

Construction Station for hands-on learning; and

Textbook Station for written work and assessments.

CHILD students follow a highly structured, yet transparent classroom management system…

Classroom Management Tools

Passports for setting goals, recording station work, reflecting on learning in order to solidify understanding, and communicating with parents;

Daily Station Assignment Boards for showing students where to begin working each day;

Station Task Cards for giving directions and connecting the activity to the learning objective tied to state standards.

There is no wasted time in a Project CHILD classroom. When students finish their first assigned station activity, they check their Passport and immediately move to the next appropriate station, review the Task Card and get to work. The CHILD system also empowers students to work cooperatively and assist one another if they need help when the teacher is busy at the Teacher Station.

Students move to each cluster classroom for 60-90 minute periods throughout the day. The lesson begins with whole group direct instruction from the teacher before station work begins. After station work, the students gather together again in whole group to review and reflect.

Throughout each week, CHILD students will work at six different reading stations, six different writing stations, and six different mathematics stations as they move from class to class. This assures a variety of modalities (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic) to accommodate each child's unique learning style for all subject areas.

CHILD students stay within their cluster for three years. Thus CHILD teachers have three years to assess each child's needs, and nurture each child's growth in their subject specialty. They can begin lessons each year with minimal start-up time, and continue productively to the last day of school, knowing they are responsible for three year's growth.

One of the teachers serves as the homeroom grade level teacher, so students will have a different homeroom teacher each year. The homeroom teacher is also responsible for the content instruction in science and social studies, although many CHILD teachers now incorporate science and social studies into station activities throughout the day.

Numerous program evaluations since 1988 have documented that CHILD students outperform their peers within the same school settings in reading, writing, and mathematics(3). CHILD has been shown to close achievement gaps for minority and high poverty students(4), and to significantly reduce third grade retentions(5,6). CHILD students also have far fewer discipline problems, and parent satisfaction is very high as evidenced by the long waiting lists at most CHILD sites where CHILD is an option.

Population

During the 2006-2007 school year there were 49 schools in Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and Pennsylvania with Project CHILD classrooms. Because the majority of the CHILD schools are in Florida, this evaluation focuses only on the 42 Florida schools. Within those schools there were 65 primary CHILD clusters (grades K-2) and 67 intermediate CHILD clusters (grades 3-5) for a total of 396 classrooms. Schools chosen for this evaluation were those with grade 3-5 intermediate clusters that took the FCAT, as well as those having both CHILD and non-CHILD classrooms so that reasonable comparisons could be made.

Since most of the CHILD schools select students randomly using the same criteria as for the non-CHILD classrooms, this evaluation comprises a semi-experimental design. There is a control group (non-CHILD classrooms) and experimental group (CHILD classrooms). However, a few schools do allow parent request, so that precludes a purely experimental design with randomized subjects.

Of the 34 schools with CHILD in grades 3-5 and with CHILD/non-CHILD comparison classrooms, 21 schools provided the data requested by ISI. This is a fairly robust response rate of 62%. Of the 21 schools, 19 were considered to adequately represent faithful implementation of the CHILD 20 Essential Components. The two rejected had not fully implemented the model throughout the school year due to high teacher turnover, as well as one school opening a new building without computers and delayed textbook deliveries.

Nine of the 19 selected schools, or 47%, were Title One schools meeting the Federal poverty requirements as measured by students receiving free or reduced lunch. The 19 schools had a broad range of experience with CHILD implementation, ranging from one to 12 years.

Schools Included in the Study

Table 1

Number of Years of Project CHILD Implementation

*Denotes Title One School

District	School	Began	# Int. Clusters
Indian River	Citrus	2005	2
Indian River	Dodgertown*	2005	1
Indian River	Sebastian	2006	1
Indian River	Vero Beach*	2005	2
Indian River	Glendale	1999	2
Indian River	Pelican Island	2005	1
Leon	Buck Lake	1995	1
Marion	Dr. N.H. Jones	2003	1
Marion	East Marion*	2002	2
Marion	Ocala Springs*	1996	3
Marion	Ft. McCoy*	2003	2
Okaloosa	Walker*	2002	1
Osceola	Central Ave*	2003	4
Osceola	Partin Settlement*	2002	4
Osceola	Reedy Creek*	1999	2
Palm Beach	Cypress Trails	2001	1
Palm Beach	Golden Grove	1999	3
Palm Beach	Grassy Waters	2005	1
Palm Beach	Panther Run	1999	3

The total population of Project CHILD students included in this study is approximately 2,442. This number was derived by multiplying the number of classroom scores reported by 22, which is the mandated class size in Florida for grades 3-5.

The exact number of non-CHILD classrooms at some schools could not be determined because

the data were reported by average scores rather than by individual classrooms. Therefore the total population of non-CHILD students was derived by extrapolating an average of three times more non-CHILD classrooms across the schools, or approximately 7,326 non-CHILD students.

Table 2: Number of Students

FCAT Comparisons Grades 3-5	CHILD	Non-CHILD
(N) Number of students included in this study	2,442	7,326

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

ISI sent a letter and data collection sheet to each CHILD school that met the criteria for the study. The directions asked the school to record in the appropriate CHILD or non-CHILD sections the percent of students class by class who scored at Level 3 and above on the FCAT. Teacher names and student names were specifically not requested so as to maintain anonymity.

Classes identified as being special needs classes such as ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages), ESE (Exceptional Student Education) and inclusion classes were not included. The CHILD and non-CHILD classroom data were then averaged and rounded to the nearest whole number.

Results

Overall there were 90 favorable comparisons for the CHILD classes, and 14 favorable comparisons for the non-CHILD classes as represented by the graph below.

Of these there were 45 favorable reading comparisons for the CHILD classes, and 6 favorable reading comparisons for the non-CHILD classes. There were 45 favorable mathematics comparisons for the CHILD classes, and 8 favorable mathematics comparisons for the non-CHILD classrooms.

FCAT Comparisons at 19 Schools
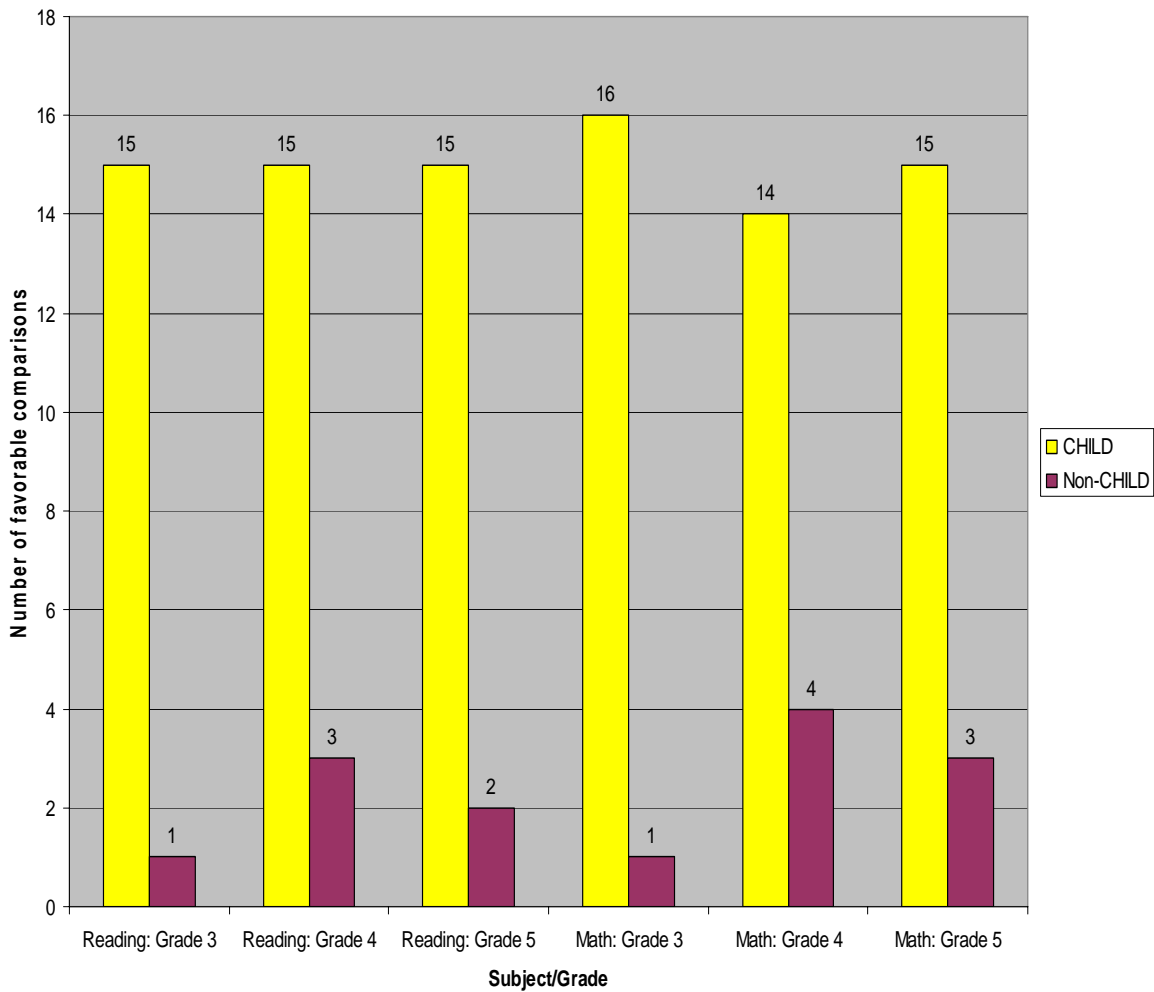
Subset of Title One Schools

Analysis of the subset of nine Title One schools showed predominantly favorable comparisons for the CHILD classes across all grades. The following six graphs represent these data comparisons.

Title One: Grade 3 FCAT Reading
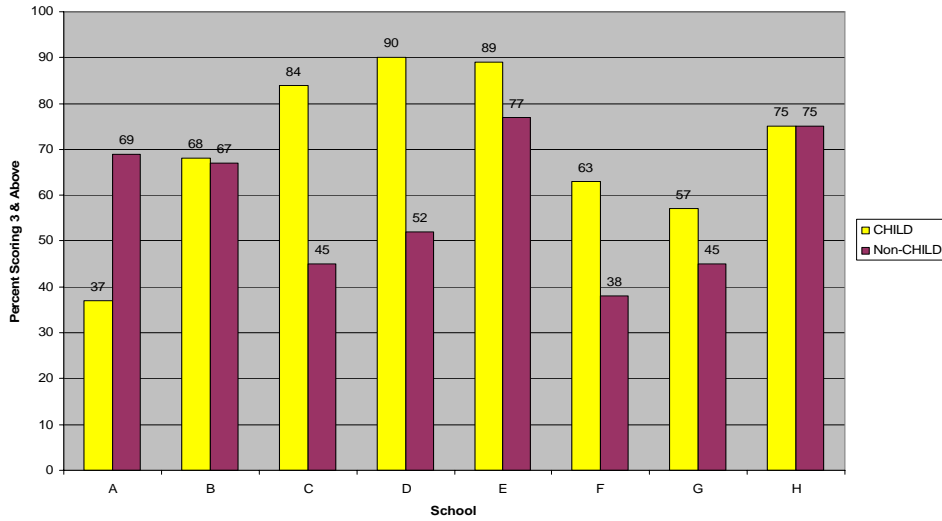
Title One: Grade 3 FCAT Mathematics
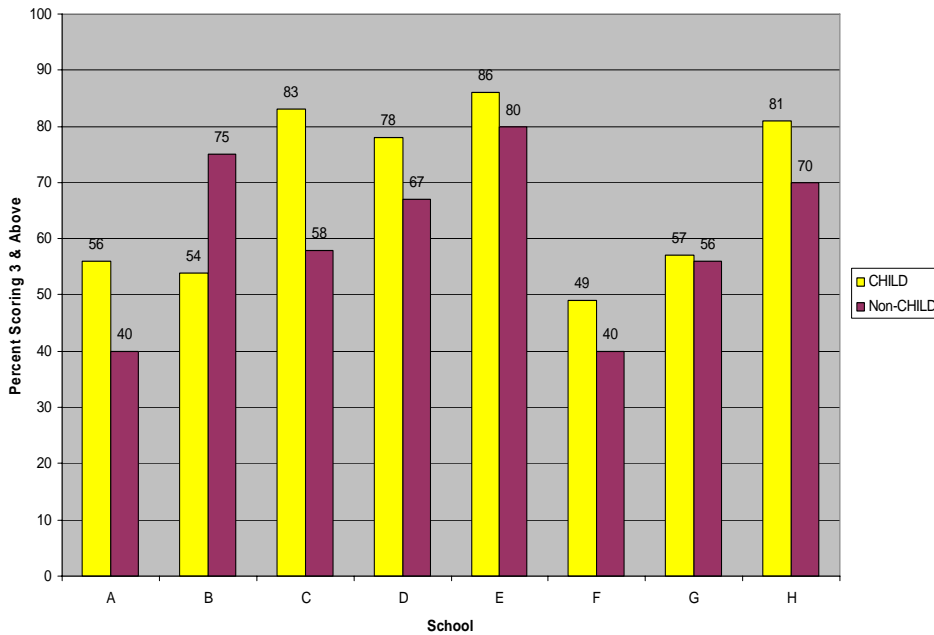
Title One: Grade 4 FCAT Reading

Percent Scoring 3 & Above

School	CHILD	Non-CHILD
A	72	37
B	85	58
C	91	72
D	94	49
E	86	83
F	50	27
G	67	64
H	89	88
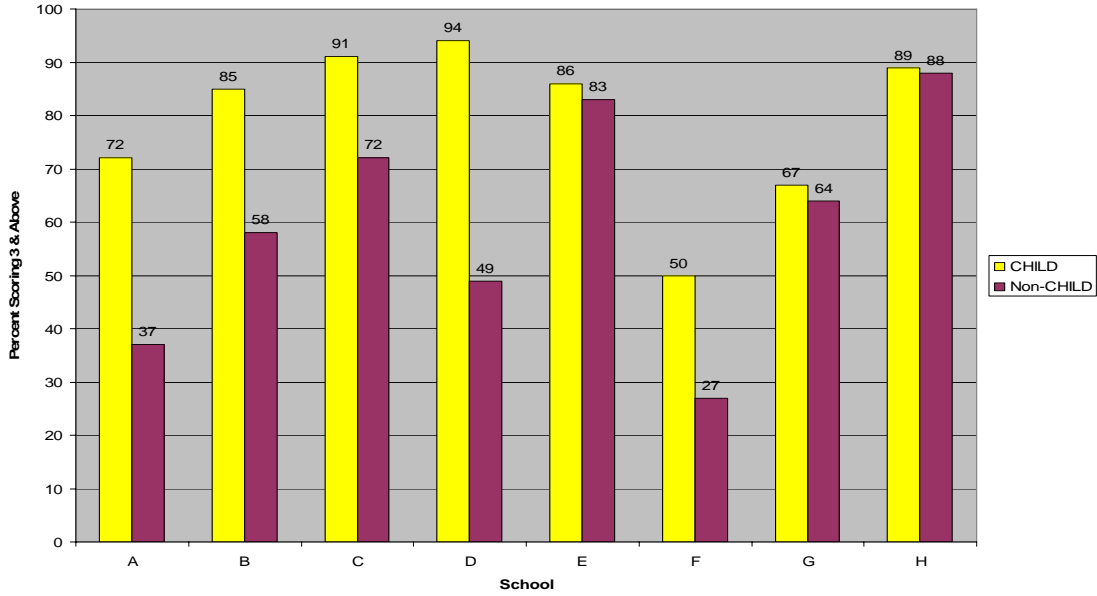
Title One: Grade 4 FCAT Mathematics

Percent Scoring 3 & Above

School	CHILD	Non-CHILD
A	61	53
B	76	57
C	79	64
D	81	84
E	86	76
F	37	27
G	54	60
H	81	64
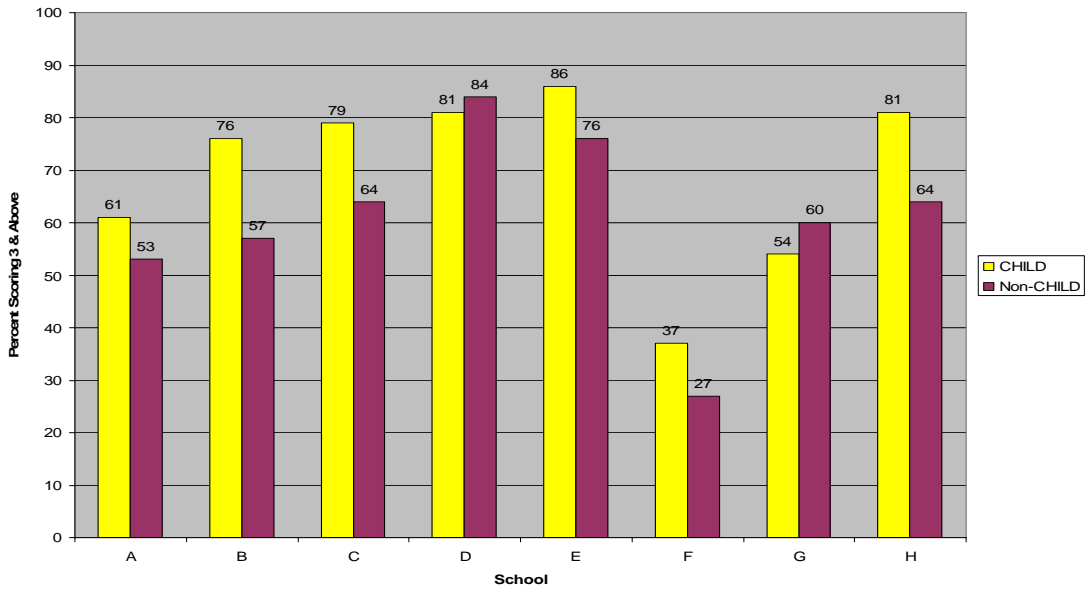
Title One: Grade 5 FCAT Reading
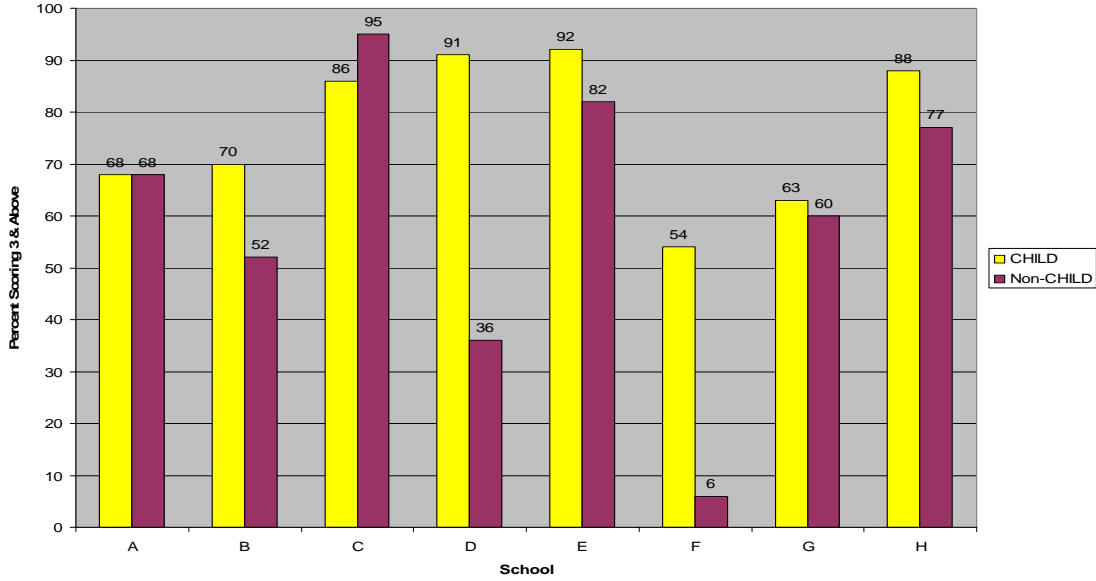
Title One: Grade 5 FCAT Mathematics
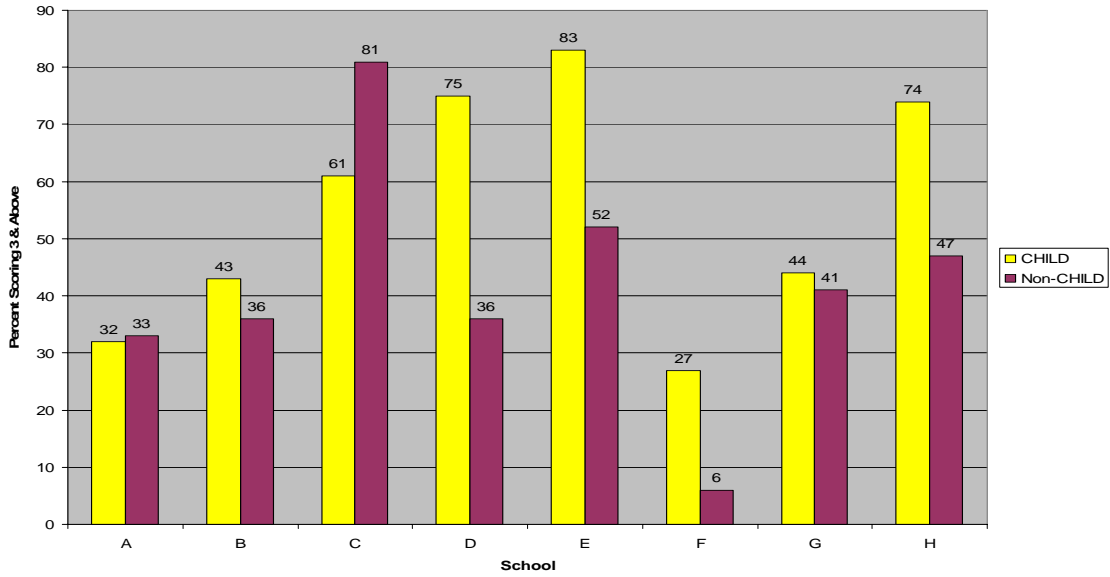
Subset of Fifth Grades with CHILD Primary (K-2) Experience

Analysis of the subset of schools with implementations of five years or longer was undertaken to determine whether having matriculated to 5th grade with prior CHILD experience in the primary grades made a difference. The data showed that 100% of the CHILD classrooms exceeded the state's passing rates (72% for reading and 59% for mathematics) by wide margins as represented in the graphs below.

Grade 5 FCAT Reading: 5+ Year's Implementation

Grade 5 FCAT Math: 5+ Years Implementation
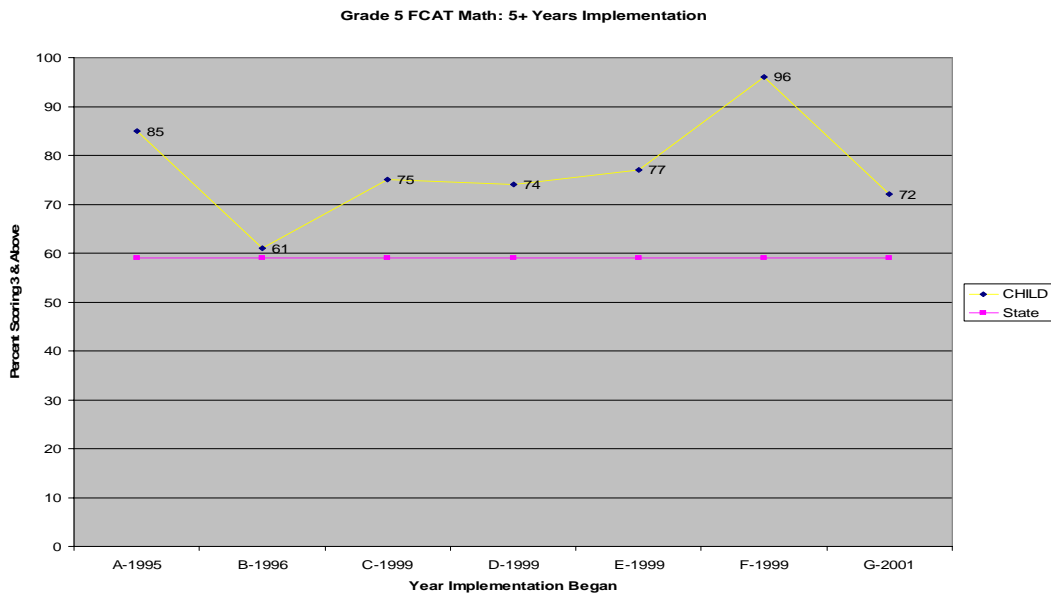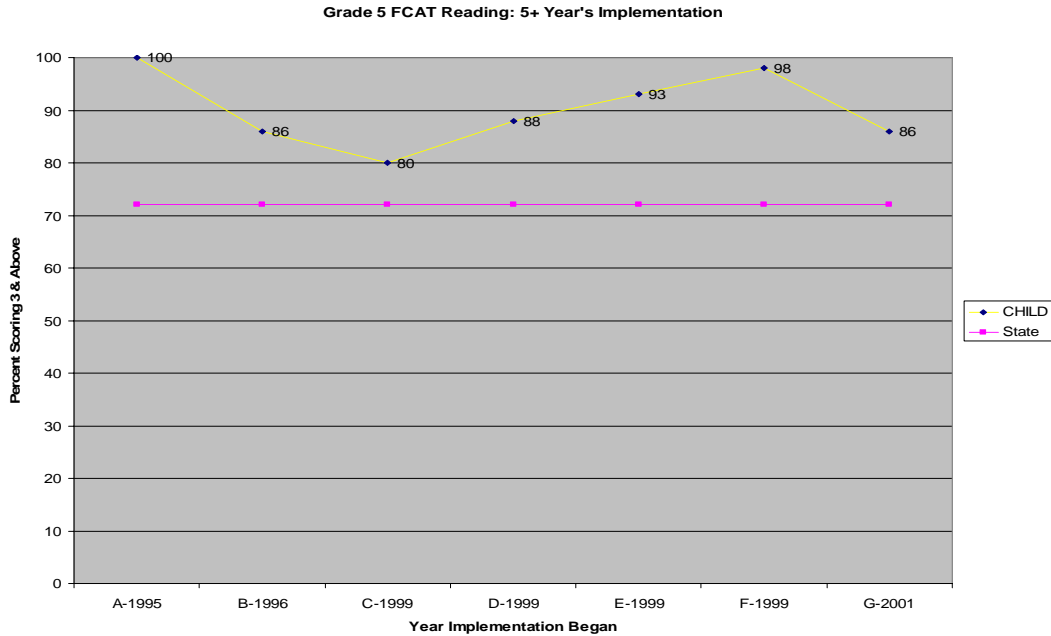
Discussion and Conclusion

The Project CHILD model continues to stand the test of time as an effective instructional system that improves student performance in comparison with traditional standard teaching practices. The overwhelming trend from school to school, and grade to grade for the 2007 FCAT results favored the CHILD classrooms.

In a few cases, the standard classrooms outperformed the CHILD classrooms. This is to be expected given the many variables involved in an elementary classroom – from teacher variables to student variables. Teaching and learning is a very complex process.This report therefore demonstrates that there are no silver bullets to improve student achievement.

More studies need to be conducted to uncover the key elements that lead to the positive trends for the CHILD approach. Two theories that undoubtedly contribute to the outcomes are 1) the use of time, and 2) teacher effectiveness.

Time-on-task has long been associated with positive learning outcomes(7). The CHILD model reduces wasted time by employing elements of looping and continuous progress, along with the independent movement of the students at learning stations. Students do not need to wait for others to finish before moving to their next task, nor do slower students need to feel rushed if they need more time to complete the station activity. The CHILD model optimizes time-on-task.

It is also interesting to note that intermediate students with Project CHILD experience in the primary grades succeed at very high levels. The 2006 report cited earlier showed a 100% FCAT passing rate for third grade students with K-2 CHILD experience. This 2007 FCAT Report shows that 100% of the CHILD fifth graders with K-2 CHILD experience surpassed the state averages in both reading and mathematics. More longitudinal studies need to be done to assess the impact of Project CHILD as a failure prevention strategy, and to see if the gains made by CHILD students continue into middle school and beyond.

The second theory is that effective teachers are essential for getting positive results(8). Perhaps the more effective teachers are drawn to Project CHILD as a vehicle that enables them to feel more empowered and creative. Perhaps the CHILD model makes the teachers more effective by letting them specialize in a subject they prefer. Perhaps they become more effective through the professional development, coaching, and the teaching tools that CHILD provides.

Experience has shown that the CHILD model can make a good teacher even better, while a weak teacher becomes more visible. A weak teacher who cannot, or will not, fully and faithfully implement the CHILD 20 Essential Components will not achieve the same outcomes as the effective teacher. But a weak teacher can become more effective by implementing at least some of the CHILD components. In the end, it always comes down to the teacher and his or her ability to motivate, engage, and assist students in meeting learning objectives.

Another area that needs further study is the role of technology and its impact on the CHILD results. The benefit of high quality educational technology is that it provides immediate feedback and individualized instruction opportunities. Well-designed software leads students through a systematic hierarchy of skills within a patient and non judgmental format. Are CHILD teachers taking advantage of

this powerful resource?

It remains unclear how much actual time is spent on appropriate and connected activities at the CHILD classroom Computer Station. Classroom observations have revealed some trivial and disconnected uses of the Computer Station, as well as "down time" due to technical problems and lack of available software. Tech support at many school districts has been drastically cut with the resulting teacher frustration in not having a dependable learning tool. Budget cuts have also impacted some schools' ability to keep their software libraries current and up to date.

Although many textbooks now provide on-line activities at no extra charge, teachers report that they lack the time to plan for true integration. Also with the availability of more free Internet software applications, cost is less a concern for acquiring educational software. However, teachers may be less than skillful at discerning which free software is effective and appropriate. More work and training needs to be done in this area.

Given these constraints, other technologies may be more appropriate, such as the AlphaSmart® word processing tools, or the LeapFrog® PLT's (Personal Learning Tools) that can operate separate from the Computer Station. ISI has undertaken a pilot project using several LeapFrog products including the Leapster®, LeapDesk®, LeapPad® and QuantumPad® to provide learner motivation and feedback at various learning stations. This new technology dimension will also need further study.
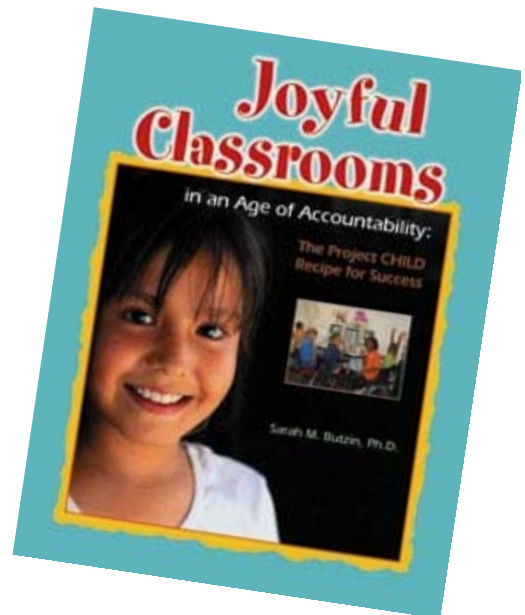
The Institute for School Innovation remains committed to reinventing classroom instruction through technology and active learning. The Project CHILD model continues to show its value in accomplishing this objective. ISI will continue to evaluate results and report them to interested researchers and policy makers in the hopes of growing and supporting a commanding network of innovative educators.

Endnotes

1. *Joyful Classrooms in an Age of Accountability: The Project CHILD Recipe for Success*. Sarah M. Butzin, Phi Delta Kappa, Bloomington, IN. 2005. ISBN 0-87367-542-8.

2. CHILD 20 Essential Components. www.ifsi.org/Project CHILD/Learn More

3. Project CHILD Research Summary. www.ifsi.org/Research & Publications

4. *Florida TaxWatch Comparative Evaluation of Project CHILD: Phase IV*. Research Report, Florida TaxWatch Center for Educational Performance & Accountability, Tallahassee, FL. March 2005. www.FloridaTaxWatch.org.

5. *An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Project CHILD on Third Grade Retentions in Florida*. EPPC Management, Tallahassee, FL. December 2005.

6. *A Retention Prevention Strategy: Project CHILD's Impact on Third Grade Retentions at Fifteen Florida Schools*. Institute for School Innovation, Tallahassee, FL. October 2006.

7. *Academic Engaged Time and its Relationship to Learning: A Review of the Literature*. J. Graden et al, ERIC Documents, ED 214 930, 1982.

8. *Good Teaching Matters: How Well-Qualified Teachers Can Close the Gap*. Kati Haycock, Thinking K-16, The Education Trust, Washington, DC. Vol. 3, Issue 2, 1998.

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A Retention Prevention Strategy

Project CHILD's Impact on Third Grade Retentions
at Fifteen Florida Schools

October 2006

Executive Summary

This report is a continuation of previous reports that have investigated the effects of Project CHILD on third grade retentions in Florida. Two previous studies have shown that CHILD third grade students in 2004 and 2005 were promoted at much higher rates than their peers in non-CHILD classrooms. Would this trend continue in 2006, especially for students participating in Project CHILD prior to third grade?

The answer is a resounding yes. Only 1% of the CHILD students were held back in third grade, compared to 14% statewide. School-by-school analysis from 12 of the 15 schools reporting data shows that not one Project CHILD student was retained. That's 100% success.

Notwithstanding the social benefits to young children who are promoted to the next grade along with their peers, the fiscal impact is staggering. A failure rate of 1% compared to 14% would save the taxpayers over $180 million.

"School-by-school analysis from 12 of the 15 schools reporting data shows that not one Project CHILD student was retained. That's 100% success."

Project CHILD is a retention prevention strategy that should be widely expanded. Just as children must be inoculated against disease before starting school, children could be inoculated against failure by participating in CHILD classrooms in the early grades (K-2). We can and must leave no third grader behind.

Project CHILD students engaged at a classroom computer learning station

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Project CHILD's Impact on Third Grade Retentions in Florida in 2006

Since its founding in 1995, the Institute for School Innovation (ISI) has been collecting achievement data for students participating in Project CHILD classrooms. Reports compiled by independent agencies such as Florida TaxWatch have documented the success of CHILD students in reading, writing, and mathematics when compared to their peers.[1]

This report further substantiates 2004 and 2005 reports on Project CHILD's impact on third grade retentions in Florida.[2,3] confirming that fewer Project CHILD students were retained than non-CHILD students. Furthermore, there were significantly less retentions for students participating in Project CHILD prior to third grade.

The research question for this report is whether this trend would continue for CHILD third grade students in 2006. Does participation in Project CHILD in the early grades act as an inoculation against failure? The answer is, YES.

About Project CHILD (Changing How Instruction for Learning is Delivered)

Project CHILD, developed at Florida State University in 1988, is an innovative instructional system for elementary schools. For the 2005-2006 school year, over 15,000 students, in five states, participated in CHILD classrooms.

Project CHILD students on task at their work stations, while the teacher is working one on one with individuals at a Teacher Station.

The CHILD model differs from the traditional single grade classroom with one teacher covering all subjects. In CHILD, teachers form cross-grade cluster teams: primary clusters for grades K-2, and intermediate clusters for grades 3-5. Each cluster teacher chooses a core subject (reading, writing, or mathematics) as their specialty. Students then rotate to each of the three classrooms in a cluster spending 60-90 minutes in each classroom working at a variety of learning stations focused on the core subject for that class. Each CHILD classroom has six learning stations:

Computer Station for learning with instructional software;
Teacher Station for small-group tutorials;
Textbook Station for written work;
Challenge Station for learning in a game-like format;
Exploration Station for hands-on activities and projects; and,
Imagination Station for creative expression.

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CHILD students are highly engaged and on-task, both factors strongly associated with academic achievement. Students stay with the same team of cluster teachers for three years. In addition to having more time to work with students, each teacher receives special training to use technology and cooperative learning techniques in his or her designated specialty area. The teachers still cover the school's required curriculum and use their basic texts and other school resources. The change with Project CHILD comes through the delivery method that moves beyond lecture and seatwork, now enhanced with technology and hands-on active learning.

Grade Retention Vs Social Promotion

Mandatory third grade retention is a huge policy issue which some have characterized as a ticking time bomb. The fiscal impact of retaining students notwithstanding, the academic and social impact on young children raises troubling questions. The long term impact on student dropout rates remains to be seen.

A proud Project CHILD first grade "Station Patrol" assisting in classroom responsibilities.

At the same time, there is a valid argument against social promotion where students are passed along unprepared for the grades to come. Political leaders in Florida have taken a hard line against social promotion. Florida law requires that third grade students who do not score at Level 2 or higher on the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT) must be retained, i.e., not promoted to fourth grade.[4]

Review of the Research

There has been extensive research on the effects of grade retention. A briefing paper from the professional education association Phi Delta Kappa[5] notes that "a summary of 19 studies conducted during the 1990's indicates that grade retention has a negative effect on achievement in reading, math, and language as well as on social issues such as behavior, school attendance, and peer relationships."

Other sobering findings from the research show that:

■ Achievement may increase during the year a student is held back, but gains fade after two or three years. By then students do no better or perform more poorly than students not retained.

■ Retained students are more likely to drop out and are less likely to go on to postsecondary schooling.

- Retention at both kindergarten and first grade is quite common and surprisingly harmful.

- In a 2001 study, sixth-grade students ranked grade retention as their number one fear, behind death of a parent and going blind!

A contrary view has been advanced via a recent study from the Manhattan Institute.[6] It reports that in 2002-2003 low-performing third-grade students in Florida who were retained improved 4.1 percentile points on the FCAT reading test compared with similarly low-performing students who were promoted. The authors of this study point out that this is the first analysis of grade retention based on objective criteria (FCAT scores) as opposed to subjective measures such as teachers' evaluations of who should be retained. The authors caution that "further research following these same groups of students will be necessary to track the effectiveness of Florida's retention program over time."

The Prevention Option

While well-meaning people on both sides debate the pros and cons of third grade retentions, all can agree that preventing failure from occurring in the first place is a more desirable approach. Prevention is the goal of Project CHILD.

Answering the research question of whether the trend for Project CHILD to prevent failure would continue, the answer is a resounding yes. The analysis of the 2006 data for third-grade CHILD students who had been in CHILD classrooms in the primary grades (K-2) indicates a 99% passing rate. This strongly supports the argument that CHILD students are prepared for third grade and can pass the FCAT. Project CHILD is a retention prevention option.

Looking at the Data

ISI requested third grade retention data from Florida CHILD schools that had both CHILD and non-CHILD classrooms so that we could compare results. Fifteen schools from nine districts responded with the following information:

- Number of CHILD third graders in CHILD classrooms with at least one year of CHILD experience in the primary grades; and the number retained.

- Number of non-CHILD third graders; and the number retained.

There were a total of 1,404 non-CHILD students, of which 111 were retained, or 8 percent. There were a total of 682 CHILD students, of which 8 were retained, or 1

percent. It should be noted that no (zero) CHILD students were retained at 12 of the schools.

Table 1: 2006 Third Grade Retentions at 15 Florida Schools

	Number of Students	Number Retained	Percent Retained
Non-CHILD	1,404	111	8%
CHILD	682	8	1%

The fifteen schools represented a diversity of socio-economic levels that ranged from 9%-86% of the students receiving free and reduced lunch. Over half of the schools were from high poverty neighborhoods where over 50% of the students were eligible for free and reduced lunches. The CHILD students are reflective of the overall school populations, with special needs students and non-English speaking students included in the CHILD classrooms.

Data published by the Florida Department of Education[7] showed that fourteen percent (14%) of Florida's third-grade students statewide scored at Level 1 on the FCAT reading, thus failing to meet the promotion criteria. Of the 9 districts included in this report, the average was twelve percent (12%) for third-graders scoring at Level 1. See Figure 1.

Figure 1: Percent of Third Grade Students Eligible for Retention* in 2006
*FCAT Reading Score at Level 1
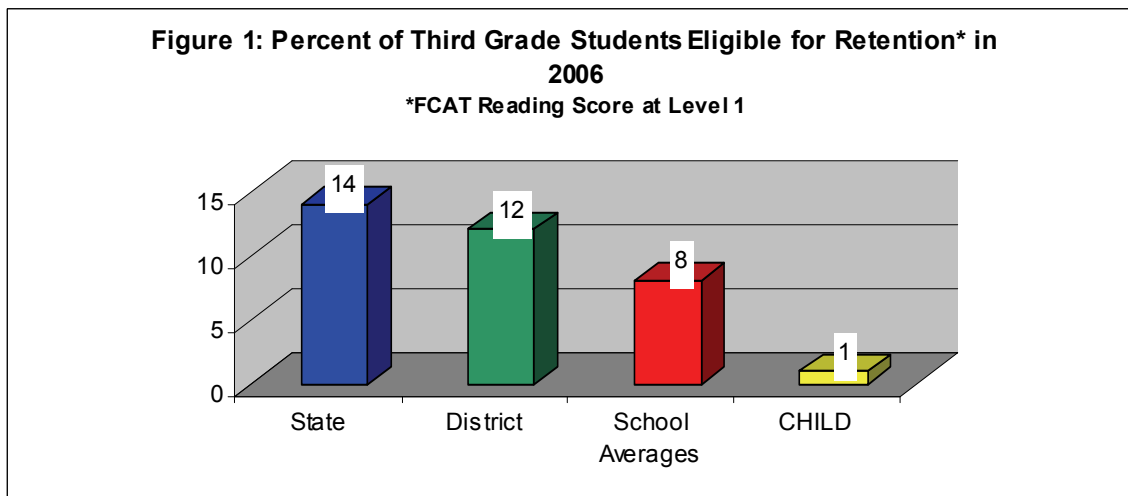
Further analysis comparing individual districts follows in Figures 2-10. In every case the CHILD students had significantly fewer retentions than the district average, and in all but one case the CHILD students had significantly fewer retentions than their school counterparts in non-CHILD classrooms.

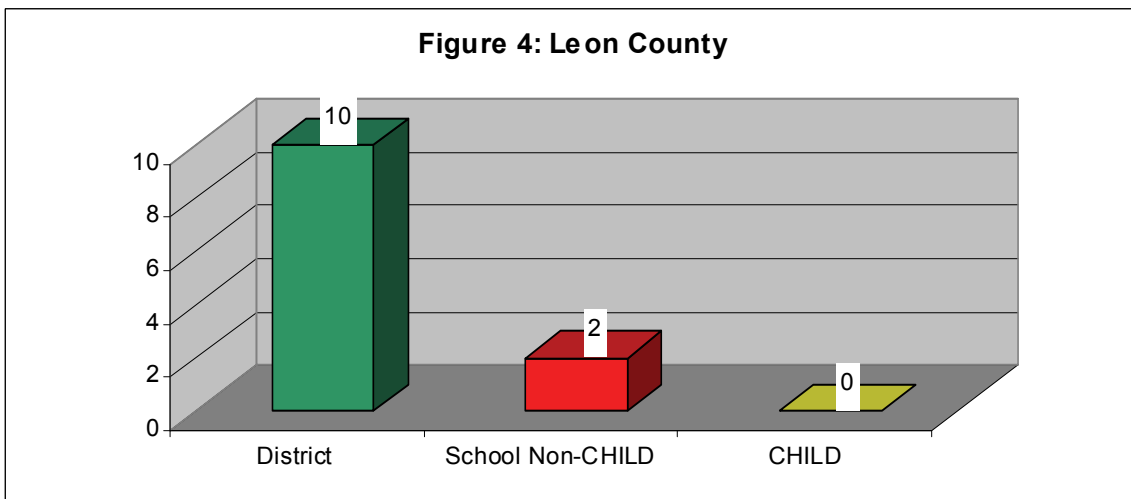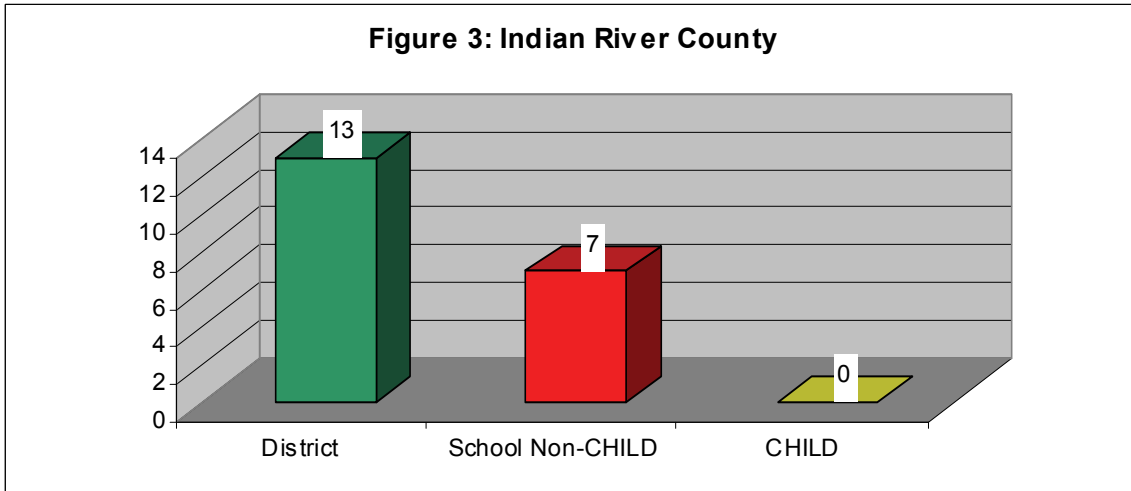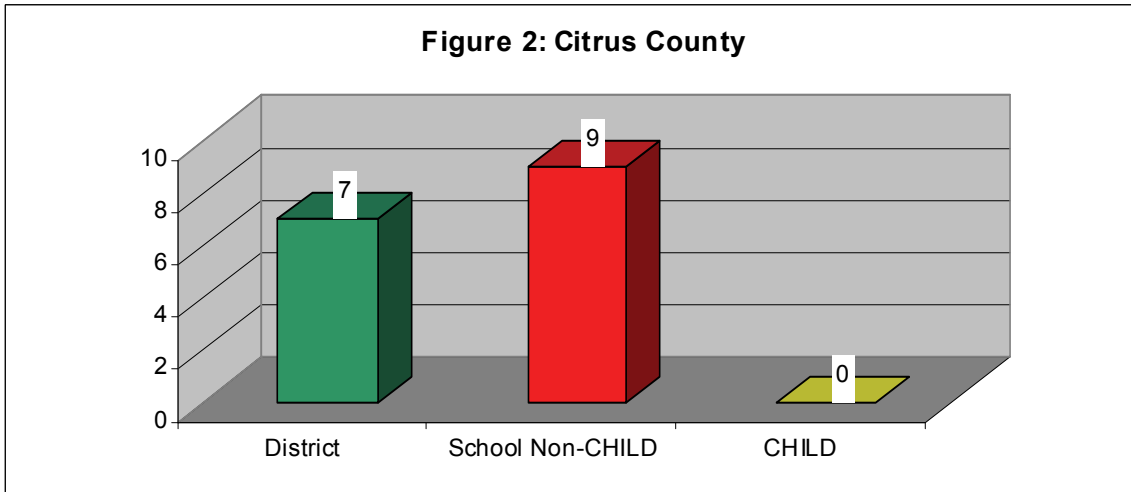**See Figures 2-10 which represent the percent not promoted.**

Figure 2: Citrus County

Figure 3: Indian River County

Figure 4: Leon County
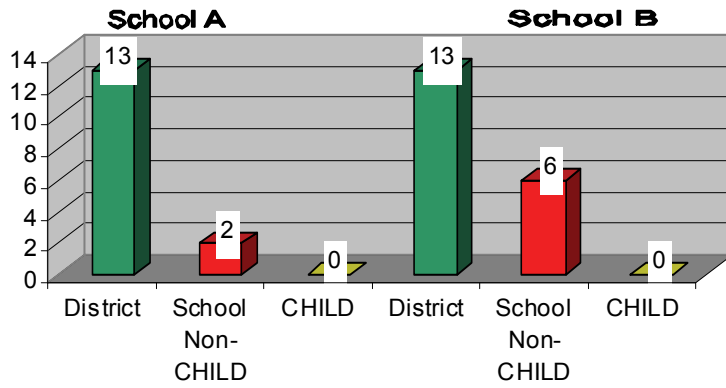
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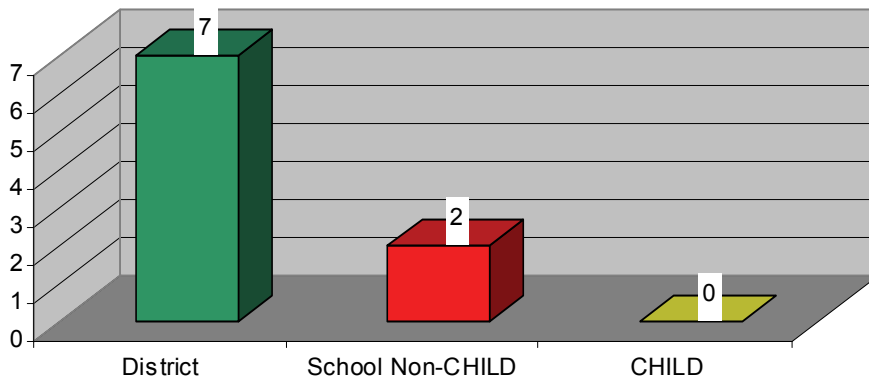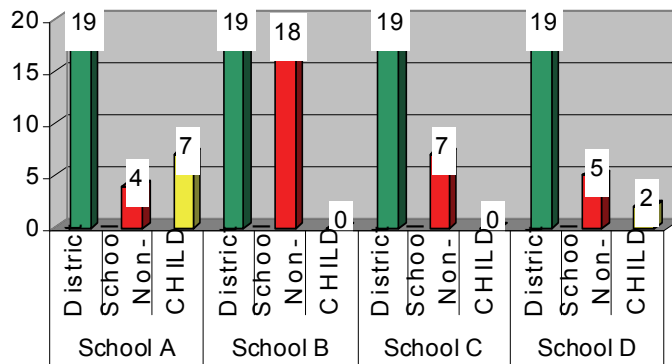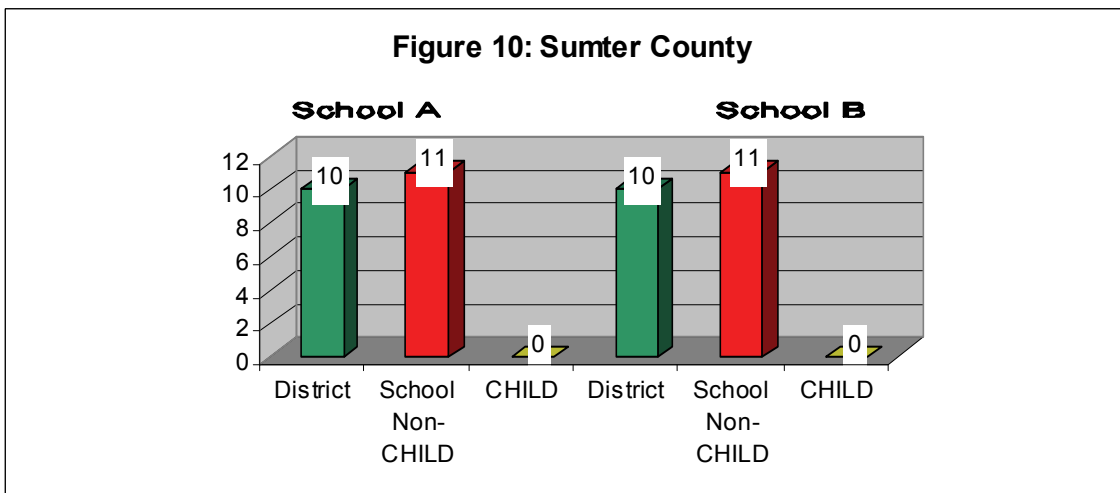
Figure 5: Marion County

Figure 6: Okaloosa County

Figure 7: Osceola County

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Figure 8: Palm Beach County

School A   **School B**

	District	School Non-CHILD	CHILD	District	School Non-CHILD	CHILD
Value	15	8	0	15	4	0

Figure 9: St. Lucie County

	District	School Non-CHILD	CHILD
Value	15	21	1

Figure 10: Sumter County

School A   **School B**

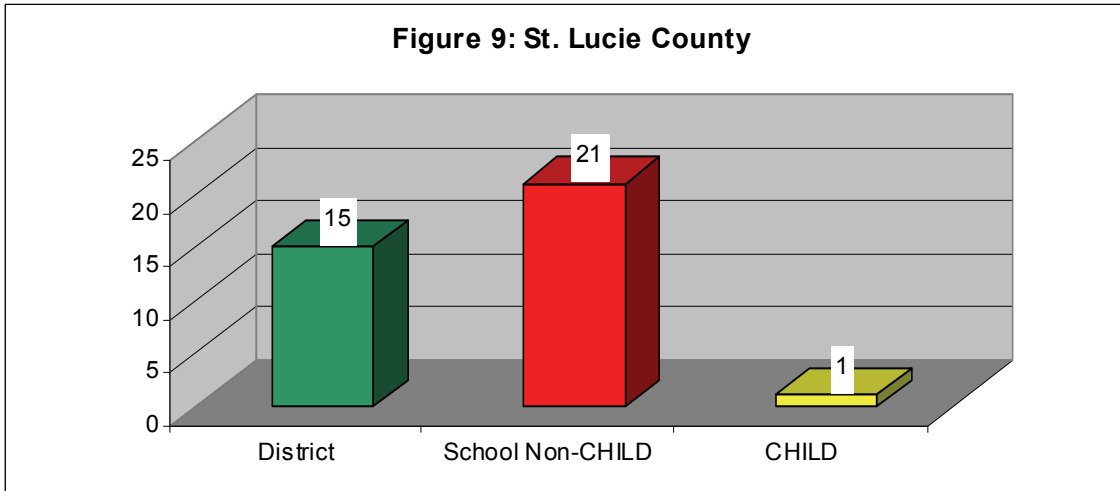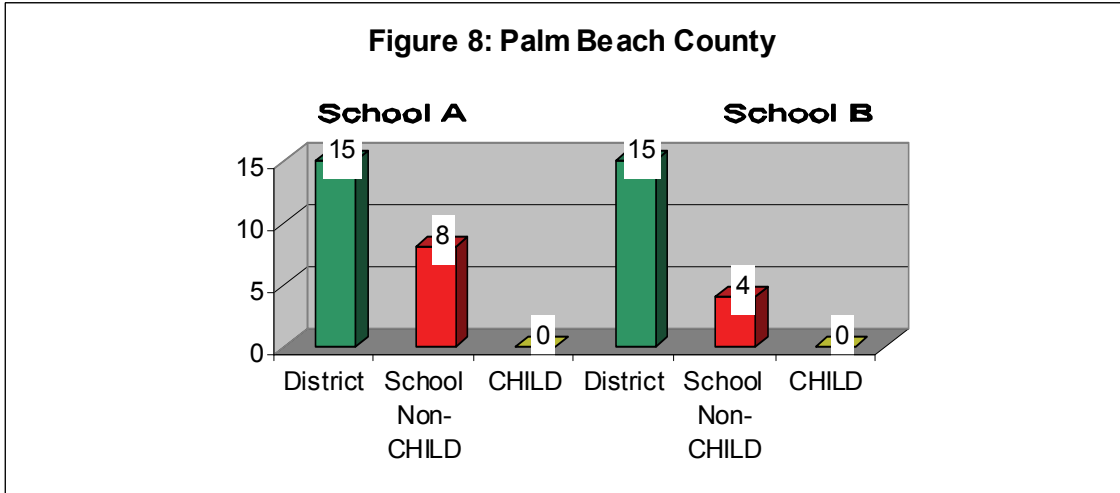|	District	School Non-CHILD	CHILD	District	School Non-CHILD	CHILD
Value	10	11	0	10	11	0

Fiscal impact

Failure is very expensive. The cost to educate a student in Florida in 2006-2007 will be $6,790 based on the unweighted FTE.[8] The number of third-grade students taking the FCAT exam in 2006 was 204,238.

If all 14% who failed the FCAT were retained, this would be 28,593 students. The fiscal impact of another year of schooling for these students is $194.2M. Assuming that even half are eventually promoted for cause[9], the fiscal impact would still be over $97M. One should also calculate the additional long-term cost of failure on the welfare and judicial systems should these students eventually drop out of school.

Assuming that a prevention strategy like Project CHILD was in place to reduce the retention rate to 1%, the fiscal impact would be $13.9M. The resulting savings at the 14% failure rate would be $180.3M, with a savings of $83.2M at the lower rate.

Table 2: The High Cost of Failure

Retention Rate	Number of Students	Cost @$6,790 FTE	Savings @1%
14%	28,593	$194,146,470	$180,274,970
7%	14,296	$97,069,840	$83,198,340
1%	2,043	$13,871,500	-0-

Technology, like books, is a daily-use delivery tool built into Project CHILD's instructional design.

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Conclusion and Policy Implications

Project CHILD is an effective instructional model that continues to prove that it prevents failure, especially when introduced to students in grades K-2. Project CHILD is a retention prevention strategy that is easily replicable and should be expanded throughout the state. The positive impact on children and the fiscal impact on the state cannot be ignored.

Project CHILD is poised to expand statewide if funding is made available to the innovators ready to take on the challenge. These innovators also need flexibility in delivery mechanisms while still requiring accountability standards. Restrictive policies that hamper innovation must be challenged.

Innovation means change, and change is a deliberate and complex process that evolves with time and unyielding leadership. The initial implementation of Project CHILD within a school requires a visionary leader willing to restructure and secure resources for the initial investment in training, materials, and on-site coaching. Teachers must be willing to put forth considerable effort in the start-up phase as they move beyond their traditional training and comfort zones.

The transformation of an elementary school usually begins in a few classrooms. Schools and districts cannot use operating budgets for selected classrooms. Therefore, supplemental funding in the form of grants is required to kick start the process at the local level. However, central office-mandated district or state initiatives usually eat up available supplemental funds. Therefore, expansion of independent proven initiatives like Project CHILD requires independent funding.

Project CHILD has vast support from innovative educators, parents, and legislative leaders. They have seen the power of Project CHILD to surpass other programs that have come and gone year after year. The integrity of the CHILD instructional design, along with the dedicated people who have sustained it over the years, is testament to sustaining real and meaningful change.

Project CHILD has developed through decades of systematic research. It is a tried, tested, and proven instructional system with test scores and retention prevention data documenting its success. ISI will continue to share published empirical data to inform future leaders and policy makers. This historical research offers the rationale to support more flexibility for schools to implement proven programs, as well as a case to provide funds to expand retention prevention programs like Project CHILD.

Florida's ability to prepare our students, teachers, and communities for today's global economy is vital. Creating caring, informed, and productive citizens is vital to ensure Florida's future success. Laying the foundation begins in the elementary grades.

There is no time to waste. The success of our state is at stake.

Endnotes

1. *Florida TaxWatch's Comparative Evaluation of Project CHILD: Phase IV.* Research Report, Florida TaxWatch Center for Educational Performance & Accountability, Tallahassee, FL, March 2005.

2. *CHILD Program Reduces Student Retention and Could Save Tens of Millions of Dollars.* Briefings, Florida TaxWatch Center for Educational Performance & Accountability, Tallahassee, FL, September 2004.

3. *An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Project CHILD on Third Grade Retentions in Florida.* EPPC Management, Tallahassee, FL, December 2005.

4. 2004 Florida Statues, Title XL VIII, Chapter 1008.

5. *Grade Retention and Social Promotion.* Phi Delta Kappa, Topics & Trends, Volume 5, Issue 10, Bloomington, IN, 2006.

6. *An Evaluation of Florida's Program to End Social Promotion.* Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, Education Working Paper No. 7, Davie, FL, December 2004.

7. Florida Department of Education, Office of Assessment and School Performance, April 26, 2006.

8. Florida Education Finance Program Final Conference Report, May 08, 2006.

9. The actual number of students being retained statewide has not been announced as this document goes to press. Some students who fail the FCAT may be promoted after attending summer school, as well as "for cause."

Reading is a core Project CHILD component. Students here created reading buddies to aid in purposeful practice to encourage life long reading skills.