



**IMAGINE ME LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL
RENEWAL REPORT**

**2014 – 2015 SCHOOL YEAR
JANUARY 2015**

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Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Background Information

Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	
Board Chair(s)	David Aviles
School Leader(s)	Dr. Katherine Corbett (Executive Director), Mr. Bevon Thompson (Principal)
Charter Management Organization (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 19
Physical Address(es)	818 Schenck Avenue, Brooklyn
Facility Owner(s)	Private
School Opened For Instruction	2010-2011
Current Charter Term Expiration Date	1/11/2015
Current Authorized Grade Span	K-5
Current Authorized Enrollment	264
Proposed New Charter Term	1.5 years [January 12, 2015 – June 30, 2016]
Proposed Authorized Grade Span for New Charter Term	K-5
Proposed Authorized Enrollment for New Charter Term	264
Proposed Sections per Grade for New Charter Term	Grades K-3: 2 sections per grade; Grades 4-5: 3 sections per grade

Overview of School-Specific Data

School Evaluation of Academic Goals as stated in Annual Report to NYSED and Renewal Application to NYC DOE

Academic Goal Analysis					
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	Cumulative Charter Term Total
Total Achievable Goals	13	13	13	13	52
# Met	1	1	2	2	6
# Partially Met	0	0	1	0	1
# Not Met	2	2	4	7	15
# Not Applicable *	10	10	6	4	30
% Met	8%	8%	15%	15%	12%
% Partially Met	0%	0%	8%	0%	2%
% Not Met	15%	15%	31%	54%	29%
% Not Applicable *	77%	77%	46%	31%	58%
% Met of All Applicable Goals	33%	33%	29%	22%	27%

* Some goals may not be applicable in all years. For example, goals related to the NYC Progress Report are not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year as Progress Reports were not issued that year.

ES/MS students scoring at or above Level 3 on NYS assessments, compared to CSD, NYC and State averages

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	-	-	6.4%	13.1%
CSD 19	-	-	14.2%	16.9%
Difference from CSD 19 *	-	-	-7.8	-3.8
NYC	-	-	28.1%	30.5%
Difference from NYC *	-	-	-21.7	-17.4
New York State **	-	-	31.1%	30.6%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-24.7	-17.5

% Proficient in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	-	-	19.1%	23.8%
CSD 19	-	-	18.8%	22.0%
Difference from CSD 19 *	-	-	0.3	1.8
NYC	-	-	33.1%	39.3%
Difference from NYC *	-	-	-14.0	-15.5
New York State **	-	-	31.1%	36.2%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-12.0	-12.4

* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served. CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

** New York State proficiency rates were taken from data.nysed.gov.

Student improvement on the state tests compared to other students

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile - English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School – All Students	-	-	-	61.5%
Peer Percent of Range - All Students	-	-	-	48.3%
City Percent of Range- All Students	-	-	-	43.2%
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School – School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	73.0%
Peer Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	51.0%
City Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	46.8%

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile - Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School – All Students	-	-	-	52.5%
Peer Percent of Range - All Students	-	-	-	32.3%
City Percent of Range- All Students	-	-	-	29.5%
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School – School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	57.0%
Peer Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	22.7%
City Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	12.8%

A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A peer/city percent of range of 50% represents the position of the average and can be interpreted as a school outperforming 50% of their peer group/city.

Closing the Achievement Gap

Percent in the 75th Growth Percentile - English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students with Disabilities *	-	-	-	-
English Language Learner Students	-	-	-	-
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	-	-	-	36.0%
Percent in the 75th Growth Percentile - Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students with Disabilities *	-	-	-	-
English Language Learner Students	-	-	-	-
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	-	-	-	21.4%

* Defined as students with a placement in Self-Contained, ICT, or SETSS.

II. Renewal Recommendation and Rationale

Based on the evidence presented herein and detailed below in Part II, the NYC DOE recommends a 1.5 year short term renewal with academic performance and finance conditions.

The academic performance conditions are as follows:

1. In each year of the charter term, the school must demonstrate its ability to close the achievement gap for students in the lowest third citywide: the school's percentage of students in the lowest third citywide in the 75th growth percentile on the New York State ELA assessment must meet or exceed the elementary school citywide average for students in the lowest third citywide in the 75th growth percentile.
2. In each year of the charter term, the school must demonstrate its ability to close the achievement gap for students in the lowest third citywide: the school's percentage of students in the lowest third citywide in the 75th growth percentile on the New York State math assessment must meet or exceed the elementary school citywide average for students in the lowest third citywide in the 75th growth percentile.

The financial condition is as follows:

1. The school will submit quarterly financial statements to the NYC DOE within 45 days of the close of each fiscal quarter. The school will submit a memorandum describing strategies for how the school will increase its unrestricted days of cash on hand from 18 to at least 30, without an infusion of cash, by the end of the 2015 fiscal year (June 30, 2015).

Global Condition

By the time of evaluation for renewal, the School must have met or exceeded 70 percent of the applicable DOE mandated goals as set forth herein in Exhibit D in order to be eligible for renewal. Failure to meet at least 70 percent of the mandated goals may result in NYC DOE recommendation to the Regents for non-renewal at the conclusion of the charter term.

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Imagine Me Leadership Charter School has not yet demonstrated academic success.

New York Charter Schools Act

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include:

§ 2850 (2)

- (a) Improve student learning and achievement;
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- (f) Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding the schools established under this article accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

Data available for Imagine Me Leadership Charter School indicates that the school has not made progress towards meeting these objectives.

Mission and Vision

Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's mission is to "provide a positive, nurturing environment along with an exciting, rigorous, academic, and cultural program where boys learn to become responsible citizens, life-long learners, and community leaders. They will develop a sense of self by knowing who they are, and what they are expected to become, thus, allowing them to be confident and prepared to face the challenges in a competitive world." The school's stated mission-aligned academic components include an instructional philosophy that considers boys' learning styles and school-defined high expectations of a passing rate of 75% in all subjects.

School Specific Academic Performance

The school entered its fifth year of operation with the 2014-2015 academic year. As an elementary school that phased in one grade level per year after opening with kindergarten and first grades in the 2010-2011 school year, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has two years of New York State (NYS) assessment data and four years of other academic data, such as data obtained through internal assessments and attendance information, to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at Imagine Me Leadership Charter School (IMLCS). However, the school has changed its internal assessments over the course of the charter term, which does not allow for a year-over-year comparison of internal assessment results.

IMLCS has consistently underperformed the CSD 19 average proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and consistently met the performance of CSD 19 in math during the current charter term. However, performance on both ELA and math assessments is far below peer, citywide and NYS averages during the charter term.

Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, NYS assessments were aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). As such, proficiency rates for school years prior to the 2012-2013 are not directly comparable. However, as this school had its first year of testing in 2012-2013, all proficiency results are aligned to the CCLS.

In 2012-2013, only 19.1% of IMLCS's students were proficient in math. IMLCS's math proficiency was lower than 67% of elementary schools citywide. In addition, when compared to elementary schools with student populations most like its own (i.e. peer schools) IMLCS outperformed only 26% of its peer schools. In 2012-2013, only 6.4% of IMLCS's students demonstrated proficiency in state tests in English Language Arts (ELA). This level of proficiency placed IMLCS in the bottom 4% of elementary schools citywide and at the zero percentile of its peer group, meaning that the school's ELA proficiency was lower than that of all of its peer group schools.

The following year, in 2013-2014, the school's proficiency rates rose in both ELA and math. However, only 23.8% of IMLCS's students were proficient in math. IMLCS's math proficiency was still lower than 67% of elementary schools citywide. When compared to elementary schools with student populations most like its own, IMLCS outperformed only 23% of similar schools. In 2013-2014, only 13.1% of IMLCS's students demonstrated proficiency in state tests in ELA. Despite doubling its absolute proficiency rates in ELA, IMLCS outperformed just 16% of elementary schools citywide. Additionally, IMLCS outperformed only 3% of its peer schools.

Over the four years that data is available for the retrospective charter term, IMLCS has met only 27% of its applicable academic charter goals.^{1,2} IMLCS met two of nine applicable performance goals in its most recent year. Because of the move to CCLS in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not

¹ This calculation does not include goals which have not been evaluated (not applicable) either as a result of the goal no longer being measurable (e.g. NYC DOE Progress Report grades for 2013-2014 school year forward) or the goal not yet measurable for the school at the time of the annual reporting (e.g. high school graduation rate for an academic year in which the school was not serving grade 12 students).

² It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and math exams or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals for the 2012-2013 school year. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE will not include goals that are related to NYC DOE Progress Report Grades or, due to a change in state regulation, goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two in its analysis of progress towards goals.

evaluate goals that measure a school's academic performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and math exams for the 2012-2013 school year. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, due to a change in state regulation, the NYC DOE will not include goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two or NYC DOE Progress Report grades. The school has demonstrated low overall rates of goal attainment across the whole of its charter term, as well as a trend of decreased achievement of its stated charter goals over the last three years of the charter term under review.

In 2013-2014, IMLCS' ELA median adjusted growth percentile was 61.5% with a City Percent of Range of 43.2%, placing the school in the 35th percentile of elementary schools citywide.³ Similarly, the school's peer and Community School District (CSD) percentiles were 45% and 50%, respectively. This means that the majority of other elementary schools in IMLCS' peer group and CSD 19 had ELA median adjusted growth percentiles greater than or equal to IMLCS's median adjusted growth percentile.

In 2013-2014, IMLCS' math median adjusted growth percentile was 52.5% with a City Percent of Range of 29.5%, placing the school in the 20th percentile of elementary schools citywide. Similarly, the school's peer and Community School District (CSD) percentiles were 28% and 35%, respectively. The school's math median adjusted growth percentile was below the average of both its peer group and CSD 19.

The school has shown limited evidence of a developed responsive education program and supportive learning environment. Reports from past NYC DOE visits to the school reference the struggles the school had in identifying and retaining school leadership over the course of the charter term. For three of the five operating years, the school had interim leadership, which led to increased teacher turnover and frequent changes in the implementation of professional development, assessments, and teacher evaluation. In a visit to the school in March 2012, reviewers noted that the school had an Interim Acting Executive Director that started off the 2011-2012 school year, but resigned three months into the job. A subsequent Interim Acting Executive Director (ED) was hired for the school year, but at the time of the visit, the Board was still unclear if it was going to hire the Interim ED for a permanent position.⁴ In a visit to the school in May 2013, reviewers reported that most of the teachers interviewed said "they receive limited feedback and no one could describe the method of evaluation."⁵

On its 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Report, IMLCS received an Overall D grade, as well as a D in Student Performance and a C in both the Student Progress and School Environment sections. The school's overall score of 17.6 points ranked the school 36th out of 37 early childhood schools citywide that received a Progress Report grade for 2012-2013. In 2012-2013 the school was classified by the NYC DOE as an Early Childhood School; Early Childhood schools do not receive a percentile rank therefore no percentile rank was included in the Progress Report.

NYC DOE Progress Reports graded each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and were based on student progress, student performance, and school environment. Scores were based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of 30-40 schools with the most similar student population and to all schools citywide. The Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report was the most heavily weighted of all sections. For schools designated as Early Childhood schools, the grade in this section was based on Early Grade Progress, which measured how individual students' proficiency on State ELA and math exams exceeded their expected proficiency in third grade based on the student's demographic characteristics. Although the NYC DOE Progress Report was discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, individual

³ A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A percentile rank provides the percentage of schools that score the same or lower than the school under consideration. A City Percent of Range of 43.2% indicates that the school's ELA median adjusted growth percentile was below than the average but less than one standard deviation below the average (that 43.2% of the range around the average represented scores lower than that of IMLCS), while a citywide percentile of 35% indicates that IMLCS's ELA median adjusted growth percentile was higher than only 35% of all elementary schools citywide.

⁴ Imagine Me Leadership Charter School Annual Site Visit Report 2011-2012

⁵ Imagine Me Leadership Charter School Annual Comprehensive Report 2012-2013

academic performance metrics from the former NYC DOE Progress Report are included in this renewal report for all years for which data was available in the current charter term.

Closing the Achievement Gap

NYC DOE-authorized charter schools are also assessed based on their ability to close the achievement gap for specific student populations. In school years prior to the 2013-2014 school year, schools received additional credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report for progress and performance of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who start in the lowest third of proficiency citywide. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, charter schools will be assessed on the actual performance as well as the academic growth of students in these populations compared with public school students in the CSD and throughout New York City.

On the 2013-2014 NYS assessments, 21% of Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's students in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting math scores. This level places IMLCS above only 4% of elementary schools citywide and above only 5% of elementary schools in CSD 19. Similarly, only 36% of students in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting ELA scores; this level places IMLCS in the 8th percentile of all elementary schools citywide and the 16th percentile of CSD 19 schools.

In 2013-2014 IMLCS did not serve the minimum number⁶ of students with disabilities to receive data on the percent of students with disabilities who experienced growth in math or ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting scores.

Similarly, IMLCS did not serve the minimum number of students designated as English Language Learners in 2013-2014 to receive data on the percent of English Language Learner students who experienced growth in math or ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting scores.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

Imagine Me Leadership Charter School (IMLCS) is a partially operationally sound and fiscally viable organization. This assessment was made based on a review of the following indicators of operational and fiscal viability:

- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's Board of Trustee bylaws;
- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's Board of Trustee meeting minutes;
- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's self-reported staffing data;
- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's financial disclosure forms;
- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's FY12, FY13, and FY14 independent financial audits;
- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's 2014-2015 staff handbook;
- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's 2014-2015 student/family handbook; and
- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's FY15 budget.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has maintained a partially developed governance structure and organizational design. The Board has consistently had a membership size that falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws, a minimum of five and maximum of 13 members over the course of the term; however, the bylaws indicate that at all times there shall be an odd number of trustees and presently the Board only has six members. The school's Board has been mostly stable, with any turnover addressed in a timely manner.

⁶ The minimum number of students for each metric in the Closing the Achievement Gap section is five. Metrics are excluded for a school when student-sample-size criteria are not met because of confidentiality considerations and the unreliability of measurements based on small numbers.

The Board held 12 meetings per year, as per the bylaws, during the most recent 2013-2014 school year, but failed to hold 12 meetings per year during the three prior school years. Quorum at Board meetings was achieved for all meetings in year three of the charter term, school year 2012-2013. Quorum was achieved at nearly all board meetings in year two and year four (2011-2012 and 2013-2014, respectively). Minutes for only three Board meetings were available for year one (2010-2011). There are clear lines of accountability between the Board and school leadership as evidenced by the school leadership team's monthly updates on academic progress and performance to the Board and its committees. The Board has active and functioning committees, as required by its bylaws, including an Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, a Fund Raising Committee, and an Academic Accountability Committee, as recorded in its roster.

Over the course of the school's charter term the school has partially developed a stable school culture. During the charter term, the school experienced significant leadership turnover with three different principals and two different executive directors since opening in 2010-2011. The school's current leadership team, which consists of Bevon Thompson, Principal; Dr. Katherine Corbett, Executive Director; Dr. George Leonard, Curriculum Director; and Mitchell Greggs, Literacy Coach, joined as an interim leadership team in 2012-2013 and took on permanent roles beginning with the 2013-2014 school year. Instructional staff turnover during the charter term has been inconsistent. The average turnover rate for instructional staff over the course of the charter term is 31%; however, there have been large swings in both the number and percentage of instructional staff who have resigned or were terminated. In year one, year two, and year three of the charter term (2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013), 25%, 5%, and 79% of instructional staff did not return, either by choice or request, at the start of the following school year. In year three this represented 23 instructional staff members. However, for the most recent period, staff turnover was only 14%.⁷ Over the course of the charter, the school has developed an active Parent Association, which meets monthly during the school year.

Overall, the school is in a weak position to meet near-term financial obligations. IMLCS's current ratio is 0.51 and the school only has \$139,415 unrestricted cash on hand to meet current liabilities totaling \$384,677. Cash on hand represents 18 days of operating expenses. Overall, the school may be financially sustainable based on its current practices. However, the school's current enrollment, which is only 83% of its projected enrollment, may impact its ability to meet its projected revenue.

Three deficiencies were noted for the fiscal year 2013 (FY13) financial audit. According to the fiscal year 2014 (FY14) financial audit, all three prior audit findings were corrected during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014.

The NYC DOE issued a Notice of Deficiency to Imagine Me Leadership Charter School on January 9, 2013. After a review of the school's accountability documents during the 2012-2013 school year, the school was found to be deficient in the following areas: Compliance with Charter School Agreement, Financial Sustainability, and Organizational Capacity. The school's Board of Trustees was given a deadline of February 28, 2013 to provide a comprehensive plan to address the concerns described in the Notice. The Board complied with the directive, issuing a Deficiency Response on February 28, 2013 outlining plans to address the deficiencies. Under the Notice of Deficiency, the NYC DOE continued to monitor the school's identified areas of deficiency and compliance with the Deficiency Response plan for the duration of the 2012-2013 school year.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

Over the charter term, Imagine Me Leadership Charter School has been compliant with some applicable laws and regulations, but not others.

All staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.

The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification.

⁷ Data on instructional staff turnover was self-reported by the school in its Renewal Application to the NYC DOE dated November 2014.

The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.

The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.

One or more of the school leaders were trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.

Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently submit complete invoicing and reconciliation documents by the associated deadlines.

During the renewal visit conducted in October 2014, the NYC DOE found evidence that the school is not adhering to its established waitlist management policy of contacting applicants in the order applications are received. In addition, the NYC DOE was provided with evidence that applicants previously called from the waitlist were accepted on the condition of an interview and an assessment to determine eligibility. Additional documentation provided by the school confirmed the school's current practice of rejecting or accepting students based on screenings prior to enrollment. This practice is a violation of New York State Education Law.

The school does not have the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.

While the school has provided the NYC DOE with a current and complete copy of their Student Discipline Policy for the 2014-2015 academic year, the policy was not determined to be compliant with federal law as the blanket reference to IDEA is not sufficient.

All current Board members have submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms. The documents submitted do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.

The board has not consistently submitted new board member credentials within the required five days of change to OSDCP for review and, if necessary, approval. During the charter term, documents were not submitted per the required timeframe for one board member.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

The school does not have any plans for material revisions to the charter during the next charter term that would increase enrollment or have the school expand to serve additional grades.

Part 2: School Overview and History

Imagine Me Leadership Charter School (IMLCS) is an elementary school serving 227 students⁸ in kindergarten through fifth grade during the 2014-2015 school year. It opened in the 2010-2011 school year with kindergarten and first grades and is under the terms of its first charter. The school's authorized full grade span is for grades kindergarten through five, which it reached this year, 2014-2015. The school's current charter term expires on January 11, 2015.⁹ The school does not currently offer a public universal Pre-Kindergarten program in New York City. The school is located in a privately operated facility in Community School District 19 in Brooklyn.

IMLCS is a single-gender elementary school. The school's mission is to provide a positive, nurturing environment along with an exciting, rigorous, academic and cultural program where boys learn to become responsible citizens, lifelong learners, and community leaders. The boys will develop a sense of self by knowing who they are and what they are expected to become, thus, allowing them to be confident and prepared to face the challenges in a competitive world. The school instills character education through the use of a "Leadership Academy," which occurs on a monthly basis and is where the young male students learn leadership skills. In addition, the school instituted a "Parent Academy" to engage parents in the school's culture, and a mentoring program for the students with The Simeon Guild, a community-based senior men's group to engage the community and offer strong role models for the young male students.

IMLCS's Board of Trustees is led by chair David Aviles. The school's founding Board Chair, Reverend David Brawley, is still a member of the school's Board. The elementary school is led by Dr. Katherine Corbett, Executive Director, who has been at the school for one and a half years. The school also has a Principal, Bevon Thompson and a Director of Human Resources/Finance and Operations, Taryn Guy, who have been with the school for one and a half years and one year, respectively.

The school typically enrolls new students in kindergarten through fifth grade. There were 24 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2014 lottery.¹⁰ The school does backfill students from the waitlist during the school year for all grades kindergarten through five.

Over the charter term, the school enrolled and served students as follows with average class size and section count noted for the most recently completed school year, 2013-2014.

Enrollment

Grade-Level Annual Enrollment *	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Kindergarten	64	48	31	34
Grade 1	53	56	57	44
Grade 2	-	53	57	56
Grade 3	-	-	48	48
Grade 4	-	-	-	39
Grade 5	-	-	-	-
Total Enrollment	117	157	193	221

* Enrollment figures reflect ATS data as of October 31st for each school year with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.

⁸ ATS data as of October 31, 2014

⁹ NYC DOE internal data

¹⁰ Self-reported information collected through the 2014-2015 DOE Annual Charter School Survey

Additional Enrollment Data

School Year 2013-2014 Information	Section Count	Average Class Size
Kindergarten	2	17
Grade 1	3	15
Grade 2	3	19
Grade 3	3	16
Grade 4	4	10
Grade 5	-	-
Students Admitted Through The Lottery	47	

* Lottery and section count information are based on self-reported data from the 2013-2014 DOE Annual Charter School Survey. Average Class Sizes were determined by dividing ATS enrollment as of October 31, 2013 by the appropriate grade-level section count.

Please see additional demographic data in Section 4 of this report for information regarding the enrollment of special populations at Imagine Me Leadership Charter School. This information includes enrollment data for the percentage of students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, English Language Learners and students with disabilities as compared to the CSD and citywide averages, as well as targets proposed by the New York State Education Department (NYSED).¹¹

¹¹ Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, Board of Regents authorized charter schools, including those authorized by NYC DOE, will be held accountable to enrollment targets once established by NYSED for students with disabilities, English Language Learner students, and students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch.

Part 3: Renewal Report Overview

Renewal Report

This report contains the findings and recommendations of the NYC DOE regarding a charter school's application for charter renewal. This report is based on a cumulative record of the school's progress during the current charter term, including but not limited to oversight visits, annual reports, and formal correspondence between the school and its authorizer, the NYC DOE, all of which are conducted in order to evaluate and monitor the charter school's academic, fiscal, and operational performance. Additionally, the NYC DOE incorporates into this report its findings from the renewal application process, which includes a written application, a report on student achievement data and a school visit by the Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) and other staff from the NYC DOE.

Upon review of all the relevant materials, a recommendation is made to the NYC DOE Chancellor. The Chancellor's determination, and the findings on which that decision is based, is then submitted to the New York State Board of Regents.

Is the school an academic success?

To assess whether a school is an academic success, the NYC DOE considers performance measures, including, but not limited to the following (as appropriate for grades served):

- New York State ELA and math assessment absolute results; New York State Regents exams passage rates;
- Comparative proficiency for elementary and middle schools, including growth rates for ELA and math proficiency;
- Comparative graduation rates and Regents completion rates for high schools;
- Closing the achievement gap performance relative to CSD or New York City public schools;
- New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) or other approved alternate assessments; and
- Performance data pertaining to college and career readiness.

Academic success is rated as **Demonstrated, Partially Demonstrated, or Not Yet Demonstrated.**

Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?

To assess whether a school is a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization, OSDCP focuses on three areas: Governance Structure & Organizational Design, School Climate & Community Engagement, and Financial Health. This includes an analysis of the school's audited financial statements, based on the National Association of Charter School Authorizer's Core Performance Framework.¹²

The NYC DOE considers a variety of supporting materials and data, including but not limited to the following:

- Board of Trustee bylaws;
- Board of Trustee meeting minutes;
- Annual Reports submitted by schools to New York State Education Department (NYSED);
- NYC DOE School Surveys;
- Data collection sheets provided by schools;
- Student, staff, and Board turnover rates;
- Audits of authorized enrollment numbers; and
- Annual financial audits.

A school's Governance Structure & Organizational Design and Climate & Community Engagement are rated as **Developed, Partially Developed, or Not Yet Developed.** A school's Financial Health is rated to indicate whether there are concerns about the near-term financial obligations and the financial sustainability of the school.

¹² Please refer to the following website for more information:

http://nacsa.mycrowdwisdom.com/diweb/catalog/item/id/126547/q/%20q=performance*20framework&c=82

Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable law and regulations?

As it pertains to compliance, the NYC DOE identifies areas of compliance and noncompliance with relevant laws and regulations as identified in the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework.

Staff Representatives

The following experts participated in the review of this school, including the renewal visit to the school on October 8 – 9, 2014:

- DawnLynne Kacer, Executive Director, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Maria Campo, Senior Director, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Kaitlin Padgett, Director of Evaluation and Policy, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Ola Duru, Director of Operations, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Caitlin Robisch, Director of Analytics, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Paul Yen, Data Analyst, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Mariama Sandi, Chairperson, Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support, Charter Committee on Special Education Citywide
- Arthur Sadoff, Independent Consultant

Part 4: Findings

Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

At the time of this school's renewal Imagine Me Leadership Charter School has not yet demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

High Academic Attainment and Improvement

- The school has four years of academic performance data and two years of New York State (NYS) assessment data at the time of this report. For detailed information on grade-level data on NYS assessments, please see Appendix A.

NOTE: The 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 ELA and math proficiency percentages should not be compared directly with prior-year results. Unlike prior years, proficiency on the NYS assessments for ELA and math in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 were based on the Common Core Learning Standards – a more demanding set of knowledge and skills necessary for 21st century college and career readiness. However, as IMLCS had its first year of testing in 2012-2013, all proficiency results are aligned to the CCLS.

ES/MS students scoring at or above Level 3 on NYS assessments, compared to CSD, NYC and State averages

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	-	-	6.4%	13.1%
CSD 19	-	-	14.2%	16.9%
Difference from CSD 19 *	-	-	-7.8	-3.8
NYC	-	-	28.1%	30.5%
Difference from NYC *	-	-	-21.7	-17.4
New York State **	-	-	31.1%	30.6%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-24.7	-17.5

% Proficient in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	-	-	19.1%	23.8%
CSD 19	-	-	18.8%	22.0%
Difference from CSD 19 *	-	-	0.3	1.8
NYC	-	-	33.1%	39.3%
Difference from NYC *	-	-	-14.0	-15.5
New York State **	-	-	31.1%	36.2%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-12.0	-12.4

* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served. CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

** New York State proficiency rates were taken from data.nysed.gov.

Performance on the NYC Progress Report

Elementary School Progress Report Grades	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Overall Grade	-	-	D	Progress Reports were discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
Student Progress	-	-	C	
Student Performance	-	-	D	
School Environment	-	-	C	

Mission and Academic Goals

According to the school's Renewal Application submitted to the NYC DOE, as well as annual reports submitted to the NYSED, over each of the four years in the charter term during which the school was open, the school met academic goals as follows:

- 1 of 3 applicable charter goals in the first year of the charter,
- 1 of 3 in the second year,
- 2 of 7 in the third year,¹³ and
- 2 of 9 in the fourth year.

Progress Towards Academic Charter Goals *

Academic Goals	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
1. 75% of third through fifth graders will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA examination.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met
2. 75% of third through fifth graders will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Math examination.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met
3. 75% of fourth graders will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Science examination.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Met
4. 75% of fifth graders will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Social Studies examination.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5. 75% of students in grades kindergarten through two will perform at or above grade level on the ECLAS2 assessment and/or Terra Nova assessment.	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	N/A
6. Grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's NYS ELA exam and 75% at or above Level 3 on the current year's NYS ELA Exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75% at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort will show at least an increase in the current year.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met
7. Grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's NYS Math exam and 75% at or above Level 3 on the current year's NYS Math Exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75% at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort will show at least an increase in the current year.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met

¹³ It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and Math exams or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and Math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals for the 2012-2013 school year. Goals that refer to comparative academic performance of the school (e.g. to the Community School District) were included in the analysis. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE will not include goals that are related to NYC DOE Progress Report Grades or, due to a change in state regulation, goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two in its analysis of progress towards goals.

Academic Goals		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
8.	75% of students in grades kindergarten through two will increase by 50% their performance on the ECLAS2 and/or Terra Nova assessments between the fall and spring administrations.	N/A	N/A	Partially Met	N/A
9.	The percent of students performing at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam in each tested grade will place the school in the top quartile of all peer schools.	N/A	N/A	Not Met	Not Met
10.	The percent of students performing at or above Level 3 on the State Math exam in each tested grade will place the school in the top quartile of all peer schools.	N/A	N/A	Not Met	Not Met
11.	The school will be deemed "In Good Standing" on the NYS Annual Report.	Met	Met	Met	N/A
12.	The school will have 90% promotion rate based on students reading on or above grade level as measured by formative and summative assessments.	N/A	N/A	Met	Met
13.	The school will have an average daily student attendance rate of at least 95%.	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met

* Goals were self-reported by the school in the school's Renewal Application submitted to NYC DOE and 2013-2014 Annual Report documentation submitted to NYSED.

Responsive Education Program

The school has changed its internal assessments over the course of the charter term, which does not allow for a year-over-year comparison of internal assessment results.

As part of the renewal review process, representatives for the NYC DOE visited the school on October 8-9, 2014. Based on discussion, document review, and observation, the following was noted:

- **Alignment with Common Core:**

- School leadership reported that school-based lesson plans, unit plans, and scope and sequences were aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards only beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
- The school moved to using i-Ready Reading assessments, i-Ready Math assessments, and Achieve 3000 in the fall of 2013 in order to monitor student growth through periodic formative assessments that were better aligned with the CCLS.
- The current school leadership team recognized a lack of professional development activities aligned with the CCLS, and in the 2014-2015 school year began including professional development topics such as higher order questioning and modeling of abstract concepts.

- **Addressing the Needs of All Learners:**

- According to the school's renewal application narrative, "prior to February 2013, any progress towards improving the academic achievement for at-risk groups and the academic achievement gap for at-risk students was undocumented."¹⁴
- The school leadership team reported that they re-established flexible grouping and provided professional development for teachers to increase their effectiveness in providing differentiated instruction. However, during classroom observations on the renewal visit, there was little evidence of differentiation or intentional groupings.
- Aside from school leadership explaining that after school tutoring and a Saturday Academy were offered as a opportunities for remediation for at-risk students, neither

¹⁴ Self-reported on Renewal Application dated October 31, 2014

school leadership nor instructional staff could provide a description of what other remediation strategies were used for struggling students, nor could they provide specifics about the nature of intervention used in the after school tutoring or Saturday Academy sessions.

- The model for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) includes pull-out Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) instruction and push-in Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) instruction. The school employs a Special Education Coordinator, who also serves as the school's Guidance Counselor.
- There is no evident program for English Language Learner (ELL) students at the school.

- **Instructional Model and Classroom Instruction:**

- School leadership reported that they encourage their teachers to use instructional practices that encourage risk-taking and student participation, such as frequent oral comprehension checks for understanding.
- The school employs a direct instruction model of instruction, with a few ICT model classes.
- The current school leadership team implemented a school-wide instructional plan at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year. It led to a review of baseline data found in standardized and interim assessments and a subsequent focus on professional development activities that would build instructional practice and improve the quality of the curriculum.
- The school is dependent on the Partnership for Innovation in Compensation for Charter Schools (PICCS) program for providing its instructional staff with professional development and developing a compensation model for all staff.
- During the renewal visit, 28 classrooms across grades kindergarten through five were observed with the school's Executive Director, Principal, Director of Curriculum, Literacy Coach, and a Grade Advisor.
- In most observed classes, students were following direct instruction with a single teacher in the classroom. In a few classrooms, there were additional adults in the classroom who were either Educational Assistants or paraprofessionals. In the ICT classrooms observed, the general education teacher was the primary instructor, while the special education teacher supported the lesson by monitoring the students' work.
- Class-sizes observed ranged from 12 to 19 students in size, with one teacher in most of the classrooms.
- Forms of questioning identified during the classroom observations included mostly basic fact recall, with some examples of challenging students to demonstrate understanding.
- In most classrooms, checks for understanding that included questioning, teacher observation, and class work were observed.
- In almost all observed classrooms, there was no observed differentiation of materials, tasks, or products. There was one observed classroom in which an Educational Assistant provided small group instruction differentiating materials, tasks, and products. In the ICT classrooms observed, the level of expectation and class work for students with disabilities did not differ from that for the general education students.
- In some observed classes, students were either fully on task or mostly on task. In other observed classes, several students were observed off-task, which went mostly unaddressed by the teachers.
- In no classroom did NYC DOE representatives see evidence of instruction aligned with a leadership or "all boys" curriculum.
- Based on debriefs with the school's leadership team members after classroom visits, most classrooms had instruction that aligned with the instructional model and current academic goals of the school.

Learning Environment

NYC DOE representatives conducted one-on-one interviews with 19 teachers and the Guidance Counselor/Special Education Coordinator. The following was noted:

- Most interviewed teachers reported that they received school-based professional development, delivered mostly by consultants through the PICCS program. A few interviewed teachers

mentioned a professional development retreat for all staff that was held at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year that focused on effective ways to engage students.

- Most of the interviewed teachers mentioned the use of the Danielson Framework for formal teacher evaluations, with teachers receiving two formal evaluations during the school year. They also reported that informal observations are conducted by the Principal and Literacy Coach who will then give verbal feedback by the end of the same day.
- Most interviewed teachers reported that they create their interim assessments by pulling questions from Engage NY, other core curriculum, former tests, and online resources. A few teachers mentioned the use of Achieve 3000 and Fountas and Pinnell as benchmark assessments given every six weeks.

A group of 10 fourth grade students and a group of 10 fifth grade students were interviewed. Based on student interviews conducted on the October 9, 2014 visit to the school, the following was noted:

- Students interviewed reported that homework was how teachers would know if the students understood what they are doing in class, and as a way for them to not forget what they learned that day in class.
- Students interviewed reported that they know they are doing well when they get shout outs from their teachers or peers and when they get the answers right to hard questions.

According to the 2013-2014 School Environment Survey, most parents strongly agree “that the school has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss [their] child” and most parents who responded to the survey strongly agree “that the school has high expectations for [their] child.”¹⁵

According to the 2013-2014 School Environment Survey, 75% of teachers agree that “order and discipline are maintained at the school,” though 20% agree with the statement that “at my school students are often harassed or bullied in school.”¹⁶

¹⁵ According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 58% of parent respondents strongly agree that IMLCS has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss their child; another 35% agree with the statement. Similarly, 60% of parent respondents strongly agree that IMLCS has high expectations for their child; another 36% agree with the statement.

¹⁶ According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 45% of teacher respondents strongly agree that order and discipline are maintained at IMLCS; another 30% agree with the statement. Of teacher respondents, 5% marked that they strongly agree that students are often harassed or bullied in the school; another 15% of teacher respondents marked ‘agree’ to the statement.

Essential Question 2: Is the School a Fiscally and Operationally Sound, Viable Organization?

During the charter term, Imagine Me Leadership Charter School was presented with one Notice of Deficiency for Fiscal or Operational Performance.

ID	Notice Type	Date Issued	Reason	Status
1	Deficiency	January 29, 2013	Financial Sustainability- The school received two loans totaling \$500,000 within four months (two consecutive invoicing cycles), which raised questions about cash flow because it was more than all charter schools in the city borrowed within the past year.	Closed

The Board of Trustees for the school was given a deadline of February 28, 2013 to provide a comprehensive plan to address the concerns described in the Notice. The Board complied with the directive, issuing a Deficiency Response Plan on February 28, 2013, outlining plans to address the deficiencies. The NYC DOE continued to monitor the school's identified areas of deficiency and compliance with the Deficiency Response Plan for the duration of the 2012-2013 school year.

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has partially developed its governance structure and organizational design.

On October 9, 2014, as part of the renewal review process, representatives for the NYC DOE met with a minimal representation of the school's Board of Trustees independent of the school leadership team. Based on document review and observation, the following was noted:

- The Board currently has six active members. This level of membership is consistent with the minimum of five members and maximum of 13 members established in the Board's bylaws.
- The Board's Treasurer and Secretary positions are specified in the bylaws and are currently filled; however, the Board's bylaws indicate that the structure must also include a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Presently, the school uses a Co-Chairperson model.
- The Board has consistently achieved quorum, as recorded in meeting minutes.
- There is a clear reporting structure with the school's Principal and Executive Director providing regular updates on academic progress and performance to the Board and its committee, as recorded regularly in meeting minutes.
- The Board has active and functioning committees, as required by its bylaws, including an Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, a Fund Raising Committee, and an Academic Accountability Committee, as recorded in its roster.
- The school's founder, Reverend David K. Brawley, is still a member of the school's Board, though he is no longer the Chairperson. Over the course of the charter term, the school has experienced significant leadership turnover with three different principals and two different executive directors since opening in 2010-2011. The school's current leadership team, which consists of Bevon Thompson, Principal; Dr. Katherine Corbett, Executive Director; Dr. George Leonard, Curriculum Director; and Mitchell Greggs, Literacy Coach, joined as an interim leadership team in 2012-2013 and took on permanent roles beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

School Climate & Community Engagement

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has partially developed a stable school culture.

- To date, the school has not yet met its charter goal of having an annual average student attendance rate of at least 95%. Average daily attendance for students over the course of the

charter term is 91.2% according to the data in the table below, which is below the citywide average of 93.5% over the same period.¹⁷

Average Attendance*

Elementary School Attendance				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School *	93.0%	85.0%	94.0%	92.8%
NYC **	93.2%	93.9%	93.6%	93.2%
Difference from NYC	-0.2	-8.9	0.4	-0.4

* Attendance was self-reported by the school for school years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012. For school years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 attendance was taken from ATS.

** NYC attendance figures reflect average attendance across all general education district schools as reflected in ATS.

- Staff turnover has not been consistent over the charter term but has improved over the last year. In year one, year two and year three of the charter term (2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013), 25%, 5%, and 79% of instructional staff did not return, either by choice or request, at the start of the following school year. However, for the most recent period staff turnover was only 14%.¹⁸
- Student mobility is presented below for the charter term without comparison to other schools, the CSD or NYC as final student retention goals were not established by the New York State Education Department for the retrospective charter term. Based on the NYC DOE's evaluation and not in comparison to any other school, the CSD or NYC averages, the school has had challenges with retaining students for the entirety of the current charter term.

Mobility

Student Mobility out of Imagine Me Leadership Charter School *				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Number of Students who Left the School	22	19	38	54
Percent of Students who Left the School	18.8%	12.1%	19.7%	25.6%

* Figures are based on student enrollment as of October 31 for each respective school year with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012. Students in terminal grades are not included.

- The NYC DOE has made changes to the NYC School Survey during the entirety of the retrospective charter term. Questions asked have been altered, added or deleted from year to year. Also, beginning with the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, survey categories will not be measured in total points out of 10 possible points. To allow for consistency during the evaluated charter term, selected questions, consistent with the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework were identified as relevant for charter schools. These are presented below for the duration of the retrospective charter term. In the most recent year of survey results, 2013-2014, the percentage of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing was not above the citywide averages for any of the four selected questions; the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing was above citywide averages for only one of three selected questions.
- NYC School Survey Response Rates should be comparable over time, however, as the measurement of these has remained consistent. Response rates for parents and teachers are presented below for each year of the charter term. In general, the response rates for both parents and teachers at Imagine Me Leadership Charter School have been below NYC averages (with the exception of the parent response rate in the second year of operation and the teacher

¹⁷ The table reflects school self-reported attendance data for school years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 and attendance data taken from the NYC DOE's Automate the Schools (ATS) system for school years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Please note that the school self-reported different attendance rates than those recorded in ATS for the last two years, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. The school self-reported attendance rates of 92.5% and 93.9%, respectively.

¹⁸ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form in November 2014

response rate in the most recent year). In two of the four years the teacher response rates were significantly below the citywide average teacher response rates.

Percent of Respondents that Agree or Strongly Agree						
Survey Question		Imagine Me Leadership Charter School				Citywide Average
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014
Students*	Most of my teachers make me excited about learning.**	-	-	-	-	-
	Most students at my school treat each other with respect.	-	-	-	-	-
	I feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker room, cafeteria, etc.	-	-	-	-	-
Parents	I feel satisfied with the education my child has received this year.	96%	90%	91%	93%	95%
	My child's school makes it easy for parents to attend meetings.	79%	81%	85%	88%	94%
	I feel satisfied with the response I get when I contact my child's school.	88%	90%	93%	96%	95%
Teachers	Order and discipline are maintained at my school.	50%	67%	33%	75%	80%
	The principal at my school communicates a clear vision for our school.	67%	83%	57%	85%	88%
	School leaders place a high priority on the quality of teaching.	100%	100%	71%	90%	92%
	I would recommend my school to parents.***	-	84%	29%	80%	81%

* Students in grades kindergarten through five do not participate in the NYC School Survey.

** This question was phrased as "My teachers inspire me to learn" in the 2009-2010 through 2012-2013 School Surveys.

*** This question was not introduced until the 2011-2012 School Survey.

		Response Rates			
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students*	Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	-	-	-	-
	NYC	-	-	-	-
Parents	Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	47%	64%	36%	42%
	NYC	52%	53%	54%	53%
Teachers	Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	75%	32%	29%	83%
	NYC	82%	81%	83%	81%

* Students in grades kindergarten through five do not participate in the NYC School Survey.

- The school's charter goals include, "parents will express satisfaction with the school's program, based on the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety and

Respect.” The school met this goal in 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. This goal is not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.

- The school’s charter goals include, “staff will express satisfaction with school leadership and professional development opportunities as determined by the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety and Respect.” This goal was not met in any of the school years 2010-2011, 2011-2012, or 2012-2013. The goal is not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.
- The school’s charter goals include, “students will express satisfaction with the school’s program, based on the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety and Respect.” This goal is not applicable because the school did not serve any students who are eligible to take the survey during the course of the retrospective charter term.

As part of the renewal process, representatives for the NYC DOE have collected evidence relevant to the school’s climate and community engagement over the school’s charter term. Based on discussion, document collection and review, and observation, the following was noted:

- Over the course of the charter, the school has developed an active Parent Association, which meets monthly during the school year.
- The NYC DOE conducted a public renewal hearing on October 9, 2014 at Imagine Me Leadership Charter School, 818 Schenck Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11207, for the school in an effort to elicit public comments. Approximately 90 participants attended the hearing, with 13 persons speaking in support of the school’s renewal and none speaking in opposition.
- The NYC DOE made randomized phone calls to parents/guardians from a roster provided by the school for students of all grades in October 2014. Calls to parents/guardians were made until twenty phone calls were completed. Of these calls, 90% of parent/guardian respondents provided positive feedback regarding the school, 5% were neutral, and 5% were negative.

Financial Health

Overall, the school is in a weak position to meet near-term financial obligations.

- Based on the FY14 financial audit and follow up, the school's current ratio of 0.51 indicated a risk that the school may be unable to meet its current liabilities.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit and follow up, the school's unrestricted cash availability of \$139,415 indicated a risk that the school will not be able to cover at least one month of its operating expenses without an infusion of cash. IMLCS's current cash on hand represents only 18 days of operating expenses.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2014-2015 budget to the actual enrollment as of September 30, 2014 revealed that the school had missed its enrollment target by more than 15%, indicating a risk that the school will be able to meet its budgeted revenue in order to cover budgeted expenses. At this level of enrollment, the school is also out of compliance with its charter agreement.
- As of the FY14 financial audit, the school had no debt obligations. On July 16, 2010, Imagine Me Leadership Charter School obtained a non-interest bearing \$50,000 loan from the New York City Charter School Center. The loan was due in full on September 30, 2013. The outstanding principal at June 30, 2013 was \$50,000. On September 30, 2013, the Board of Directors of the New York City Charter School Center voted to forgive the loan in its entirety to assist the school in carrying out its mission.

Overall, the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices.

- Based on the financial audits from FY14, the school generated a surplus though the school operated at an aggregate deficit of 6% over the past three fiscal years from FY12-FY14.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit, the school's debt-to-asset ratio of 0.78 indicated that the school had more total assets than it had total liabilities.
- Based on the financial audits from FY12 through FY14, the school generated overall positive cash flow from FY12 to FY14 and the school had positive cash flow in each measurable year.

Three deficiencies were noted for the FY13 financial audit. The deficiencies noted in the audited financials were:

1. The school did not maintain the required \$70,000 cash balance in its escrow fund.
2. The school was missing one I-9 form from one of its employees.
3. The school was missing support for cash disbursements during the year ended June 30, 2013. However, subsequent to year end, the new personnel had adequate supporting documentation on hand to support cash disbursements.

There were no material deficiencies or weaknesses for the FY12 and FY14 audits.

Essential Question 3: Is the School Compliant with its Charter and All Applicable Law and Regulations?

Over the charter term, Imagine Me Leadership Charter School has been compliant with some applicable laws and regulations, but not others. On January 29, 2013, the NYC DOE issued a Notice of Deficiency to the school for non-compliance with its charter agreement and state law.

ID	Notice Type	Date Issued	Reason	Category	Status
1	Deficiency	January 29, 2013	<p>The school entered into a loan with the Fund for the City of New York without giving notice to the authorizer.</p> <p>The school used per pupil dollars as collateral for loans.</p> <p>The school did not notify the authorizer that they hired a new principal.</p> <p>The school submitted NY State VADIR report three months late, as well as having late submissions of DOE-accountability documents from September through December 2012.</p>	Violation of Charter Contract & State Non-Compliance	Closed

The Board of Trustees for the school was given a deadline of February 28, 2013 to provide a comprehensive plan to address the concerns described in the Notice. The Board complied with the directive, issuing a Deficiency Response Plan on February 28, 2013, outlining plans to address the deficiencies. The NYC DOE continued to monitor the school's identified areas of deficiency and compliance with the Deficiency Response Plan for the duration of the 2012-2013 school year.

As of the review on November 2014, the Board of Trustees for IMLCS is in compliance with:

- **Submission of all required documents.** All current Board members have submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms. The documents submitted do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.¹⁹
- **Posting of minutes and agendas.** The Board has made Board minutes and agendas publically available online for the meetings that took place in 2013 and 2014; minutes and agendas are not available online for earlier years of the charter.
- **Timely submission of documents.** The Board did consistently submit the Annual Report to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) by the deadline of August 1 (or by the NYSED granted extension date) for each year of the current charter term. The school has not posted to its website its annual audit for each year of the charter term, as required in charter law; however, the audit is posted for FY12.

As of the review on November 2014, the Board of Trustees for IMLCS is out of compliance with:

- **Membership size.** Over the charter term, the Board has consistently had a membership size that falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws, a minimum of five and maximum of 13 members; however, the bylaws indicate that at all times there shall be an odd number of trustees and presently the Board only has six members.
- **Required number of monthly meetings.** The school's bylaws indicate that the Board is to hold meetings each month. In the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years the Board did not hold the required monthly meetings, as evidenced by the Board Yearly Meeting Schedule and the posted meeting minutes. In the 2013-2014 school year the Board met 12 times, but one of the meetings did not have quorum. The Charter Schools Act requires that the Board hold monthly meetings over a period of 12 calendar months per year.

¹⁹ Source: New York State Education Department Annual Report

- **Notification of Board Member Resignations/Submission of New Board Members for Approval.** The board has not consistently submitted new board member credentials within the required five days of change to OSDCP for review and, if necessary, approval. During the charter term, documents were not submitted per the required timeframe for one board member.

As of the review on November 2014, the charter school is in compliance with:

- **Fingerprint clearance.** All staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
- **Teacher certification.** The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification. The Charter Schools Act prohibits more than five staff members or more than 30% of the teaching staff from not being certified in accordance with requirements applicable to other public schools.
- **Immunization.** The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.
- **Insurance.** The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.
- **Fire Emergency.** One or more of the school leaders were trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.
- **Timely Submission of Invoicing and Reconciliation Documents.** Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently submit complete invoicing and reconciliation documents by the associated deadlines.

As of the review on November 2014, the charter school is out of compliance with:

- **Application and Lottery.** For the 2014-2015 school year, the school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 24, 2014, adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1. Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently adhere to this requirement. However, during the renewal visit conducted in October 2014, the NYC DOE found evidence that the school is not adhering to its established waitlist management policy of contacting applicants in the order applications are received. The NYC DOE found evidence that the school made a single automated call to all applicants on the waitlist within a grade level. Open seats at the school were made available to those applicants on a first come first serve basis. Additionally, the NYC DOE found evidence that the school screened applicants prior to enrolling them. The applicants previously called from the waitlist were accepted on the condition of an interview and an assessment to determine eligibility for enrollment. The NYC DOE found evidence that a few students were not admitted to the school after screening. In addition, there is evidence that the school did not enroll a student because it did not offer the program required in the student's IEP. However, the documentation provided by the school for this student does not reflect that its decision was based upon the most recent IEP. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the school contacted its Committee on Special Education (CSE) to discuss whether it could provide services and/or a setting appropriate for the student's needs.
- **Safety Documents.** The school has submitted the required safety plan. The school does not have the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.
- **Student Discipline Plan.** The school has provided the NYC DOE with a current and complete copy of its Student Discipline Policy for the 2014-2015 academic year. This policy was not determined to be compliant with federal law, as the blanket reference to IDEA is not sufficient.

Enrollment and Retention Targets

- Amendments to Article 56 of the New York State Consolidated Laws: Education, which relates to Charter Schools, call for charter schools, as a consideration of renewal, "to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets" for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program. The amendments further indicate "Repeated failure to comply with the requirement" as a cause for revocation or termination of the charter.
 - The law directs schools to demonstrate "that it has made extensive efforts to recruit and retain such students" in the event it has not yet met its targets.
 - The NYC DOE, as authorizer, will annually monitor the school's performance against these targets and the efforts it makes to meet this state requirement.
 - As of November 1, 2014, charter school enrollment and retention targets as required by the NYS Charter Schools Act are still in a *proposed* status. The information presented

below for enrollment is compared to NYC CSD and NYC averages, however, these averages should not be assumed to be similar to the final enrollment targets to be released by NYSED.²⁰

- In all years of operation, including the most recent completed school year 2013-2014, IMLCS:
 - served a lower percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch compared to both the CSD 19 and citywide percentages (the only exception is for school year 2013-2014, when IMLCS served a higher percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch compared to the citywide percentage, though not compared to the CSD 19 percentage);
 - served a lower percentage of students with disabilities compared to the citywide average across all years and a lower percentage than CSD 19 in the most recent school year, 2013-2014 (in the three prior years the school served a higher percentage of students with disabilities than CSD 19); and
 - served a significantly lower percentage of English Language Learner students compared to both the CSD 19 and citywide percentages.

²⁰ Please see the following website for more information: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/enrollment-retention-targets.html>

Enrollment of Special Populations²¹

Special Population		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014 State Enrollment Target (Proposed)
Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)	Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	80.3%	82.2%	81.3%	83.3%	92.2%
	CSD 19	96.4%	96.6%	96.5%	96.1%	
	NYC	80.7%	83.3%	82.6%	82.4%	
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	13.7%	14.6%	13.0%	14.5%	10.4%
	CSD 19	10.6%	11.5%	13.9%	18.2%	
	NYC	14.5%	15.2%	16.7%	19.3%	
English Language Learners (ELL)	Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	1.7%	1.9%	2.1%	1.8%	10.3%
	CSD 19	12.8%	13.0%	12.2%	12.0%	
	NYC	20.2%	18.8%	17.7%	16.6%	

Additional Enrollment Information				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	K-1	K-2	K-3	K-4
CSD(s)	19	19	19	19

²¹ Comparisons of a charter school's special populations to the CSD and City are made relative only to the grades served by the school. For example, if a charter school serves grades kindergarten through five, comparisons of that school's special populations will only be made relative to grades kindergarten through five in the CSD and citywide. CSD comparisons are particular to the grades served in each CSD each year. Enrollment rates reflect demographic characteristics as of June 1st and enrollment as of October 31st for each given school year, with the exception of enrollment in the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26th, 2012.

State enrollment targets were generated by a calculator developed by the State Education Department (SED). Once a school's CSD, total enrollment and grade span are entered, the calculator generates a school-specific enrollment target. The CSD for a multi-district school is the primary CSD as determined by each school. The enrollment is determined by the total number of students enrolled as of October 31st, 2013. For more information regarding SED's methodology behind the calculation of charter school enrollment and retention targets, please refer to the memo at <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/July2012/712brca11.pdf>.

Essential Question 4: What are the School's Plans for the Next Charter Term?

As reported by school leadership and the school's Board, the following was noted:

- The school does not plan to serve additional grades or increase its enrollment in the next charter term.
- The school will modify its school's compensation process for the principal, teachers, and other staff members, to be a performance-based salary system.
- The school, in partnership with its current landlord, St. Paul Community Baptist Church, has plans to develop a new school facility which the school would move into during the next charter term.

Part 5: Background on the Charter Renewal Process

Renewal Process

In the final year of its charter, a NYC DOE Chancellor-authorized charter school seeking renewal must demonstrate its success during the current charter term and establish goals and objectives for the next charter term. Ultimately, the renewal process offers an opportunity for the school community to reflect on its experiences during its prior term, to make a compelling, evidence-based case that it has earned the privilege of an additional charter term, and, if renewed, to carry out an ambitious plan for the future.

The NYC DOE does not automatically grant charter renewal, and no charter operator is entitled to renewal. Rather, a school must prove that it has earned renewal and is worthy of continuing the privilege of educating New York City public school students. To make such determinations, the NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) renewal team performs a comprehensive review of the school's academic, operational and fiscal performance over the course of the charter which includes an analysis of the school's renewal application. This application is built around the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework and includes a retrospective analysis of the school's prior track record as well as a prospective plan for the school. In reviewing this information, a school must be able to demonstrate that it can satisfy the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

The school presents evidence to support its application for renewal by providing a compelling response to these overarching questions that demonstrates its students have made significant academic progress, is serving students equitably, has sustainable operations to be successful in the next charter term, and that the school has met the goals and objectives pledged in its current charter. In addition, the school will describe challenges it has faced during its charter term, the strategies that were used to address those challenges and the lessons learned.

While the academic performance of students is the foremost determining factor of a school's success, a school's ability to demonstrate an effective educational program, a financially and operationally viable organization, and a strong learning community with support from stakeholders are also important factors that inform a renewal decision. For more information on how OSDCP makes renewal recommendations to the Chancellor, please see the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework overview in Part 6 of this report.

Statutory Basis for Renewal

The New York State Charter Schools Act ("the Act") authorizes the creation of a system of charter schools to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently of existing schools and school districts in order to accomplish the following objectives:

§2850:

- (a) Improve student learning and achievement;
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- (f) Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance based accountability systems by holding the schools established under this article accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

When granted, a charter is valid for up to five years. For a school chartered under the Act to operate beyond the initial charter term, the school must seek and obtain renewal of its charter.²²

The Act states the following regarding the renewal of a school's charter:

§2851.4:

Charters may be renewed, upon application, for a term of up to five years in accordance with the provisions of this article for the issuance of such charters pursuant to section twenty-eight hundred fifty-two of this article; provided, however, that a renewal application shall [also] include:

(a) A report of the progress of the charter school in achieving the educational objectives set forth in the charter.

(b) A detailed financial statement that discloses the cost of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that will allow a comparison of such costs to other schools, both public and private. Such statement shall be in a form prescribed by the board of regents.

(c) Copies of each of the annual reports of the charter school required by subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty-seven of this article, including the charter school report cards and the certified financial statements.

(d) Indications of parent and student satisfaction.

(e) The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents or the board of trustees of the state university of New York, as applicable, of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal. When developing such targets, the board of regents and the board of trustees of the state university of New York shall ensure (1) that such enrollment targets are comparable to the enrollment figures of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the charter school is located; and (2) that such retention targets are comparable to the rate of retention of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the proposed charter school would be located.

Such renewal application shall be submitted to the charter entity no later than six months prior to the expiration of the charter; provided, however, that the charter entity may waive such deadline for good cause shown.

The determination of whether to approve a renewal application rests in the sole discretion of a charter school's authorizer.

A school seeking renewal of its charter must submit a renewal application to the charter entity to which the original charter application was submitted.²³ As one such charter entity, the New York City Department of Education ("NYC DOE") institutes a renewal application process that adheres to the Act's renewal standards:

- A report of the progress of the charter school in achieving the educational objectives set forth in its charter;
- A detailed financial statement that discloses the cost of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that will allow a comparison of such costs to other schools, both public and private;
- Copies of each of the annual reports of the charter school including the charter school report cards and certified financial statements;
- Indications of parent and student satisfaction; and
- The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and

²² See §§ 2851(4) and 2852 of the Act.

²³ See generally §§ 2851(3) and 2851(4).

students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal.²⁴

Where the NYC DOE approves a renewal application, it is required under the Act to submit the application and a proposed charter to the Board of Regents for its review and approval.²⁵

²⁴ § 2851(4)(e) added with the 2010 amendments to the Act.

²⁵ See § 2852(5).

Part 6: NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

The Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) team may recommend to the Chancellor three potential outcomes for charter schools applying for renewal: full-term renewal (with or without conditions), short term renewal (with or without conditions), or non-renewal.

After the OSDCP renewal site visit, the OSDCP team incorporates its findings from the visit into this renewal report. The evidence and findings align to the four essential questions of the NYC DOE accountability framework and may include classroom observations, leadership interviews, assessment results, School Survey results, public hearings and other community feedback, as well as a variety of other data. Schools will be given the opportunity to correct factual errors in this report. If the OSDCP renewal team determines that renewal is not warranted, the school will be informed in writing of the reasons for the non-renewal. If OSDCP approves the renewal application and the Chancellor recommends renewal for the school, prior to the school's charter expiration date, OSDCP will send the renewal report and recommendation along with the school's renewal application and other supporting evidence to the Board of Regents for its approval.

Full-Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions

In cases where a school has demonstrated exceptional results with its students, a five-year renewal will be granted. A school must show that its program has clearly and consistently demonstrated high academic attainment and/or consistent and significant student academic progress, has met the majority of its charter goals, has demonstrated financial stability, has demonstrated operational viability, has attained sufficient board capacity, and has an educationally sound learning environment in order to gain this type of renewal.

Short Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions

In cases where a school is up for renewal of its initial charter and has two years or fewer of state-assessment results, or where any school has demonstrated mixed academic results or has uncertain organizational or financial viability, a short-term renewal with or without conditions may be considered.

Non-Renewal

Renewal is not automatic. Schools that have not demonstrated significant progress or high levels of student achievement and/or are in violation of their charter will not be renewed.

Grade Expansions or Enrollment Changes

A school may seek material charter revisions as part of the renewal process. In the case of a grade expansion or change in authorized enrollment, these material charter revisions are considered separately from the charter renewal. Charter renewal, with or without conditions, is not a guarantee of approval for a proposed material charter revision.

The NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

To help Chancellor-authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the OSDCP team has developed an Accountability Framework built around four essential questions for charter school renewal:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

Although academic performance is primary, the NYC DOE takes into account a wide variety of factors (as indicated by the framework strands and available evidence detail) when evaluating a school. These factors include academic, fiscal, operational and environmental indicators of a charter school's performance. Additionally, some of the indicators we evaluate relate to expected performance as defined in the New York State Charter Schools Act including evidence of improved student learning and achievement, special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure, use of different and innovative teaching methods, parent and student satisfaction, and enrollment and retention of special student populations. Further detail about the application of the framework to school reflection and evaluation is provided beginning on page 17 of the NYC DOE Chancellor-Authorized Schools Accountability Handbook for 2014-2015.

What follows is a framework that outlines strands, indicators, and potential evidence for each of the four essential questions. The framework identifies what OSDCP looks at in determining whether a school is successful enough to earn a new charter term, with or without conditions, and the duration of the charter term recommended by NYC DOE. As schools use the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework, they should remember that charter schools exist to deliver improved student achievement for the students they serve, particularly at-risk students, so the schools are high-quality choices for families. This reminder should help a school apply this framework to its own performance analysis, underscoring the state and city's commitment to superior academic performance as the most important factor in a school's performance, while also recognizing the importance of closing the achievement gap and offering high-quality learning opportunities for all students.

1. Is the School an Academic Success?

1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement

Schools that are academic successes have many of the characteristics below:

- Meet absolute performance goals established in school charter
- Meet student progress goals established in school charter
- Meet other rigorous academic goals as stated on school charter
- Demonstrate increasing student achievement/growth
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and ELL students
- Are surpassing academic performance measures of DOE identified peer-schools
- Are surpassing academic performance measures compared with district/city proficiency averages

Evidence for success might include, but not be limited to, the following depending on school configurations:

- Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 3-8 NYS Math Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 4 and 8 NYS Science Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- HS 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates
- Grades 8-12 NYS Regent Exam Results
- Grades 8-12 College Readiness Credit Accumulation
- Percentage of Students Applying to and Being Admitted to College
- Percentage of Students Taking AP Courses and/or Percentage of Students Passing AP Courses
- When applicable, NYSAA or other approved alternate assessments results
- Results on state accountability measures
- Charter School Academic Goals
- School-reported internal assessments
- NYC DOE Progress Reports or School Quality Reports²⁶

1b. Instructionally Sound and Responsive Education Program

Schools with successful education programs have many of the characteristics below:

- Are self-reflective and examine practice based on outcomes against goals
- Have well-thought out curricular programs that are aligned with NYS learning outcomes as described by state and Common Core Learning Standards
- Use instructional models and resources that are consistent with school mission and flexible in addressing the needs of all learners
- Have defined strategies that they can measure and monitor for closing the achievement gap
- Offer defined opportunities for remediation and acceleration
- Utilizes a coherent and effective interim assessment system (e.g., use of formative, interim, and summative assessment data) for monitoring progress, predicting performance, and adjusting instruction
- Have an effective process for supporting improved classroom instruction, including frequent observation and feedback
- Have effective strategies and quality instructional programs for addressing students with special needs and ELLs
- Use a defined process for evaluating and supporting curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals

²⁶ Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE replaced the DOE Progress Report with the DOE School Quality Report. The 2012-2013 school year is the last year NYC public schools will have a Progress Report score. The Progress Report and School Quality Report contain similar indicators of performance.

Evidence for successful education programs, in addition to positive results, may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- Classroom observations
- Instructional planning documents (alignments, scope and sequences, curriculum maps, unit and lesson plans, etc.)
- Instructional leader and staff interviews
- Special Education/ELL progress monitoring documentation
- Professional development plans and resources
- Student/teacher schedules
- Student Intervention / Response to Intervention program description and resources
- Interim assessment results
- Data findings; adjusted lesson plans
- Self-assessment documentation

1c. Learning Environment

Schools with successful learning environments have many of the characteristics below:

- Provide a safe, respectful, and stable academic environment conducive to student learning (one with efficient transitions and safe hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.)
- Have a strong academic culture that creates high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to consistently give their best effort academically and to actively engage in their own learning and the life of the school
- Use a comprehensive approach to student management, including positive behavioral expectations and a clear discipline policy to build and sustain a safe, orderly, and supportive classroom environment
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Have formal or informal structures or programs in place that provide students opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens (for example: a character education, citizenship, or community involvement or service program)

Evidence for successful learning environments may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- Classroom observations
- NYC DOE School Survey results (students, parents and teachers)
- School mission and articulated values
- Student management plan (code of conduct, school values, discipline policy, positive incentive system, etc.)
- Student attendance and retention rates
- Student discipline data (referral, suspension, expulsion)
- Parent complaint/concern information
- Self-administered satisfaction survey results
- Interviews with school leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, students
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)
- School calendar and class schedules

2. Is the School a Fiscally and Operationally Sound, Viable Organization?

2a. Mission and Goals

Schools with a successful mission and goals have many of the characteristics below:

- Have an animated mission statement and clearly articulated goals (both academic and non-academic) that staff, students and community embrace
- Demonstrate an active self-evaluation process that involves regular monitoring, an examination of practices based on outcomes against goals, and reporting on progress towards school goals
- Have processes for adjusting strategies in support of goals as appropriate in response to monitoring data

Evidence for a successful mission and goals might include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Mission Statement
- School charter and external documents (student/family handbooks, school website, etc.)
- Annual Reports, school improvement plans, leadership/Board reports
- Board agendas and minutes
- Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction surveys
- Participation at parent-teacher conferences, school advocacy events, participation in academic goal related programs
- Stakeholder interviews (board, parents, staff, students, etc.)

2b. Leadership and Governance Structure

Schools with successful leadership and governance structures have many of the characteristics below:

- Have a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations, with clear lines of accountability for the Board, school leadership and all staff
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate officers, committees, and a purposeful blend of skills and experiences to provide oversight and strategic direction to fulfill the mission and goals of its charter
- Have a Board that is fully compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, particularly, but not limited to, Open-Meeting Law and conflict of interest laws, and is fully compliant with its Board approved by-laws (number of meetings, quorum, posting of calendar, agenda and minutes)
- Have a defined process for Board reflection on effectiveness, assessing developing needs, and plan for professional growth
- Have developed a succession plan for board and school leadership, consistent with the charter and Board by-laws, to ensure continuity of direction and leadership over time
- Implements a school leadership structure that is aligned with charter and that is sufficient to fulfill school's mission and achieve its accountability goals and, if and when necessary, makes timely adjustments to that structure with proper notice to and approval by its authorizer
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provides regular feedback on instruction to teachers, including both formal and informal observations

Evidence for school governance and organizational design may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- School charter
- Board by-laws, roster, trustee resumes, calendar of meetings, meeting agenda and minutes
- Annual conflict of interest forms
- Board resources for evaluating school leadership and staff, including rubric/performance metrics
- Board resources for self-reflection and professional growth
- Board development plan
- Board interviews
- Staff roster, job descriptions, staff handbook and core operational policies
- School calendar
- Professional development plans
- Stakeholder interviews (board, school leadership and staff)

2c. School Climate and Community Engagement

Schools with a sustaining school climate and engaged parent and community support have many of the characteristics below:

- A healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student-centered, and open to parents and community support
- Employ an effective means of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including, but not limited to, the NYC DOE School Survey
- Have effective home-school communication practices and engagement strategies to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Strong community-based partnerships that support and advocate for the school
- Engage families actively in the life of the school, including advocacy, community engagement, and feedback on school policies and initiatives
- Have a clear procedure for parents and staff to express concerns to school leadership and the Board, as appropriate, including a clearly articulated escalation path to authorizer
- Share instructional and operational practices with the larger NYC school community and actively seek opportunities for partnering and collaboration
- Encourage professional conversations about effective performance and quality instruction among staff, through, for example, such means as regular and periodic teaming (grade level teams, data days, etc.) and peer observations
- Have systems in place to evaluate professional development effectiveness and provide ongoing support for school-wide and individual initiatives

Evidence for school climate and community engagement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- NYC DOE School Survey satisfaction parent, teacher, and, if appropriate student results
- Student retention and wait list data
- Staff retention data
- Leadership, staff, parent, student interviews
- Student and staff attendance rates
- Parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences
- Parent association meeting calendar and minutes
- Community partnerships and sponsored programs
- Participation in NYC DOE initiatives and efforts to collaborate/partner with other NYC schools
- Parent and community feedback via public hearings, renewal calls to parents, etc.
- Community outreach documents (newsletters, announcements, invitations, etc.)
- School Professional Development Plan and staff feedback on professional development events
- Resources for evaluations and observations, scheduled opportunities for professional collaboration, staff feedback on professional development events
- Student/Family and Staff Handbooks

2d. Operational Health

Schools that are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- A safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations
- Demonstrate efficient and orderly daily operations
- Have appropriate insurance coverage and insurance and facility documents
- An effective process for recruiting, hiring, compensating, monitoring, supporting, and evaluating school leadership and staff
- A flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- Consistently meet student enrollment and retention targets as established by SED (applicable to schools renewed after 2010)
- Communications with NYC DOE are timely, comprehensive, and appropriate
- If applicable, school relationship with a charter management organization identified in charter and supported by a management agreement that spells out services, responsibilities, accountability reporting, performance expectations, and fees

Evidence of an operationally viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- Appropriate insurance documents
- Operational policies and procedures
- Operational organizational chart
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- School safety plan
- Immunization completion rate information
- Appropriate AED/CPR certifications

2e. Financial Sustainability

Schools that are responsible stewards of public funds and are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- Maintain annual budgets that meet all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- Provide rigorous oversight of financial and operational responsibilities, at school leadership and Board levels, in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to short- and long-term decision-making
- Consistently clean financial audits and compliant escrow accounts
- If applicable, strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of charter school's design and academic program
- School leadership and Board maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- School leadership and Board oversee financial and operational responsibilities in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to decision-making
- Demonstrate financial planning for future school years, including per-pupil and space-related cost projections

Evidence for a financially sound, viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School budget, P&Ls, and monthly/quarterly cash-flow reports
- Financial audits, escrow accounts and other fiscal reporting documents
- Financial leader(s) resume and accountability documents
- Financial and operational organizational chart
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) for significant partnerships and vendor relationships

3. Is the School in Compliance with its Charter and All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

3a. Approved Charter and Agreement

Schools in substantial compliance with the school's charter and charter agreement have the characteristics below:

- Implement the key features of their charter as described in the original charter and, if appropriate, as modified in approved revisions to their charter, including but not limited to mission, academic program, school organization, grade configuration, enrollment, goals, etc.
- Ensure that up-to-date charter is available on request to staff, parents, and school community
- Implement comprehensive academic, behavioral, oversight, management, and operational policies and procedures that are substantially aligned with the charter and the school's stated mission and vision

Evidence for a school's compliance with the terms of its charter and charter agreement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Authorized charter and signed agreement
- Charter revision request approval and documentation
- School mission
- School policies and procedures
- Annual Comprehensive Review reports
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership/Board and staff interviews
- Public hearings (renewal or material revision hearings)

3b. Applicable Federal and State Law

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law have the characteristics below:

- Meet all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for Free and Reduced Price Lunch, ELL and Special Education students to those of their community school district of location²⁷ or are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages for enrollment and retention
- Implement school policies related to student discipline and promotion and retention that are fully compliant with laws and regulations related to students with disabilities and due process regulations
- Conduct an independently verified fair and open lottery and manage enrollment process and annual waiting lists with integrity
- Employ instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and meet all certification requirements

²⁷ School-specific targets for enrollment and retention are to come from the NY State Education Department. This requirement of the New York State Charter Schools Act applies to schools renewed after 2010.

Evidence for compliance with applicable federal and state law may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School reporting documents
- School's NYSED Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Student/Family Handbook
- Student discipline policy and records
- Parent complaint/grievance records
- Lottery policy, resources, and records; enrollment procedures and records
- Demographic data (school, district, and other as appropriate)
- Staff roster, fingerprint clearance for all staff, certification status of all instructional staff

3c. Applicable Regulations

Schools in substantial compliance with applicable regulations have the characteristics below:

- Safe and secure facilities with no significant compliance concerns
- Consistently clean annual audits, up-to-date escrow accounts, and complete all other financial reporting as required
- Boards that meet requirements for size, meeting frequency, public notice, applicable open-meeting and conflict of interest regulations, as well as comply with NYC DOE OSDCP's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members
- Inform NYC DOE OSDCP, and where required, receive OSDCP approval for changes in significant partnerships, such as dropping/replacing a management organization
- Effectively engaged parent associations

Evidence for compliance with applicable regulations may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School or building safety plan; appropriate inspection documents
- Annual audits, escrow accounts, other financial reporting documents
- Board roster, calendar, agenda and minutes, conflict of interest documents, notification of changes/approval of new member request documents
- Charter revision requests
- Revised or new contracts
- Parent association calendar of meetings, identified officers, parent association agenda and minutes, parent satisfaction survey results
- Stakeholder interviews

4. What Are the School's Plans for its Next Charter Term?

4a. School Expansion or Model Replication

In anticipation of a new charter term, a school may consider various growth options: replication, expansion to new grades or increased enrollment, or alteration of its model in some significant way. Successful schools generally have processes for:

- Conducting needs/opportunity assessments
- Forming Board and leadership committees or subcommittees to investigate options, develop action plans, ensure capacity and resources are aligned, etc.
- Engaging school community in articulating charter revisions (or a new charter in cases of replication) to determine community needs and to communicate regarding the school's proposed growth plans
- Ensuring that the final proposal is ambitious but realistic in its plans
- Creating a well-reasoned and documented prospective for the school's new charter term and, if applicable, a new charter proposal (for replication)

Evidence for likely success in planning for school growth in a new charter term may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter submission, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Charter revision or merger applications
- Leadership and Board interviews

4b. Organizational Sustainability

Successful schools consistently perform despite change. While there is no single path for ensuring sustainability, successful schools often have the following features:

- School anticipates organizational opportunities/needs and plans for resource development (for example, human resource policies for growing your own talent, or fundraising or budget management to take care of anticipated capital needs and to mitigate risks for the unexpected, or board development to bring new talent or specific needs-based expertise to the school)
- School develops contingency plans especially for facilities or financial scenarios

Evidence for organizational sustainability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Charter renewal application
- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organizational chart
- Staff rosters
- Staff handbook
- Leadership and staff interviews
- Budget

4c. School or Model Improvements

Successful schools are thoughtful about the continued appropriateness of school design features and elements of their models. They:

- Review performance carefully and even without major changes through expansion or replication, are careful to adjust elements to ensure continued and improved success
- Develop plans to improve the school learning environment, including improving their facilities to expand program offerings and/or developing new partnerships to further the school's mission

Evidence for successful improvements to a school's program or model may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and Board interviews
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) with partners or important vendors

Appendix A: School Performance Data

Students scoring at or above Level 3

Grade-Level Proficiency in English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School				
Grade 3	-	-	6.4%	12.8%
Grade 4	-	-	-	13.5%
DIFFERENCE FROM CSD 19 *				
Grade 3	-	-	-7.8	-2.8
Grade 4	-	-	-	-4.6
DIFFERENCE FROM NYC				
Grade 3	-	-	-21.7	-17.2
Grade 4	-	-	-	-17.6

Grade-Level Proficiency in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School				
Grade 3	-	-	19.1%	21.3%
Grade 4	-	-	-	27.0%
DIFFERENCE FROM CSD 19 *				
Grade 3	-	-	0.3	1.0
Grade 4	-	-	-	3.3
DIFFERENCE FROM NYC				
Grade 3	-	-	-14.0	-17.4
Grade 4	-	-	-	-12.9

* CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

Appendix B: Additional Accountability Data

NYC DOE Accountability Reports

[Annual Comprehensive Report 2013-2014](#)

[Annual Comprehensive Report 2012-2013](#)

[Annual Site Visit Report 2011-2012](#)

[Annual Site Visit Report 2010-2011](#)