



# State Public Charter School Commission 2018 Recommendation Report

Charter Application for  
**IMAG Academy**

***Academic Plan, Organizational Plan, and Financial Plan  
Evaluation***

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***Academic Capacity, Organizational Capacity, and Financial  
Capacity Evaluation***

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## Introduction

In 2012, the Hawaii State Legislature passed Act 130, replacing the state's previous charter school law, Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS") Chapter 302B, with our new law, codified as HRS Chapter 302D. Act 130 instituted a rigorous, transparent accountability system that at the same time honors the autonomy and local decision-making of Hawaii's charter schools. The law created the State Public Charter School Commission ("Commission"), assigned it statewide chartering jurisdiction and authority, and directed it to enter into State Public Charter School Contracts ("Charter Contract") with every existing charter school and every newly approved charter school applicant.

The 2018 Request for Proposals and the resulting evaluation process are rigorous, thorough, transparent, and demanding. The process is meant to ensure that charter school operators possess the capacity to implement sound strategies, practices, and methodologies. Successful applicants will clearly demonstrate high levels of expertise in the areas of education, school finance, administration, and management as well as high expectations for excellence in professional standards and student achievement.

## Evaluation Process

Following the advice and training from national experts and the experience gained in previous application cycles, the Commission created standardized evaluation forms, provided evaluator training, and assembled evaluation teams based on the national best practices, policies, and standards needed to authorize high-performing charter schools. For the 2018 application cycle, each application was assessed by two evaluation teams. One evaluation team reviewed the academic, organizational and financial plans of each application. Another team assessed the capacity of the applicants to carry out the academic, organizational, and financial plans of each application. The highlights of the evaluation process are as follows:

**Proposal Evaluation.** The Commission's Applications Committee conducted a completeness check to ensure that both evaluation teams were sent complete submissions of the application to review and evaluate. Both evaluation teams read and reviewed each application. The academic, organizational, and financial plans of each application were assessed by one evaluation team. This team also conducted a clarification interview with each applicant so that the applicant could clarify its application.

**Capacity Evaluation.** An evaluation team charged with evaluating academic, organizational, and financial capacity reviewed the application, then subsequently conducted an interview with the applicant to further assess applicant's capacity to carry out the plans as stated in the application.

**Due Diligence.** The evaluation teams considered any other available information relevant to each application.

**Consensus Judgment.** Members of both evaluation teams reached a consensus in determining whether to recommend the application for approval or denial.

*The duty of the Evaluation Team is to recommend approval or denial of each application based on its merits. The authority and responsibility to decide whether to approve or deny each application rests with the Commission.*

## Report Contents

This Recommendation Report includes the following:

### Proposal Overview

Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.

### Recommendation

An overall judgment regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval.

### Evaluation Summary

A summary analysis of the proposal based on four primary areas of plan development and the capacity of the applicant to execute the plan as presented:

1. Academic Plan
2. Organizational Plan
3. Financial Plan
4. Evidence of Capacity

### Rating Characteristics

Rating	Characteristics
<b>Meets the Standard</b>	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the proposed school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.
<b>Does Not Meet the Standard</b>	The response meets the criteria in some respects but has substantial gaps, lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas and does not reflect a thorough understanding of key issues. It does not provide enough accurate, specific information to show thorough preparation; fails to present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and does not inspire confidence in the applicant's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.

### Evaluation Report

A report, attached as **Appendix A**, provides details on the Evaluation Team's assessment of the applicant's proposal when reviewed against the evaluation criteria.

# Proposal Overview

## Proposed School Name

IMAG Academy

## Mission and Vision (as described by the applicant)

Mission: *“The founders of IMAG Academy believe that all children are curious, creative and capable of learning. IMAG Academy will be a school with high social and academic expectations regardless of students’ socioeconomic background, educational needs or English language challenges. IMAG Academy’s mission is to provide a small, family-like environment to prepare mindful citizens through engaging our students in community centered concerns and projects. We focus on creating a continuum of experiences, in and outside of school, where the strengths and potential of the individual, family and community can flourish.”*

Vision: *“Our vision is to become a community resource raising generations of innovative, mindful, accepting, and giving (IMAG) citizens grounded in their knowledge and capabilities to create and sustain ethnically diverse, successful, and peace-filled communities.”*

## Geographic Location (as described by the applicant)

*“IMAG Academy will be located within the boundaries of the city of Waipahu. It is surrounded by the cities of Kapolei, Ewa, Ewa Beach, Pearl City, and Mililani, known as the central leeward area. The area has over 40,000 of the 180,000+ students within the public school system spread across some of the largest campuses within all school levels.”*

## Anticipated Student Population (as described by the applicant)

*“The socioeconomic demographics of the Waipahu area highlights a high percentage of the students qualifying for the free and reduced lunch program and higher than our state average will be considered English Language Learners. At least 50% of the students will have scored below the state’s targets on Hawaii state summative tests in the year before they enroll at IMAG Academy.*

*The majority of our students will be Filipino (60+%) with several other culturally diverse ethnic groups represented, such as Native Hawaiian, Micronesian, and Samoan. In all groups, family and friends can play a critical role in their level of academic success. School pride and a sense of belonging are important; therefore a positive school culture that provides a safe and nurturing social and learning environment for all students is essential.”*

## Contribution to Public Education System (as described by the applicant)

*“The two Priority Needs of the Commission are to provide more educational capacity in areas where over-crowding exists or schools are at capacity (#1) and to improve academic outcomes where schools are not performing (#2). Due to our educational model and resulting design, we believe we can offer the central leeward area assistance to both priorities and families an option that does not exist today. Our community-centered project focused instructional strategy will offer experiences for all types of learners and will help provide an environment where students will be able to transfer and adapt their knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to solving real concerns of real businesses. It will provide the essential ingredient to student motivation, engagement, and learning; real world connections.”*

**Enrollment Summary (as described by the applicant)**

Grade Level	Number of Students											
	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Capacity	
	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		2025	
Brick & Mortar/ Blended vs. Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual	B&M/ Blended	Virtual
K	25		25		25		25		25		25	
1	25		25		25		25		25		25	
2	25		25		25		25		25		25	
3	25		25		25		25		25		25	
4	25		25		25		25		25		25	
5	25		25		25		25		25		25	
6	25		50		50		50		50		50	
7	25		50		50		50		50		50	
8			50		50		50		50		50	
9					75		75		75		75	
10							75		75		75	
11									75		75	
12											75	
<b>Subtotals</b>	200	0	300	0	375	0	450	0	525	0	600	0
<b>Totals</b>	200		300		375		450		525		600	

# Executive Summary

IMAG Academy

**Recommendation**

**Deny**

## Summary Analysis

It is recommended that the application for IMAG Academy be denied since the applicant did not meet the standard for approval in all four core areas of the application. The applicant failed to satisfy the criteria in the academic plan, organizational plan, financial plan, and applicant capacity sections.

The academic plan does not meet the standard for approval, and as described in the application is tentative at best. The applicant has stated that academic goals and targets, student assessment tools, plans for assessing and meeting student needs, and plans for professional development will require additional research or will need to be revisited and finalized during the start-up period.

The organizational plan does not meet the standard for approval. There are various concerns regarding the organizational plan relating to the training for the school governing board, the capacity of the nonprofit board, plans for food service and facilities, agreement with the service providers, and the failure of parts of the organizational plan to align to the Financial Plan.

The financial plan does not meet the standard since the applicant did not provide a complete, realistic, and viable start-up plan and three year operating budget. Exclusions within the budget, including a blank start-up worksheet, in addition to incomplete costs that were listed throughout, render the Financial plan unreliable and unsound.

The applicant’s capacity did not meet the standard because it did not demonstrate that it has the academic, financial, and organizational capacity to launch a successful high quality charter school. Of concern is that the proposed school principal exhibits undemonstrated capacity and ability since her resume does not indicate that she has the range of experience and skills necessary to implement curriculum and develop the educational program while attempting to open and lead a new charter school.

## Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weakness in others.

Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must receive a “Meets the Standard” rating in all areas.

**Academic Plan**

**Does not meet the standard**

**Financial Plan**

**Does not meet the standard**

**Organizational Plan**

**Does not meet the standard**

**Evidence of Capacity**

**Does not meet the standard**

# Academic Plan

IMAG Academy

Rating

**Does not meet the standard for approval**

This section of the application contains eight sub-sections. IMAG Academy’s application received ratings for six of the eight sub-sections:

Section II. Academic Plan - Sub-sections	Rating
A. Academic Plan Overview, Academic Philosophy, and Student Population	<i>This section is not separately rated by the evaluators. However, a strong Academic Plan will demonstrate consistent alignment with the Academic Plan Overview, Academic Philosophy, and Student Population.</i>
B. Curriculum and Instructional Design	<b>✗Does not meet the standard for approval</b>
C. Special Populations and At-Risk Students	<b>✗Does not meet the standard for approval</b>
D. School Culture	<b>✓Meets the standard for approval</b>
E. Professional Culture and Staffing	<b>✗Does not meet the standard for approval</b>
F. School Calendar and Schedule	<b>✗Does not meet the standard for approval</b>
G. Supplemental Programs	<b>✗Does not meet the standard for approval</b>
H. Conversion Charter School Additional Academic Information	<i>Not applicable</i>

## Analysis

Because IMAG Academy’s application was found to meet the standard for approval for only one of the six of rated sub-sections, **the Academic Plan does not meet the standard for approval.**

As described in the Commission’s 2018 Request for Proposals for new charter schools, “[t]he Narrative Proposal is the formal application to the Commission and is a comprehensive description of the proposed school’s academic, organizational, and financial plans;” however, the Academic Plan described in IMAG’s application is largely tentative. This is illustrated by the lack of detail in the application (described further in Appendix A) and was confirmed by the Applicant in the clarification interview, during which they described all of the following components of the application as either requiring additional research or needing to be revisited and finalized during the start-up period:

- Academic goals and targets
- Selected student assessment tools
- Plan for assessing and meeting the needs of students

- Plan for teacher induction and professional development

Although the Applicant has clearly invested a significant amount of time and energy in the development of the Academic Plan, they were unable to clarify many essential elements, specifically:

- the definitions and related data sources for the identified academic goals and targets,
- how identified assessments would accurately measure student progress towards the identified goals and targets,
- how the school would identify and deliver the appropriate supports and services to children in early grades, in particular kindergarteners, who would arrive on campus with no prior school record, and
- how, given budget constraints and the requirements of collectively bargained agreements, the school would be able to provide adequate professional development on the 13 types of instructional materials, four assessment tools, eight sets of standards, and five frameworks/strategies related to the school's educational model that, as described in the application, are essential for all faculty and staff to be familiar with in order to successfully implement the Academic Plan.

Also of concern was the fact that several components of the plan are based on outdated materials, including both the school administrator and teacher evaluation plans and one of the student assessment tools. In the clarification interview, the Applicant confirmed that this is due to the fact that they did not double-check that all of the content of the Academic Plan was current prior to submitting the application. While it is reasonable for a repeat applicant like IMAG Academy to reuse or modify content from previous applications, it is concerning that the Applicant would not take steps to verify that the full content of the application was still valid, relevant, and accurate.

The Evaluation Team commends the Applicant for their willingness to make a difference for keiki and their tremendous perseverance in their quest to launch a charter school in Hawaii; however, whether due to a lack of familiarity with the academic subject matter or insufficient planning, the Academic Plan does not appear to be implementable as described in the application. This, combined with the fact that the Applicant had difficulty articulating its plan during the clarification interview and was unable to demonstrate a basic understanding of a sound academic program, prevents the Evaluation Team from being able to assess the viability and anticipated efficacy of the Academic Plan, and indicates that the plan has not met the standard for approval.



# Organizational Plan

IMAG Academy

Rating

**Does not meet the standard for approval**

This section of the application contains eight sub-sections. IMAG Academy’s application received ratings for seven of the eight sub-sections:

Section III. Organizational Plan - Sub-sections	Rating
A. Governance	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
B. Academic, Financial, and Organizational Performance Management	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
C. Ongoing Operations	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
D. Student Recruitment, Admission and Enrollment	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
E. Geographic Location and Facilities	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
F. Start-Up Period	✔Meets the standard for approval
G. Conversion Charter School Additional Organizational Information	<i>Not applicable</i>
H. Third Party Service Providers	✗Does not meet the standard for approval

## Analysis

Because IMAG Academy’s application was found to meet the standard for approval for only one of the seven rated sub-sections, **the Organizational Plan does not meet the standard for approval**. Specific areas of concern include:

- the plan does not present a clear, realistic picture of training for the school’s governing board to continue as a high-functioning board;
- there is a concern for the capacity of the nonprofit board to effectively support the school;
- the Applicant’s plans for food service and facilities do not inspire confidence;
- the proposed school’s agreements and relationship with its Service Provider are undetermined; and
- sections in the Organizational Plan fail to align with the school’s Financial Plan.

### **Concerns Related to Governance**

#### **Undeveloped plans for governing board training**

IMAG Academy's current governing board members appear to represent a range of skill sets. The board has also provided a detailed plan to recruit new members. However, the applicant does not have detailed plans for training its board members. For example, for the board training that will happen during the start-up period, it is not clear who will deliver the training and appears the board may develop its own, rather than utilizing an organization experienced in governing board training. There is concern for whether training will be relevant, deep, and foster a high-functioning charter school board.

Further magnifying the concern, the Applicant does not describe orientation, on-going training, or member development, after the start-up period. As the Applicant intends that the Board Development Committee will determine this plan in the future, is unknown what governing board training will consist of, including the topics that would be addressed, and whether the training will be developed by the governing board itself, Ho'okako'o, or experienced trainers. Without a clear plan, the capacity of the future governing board, as early as Year 1, is unknown. A well-trained decision-making board should always be in place at a school but is especially important during this fragile stage in a school's life-cycle.

#### **Nonprofit compliance with State Ethics Code and capacity to support the school**

The current membership of the nonprofit board is not in compliance with the State Ethics Code, as there are only three members and two of those are current members of the governing board. Although the Applicant states the "board membership will be re-aligned to ensure no conflict of interest will take place..." the Applicant does not provide a plan or explain how this will be done.

Further complicating the matter, there is a lack of confidence in the nonprofit board's capacity to fulfill the role of the nonprofit. For example, the applicant states the nonprofit "will continue to recruit those with experience and capacity" however, the simple statement lacks detail and the applicant does not show a clear and realistic picture of a comprehensive recruitment plan; there is a concern whether the nonprofit board would recruit individuals possessing the necessary experience and capacity.

Also, the intended roles of the current nonprofit members: Financial Management, Policy Development and Governance, Strategic Planning and Events Management, do not appear relevant to the means of supports that the nonprofit states it intends to provide IMAG Academy: "school funds development, fundraising, grant writing, fiscal sponsorship/agency and strategic visioning assistance". There is a concern over the misalignment between roles and supports and whether the nonprofit has the capacity for the activities, such as fundraising, funds development and grant writing. Subsequently there is a concern for any budget items reliant on fundraising, such as the proposed school's food service.

### **Concerns Related to Ongoing Operations**

The plan for food service is undetermined and the Applicant did not provide a reliable contingency plan despite the apparent student need. The Applicant states IMAG Academy anticipates that more than 55% of its students will qualify for the Free or Reduced Lunch program, thus the proposed school plans to offer lunch and a snack starting in Year 1. IMAG Academy estimates it needs \$115,000 for the first year of food service. In the clarification interview, the Applicant reported that no food service expenses are reflected in the school's Year 1, Year 2, or Year 3 budget, and these expenses need to be funded by fundraising activities. IMAG Academy has no contingency plan if it cannot raise the funds necessary to cover the upfront costs of providing the meals. The Applicant explained that although food would still be made available, students would need to purchase the meals, even students who qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch program. Given the lack of confidence in the nonprofit's capacity as explained

above, there is a concern that the estimated 55% of the students who qualify for Free and Reduced Lunches, would have to purchase full price meals. As it could affect a student's ability to attend the school, families need to know upfront whether or not meals will be subsidized; it's not fair to say this is the plan but later take it away. In consideration of the anticipated student population, whether or not IMAG Academy will provide a Free and Reduced Lunch program needs to have been determined, not a plan in progress. In addition to these concerns, as the food services costs are missing from the Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 budget, the larger financial implications are explained in the Financial Plan Section.

### **Concerns Related to Facilities**

The facility plan fails to present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; there are concerns regarding square footage, renovations, and future growth.

Attachment Q presents general square footage needs of the school for Year 1 through 5, but there is a concern that projections may not be realistic because they are not well-supported assumptions. In the narrative of the Financial Plan, the applicant provided a figure of 5,350 square feet for a facility to determine Year 1 expense assumptions. With a projected enrollment figure of 200 students, a facility of this size amounts to approximately 27 square feet per person.

To provide a point of reference, a report from the Department of Education's Facilities Development Branch, dated July 19, 2016, reported that DOE guidelines provide for an average of 107 to 143 square ft. per student of the schools. The report further states that the national average for space per student is 104 to 161 square feet per student. IMAG Academy's projection of approximately 27 square feet is nearly 4 times less space per student.

During the Clarification Interview, the Applicant reported that they measured a classroom in Waipahu High School and used that to determine the square footage needs for its classrooms; it is not known what the square footage figures for "common areas" and "school office" are based on. The Applicant does not provide a rationale for considering facilities that result in square footage per student amounts that are significantly lower than Hawaii public school guidelines. As such there are concerns whether the school's facilities plan supports and aligns with the school's academic plan, fosters good learning environments, and ultimately are safe.

Without general assessments of the specific buildings listed in Attachment Q, there is no confidence in the estimations used for the facility renovation and financing plans. Several buildings are represented in Attachment Q as possible school sites, but not the square footage and general assessments of what needs to be done to bring each possible facility into compliance for use as a school. In the clarification interview, the Applicant reported the renovation costs are based on IMAG Academy finding ready-to-use office space that doesn't require expensive fixes to be converted to a school, and on research conducted of other buildings for previous charter school application cycles. For this reason, they provided a conservative budget based on "minimum renovations and permitting concerns". Further complicating the matter, the renovation activities in the Financial Management Plan (page 16 of Attachment Q), happen in May-June 2020 (item 16), but the renovation activities in the Facility Acquisition Project Plan (page 11 of Attachment Q) start in December 2019 (item 27), 6 months earlier. There is a concern regarding the alignment between readiness, or availability, of finances when renovations begin.

The facilities plan does not include how the school will accommodate any square footage increases necessary to meet the Enrollment Plan, which adds more students every year. In the clarification

interview the applicant provided simply that the criteria for selecting a facility is to find a building that will accommodate the growth. Similar to the renovation plan, the Applicant is relying on assumptions that a large enough building, that fits into their budget, will be available. There is a concern whether these are well-supported assumptions for finding a facility. Without clearly reliable supporting evidence these assumptions are not sound plans for growth.

### **Concerns Related to Service Providers**

The Applicant has chosen to work with a service provider, Ho'okako'o Corporation, that has shown success working with three public conversion charter schools in Hawaii. IMAG Academy would be the first start-up public charter school Ho'okako'o Corporation would work with. Although a draft Service Agreement was provided that shows the terms and fee schedule, during the Capacity Interview there was uncertainty, between the proposed school and the Service Provider, on the fee that would be charged to the proposed school. The difference was approximately \$10,000.00. Because the difference in the fee that will be charged has larger financial implications, this will be explained in the Financial Plan Section. Organizationally, the inability to agree upon a service agreement with its primary, and initial, contractor in the application phase is evidence that the Applicant Team does not have the capacity to implement its policies and procedures for selecting vendors or contractors effectively.

Finally, regarding the relationship between Ho'okako'o Corporation and IMAG Academy, the Applicant does not provide the methods the proposed school governing board will use to review and evaluate the Service Provider's progress, or an explanation of whether there will be an external evaluator to assess the Service Provider's, or the procedures, standards, or conditions, for interventions. The Applicant simply states that Ho'okako'o will be assessed annually and lists the assessment areas.

# Financial Plan

IMAG Academy

Rating

**Does not meet the standard for approval**

This section of the application contains two sub-sections. IMAG Academy's application received ratings for both of the sub-sections:

Section IV. Financial Plan - Sub-sections	Rating
A. Financial Oversight and Management	✗Does not meet the standard for approval
B. Operating Budget	✗Does not meet the standard for approval

## Analysis

Because IMAG Academy's application was not found to meet the standard for approval for the both rated sub-sections, **the Financial Plan does not meet the standard for approval**. Specifically, the Applicant did not provide a complete, realistic, and viable start-up plan and three-year operating budget. Exclusions and incomplete costs render the Financial Plan and the application as a whole unreliable and unsound. Incomplete or excluded items include, but are not limited to:

- Food costs for Years 1-3 (discussed in more detail below);
- Instructional materials, software, and assessments;
- Professional development on the numerous standards, frameworks, and approaches that comprise the school's educational model;
- Costs to cover teacher professional development/work days that exceed collective bargaining requirements;
- Staffing (discussed in more detail below); and
- Facility renovation and retrofitting costs.

In addition, the Applicant did not complete the Financial Plan workbook in accordance with the requirements of the Request for Proposal; the applicant failed to submit a start-up period budget. Instead, a blank spreadsheet was submitted and start-up year budget information was provided in the narrative proposal. While the Evaluation Team was able to review the narrative for budget information, the Applicant's inability to complete the Financial Plan section as required raises concerns that further financial information is incomplete or not included and it raises concerns pertaining to the capacity of the applicant governing board, which allowed the application to be submitted with this glaring omission.

The Evaluation Team would like to note that the described system of financial oversight by the school governing board and the division of operational duties and responsibilities between the school administration, specifically the school director, and its financial service provider, Ho'okako'o Corporation, sets the foundation for sound systems, policies, and processes for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll. Though financial policies and internal controls would need to be finalized and adopted by the school governing board, the Applicant has clearly delineated the roles and

responsibilities of the governing board, school administration and its financial service provider, Ho'okako'o Corporation.

#### **Fiscal Concerns Related to Year 1 Budget**

However, as previously mentioned, the Applicant does not meet the standard for this section due to the numerous inconsistencies and exclusions in the budget provided in the Financial Plan. The Applicant projects that the school will end Year 1 with approximately \$31,500, which equates to less than 8 days of cash on hand. Under the Financial Performance Framework of the State Public Charter School Contract, this would result in a classification of significant risk, the most severe level of risk in the Financial Performance Framework. The Days Cash on Hand indicator evaluates whether a school maintains a sufficient cash balance to meet its cash obligations. The Framework classifies moderate risk as 30-50 days cash on hand. The school's projection of 8 days cash on hand increases the risk of financial insolvency, which under Hawaii state law, results in closure of the charter school.

Inaccurate or incomplete budget projections further erodes the viability of the Year 1 budget. As previously stated in the Organizational Plan, Ho'okako'o Corporation states that its fee is \$65,000 as described in the draft service agreement provided in the application, while the Applicant states that the fee is \$55,000 as stated in the annual budgets provided in the application. Though the difference of \$10,000 may initially appear inconsequential, this difference would have a severe impact in the applicant's Year 1 budget. Should the fee for Ho'okako'o Corporation be \$65,000, this would lower the end of year balance to \$21,500 and about 5 days cash-on-hand, which further exacerbates an already precarious financial situation.

#### **Fiscal Concerns Related to Incomplete/Excluded Costs**

In addition to the Year 1 budget concerns, the exclusion of expenses further erodes the viability of the budget and Financial Plan as a whole. For example, the Applicant did not include food service costs in the operating budget despite the Applicant's stated intention to serve lunch and a snack in Year 1 of operations and breakfast by Year 4. This is driven by the fact that the school anticipates more than 55% of its students will qualify for free or reduced lunch. As described in the application, the Applicant did not expect to have a certified kitchen in its facility, so contracted vendors would provide and deliver meals. The application further provides a projected cost of \$115,000 for food service for Year 1. However, as previously stated, the annual budgets for Years 1 through 3 do not have any food costs, though it is stated that grants, donations, and fundraising may be needed to cover the Year 1 cost. A review of the Applicant's contingency plans did not find any mention of canceling food service if enrollment projections are not met.

In the clarification interview, the Applicant stated that food costs were not included in the budgets as the school would need to apply for and be approved to participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Applicants were not allowed to provide unsubstantiated federal funding in the budget; however, the federal reimbursement does not cover the full costs of school meals. Even if approved for the NSLP, the Applicant will need to budget for food costs on some level.

As food service is a costly expense for public schools, the absence of any food costs raises serious questions and doubts of the Applicant's ability to provide this service. With more than half the projected student population qualifying for free or reduced lunch, the absence of food service would have a negative impact on students. On the other hand, should the school provide food service, the budget provided would be inaccurate and unreliable, resulting in concerns and doubts of the school's ability to implement other facets of its academic and organizational plan.

Other cost estimates that appear incomplete or are excluded include staffing costs are budgeted at \$53,000 for each teacher, in each year of the budget). This potentially limits the school to hiring teachers whose qualifications or experience are at the lower levels. There are three teacher Classes that include salary levels around a \$53,000 salary level or lower in the 2020-2021 school year salary schedule. However only two of these classes would include licensed teachers, the other class includes teachers that are unlicensed, have not completed a State Approved Teacher Education Program, and would only be eligible for an emergency hire permit.

## Evidence of Capacity

IMAG Academy

Rating

**Does not meet the standard for approval**

This section of the application contains three sub-sections. IMAG Academy's application received ratings for all three of the sub-sections:

Section V. Applicant Capacity - Sub-sections	Rating
A. Academic Plan Capacity	<b>X</b> Does not meet the standard for approval
B. Organizational Plan Capacity	<b>X</b> Does not meet the standard for approval
C. Financial Plan Capacity	<b>X</b> Does not meet the standard for approval

### Analysis

The applicant does not demonstrate the capacity to open and manage a high quality charter school since the applicant does not meet the standard with regard to its academic, organizational and financial management capacity.

The applicant does not have the academic capacity necessary to run a high quality charter school. Although the school will be supported by various advisors, the day to day operational aspect of running a charter school, as well as academic related start-up activities will rest with the proposed school director. The position description for school director did not require or emphasize school administration or leadership. Instead, the job description set qualifications for the position that emphasized Organizational Management, Project Management, Strategic Planning, and mid-management supervisory experience over school administrative experience, teaching experience, and developing and delivering school programs. The proposed school principal exhibits undemonstrated capacity and ability since her resume does not indicate that she has the range of experience and skills necessary to launch and lead a high quality charter school in addition to implementing curriculum and developing the educational program.

The applicant does not have organizational capacity since the average classroom size of the school may not be sufficient to deliver instruction in the methods that would be chosen for the school.

The applicant does not have financial capacity since the governing board treasurer and another governing board member with fundraising experience are listed as the members that will carry out the financial plan. The governing board treasurer of the proposed school is knowledgeable about financial



management. However, this experience of the treasurer may need to be supplemented with a deeper understanding of the financial management aspects of a school.

## **Evaluator Biographies**

### **Martha Evans**

Ms. Evans has over 40 years of experience in education having served as a school administrator, curriculum coordinator, and teacher in both public and private schools. She served as a school administrator at Lānaʻi High and Elementary School, Saint Louis School and McKinley Community School for Adults. Ms. Evans taught at Lānaʻi High and Elementary School, Holy Family School and Mokapu Elementary. She earned both a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and Master's Degree in Elementary Education/Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Hawaii Manoa, a Certificate in Reading Recovery from the University of California San Bernardino, and a Certificate in Educational Administration from the University of Hawaii Manoa.

### **Patricia Hamamoto**

Ms. Hamamoto is the former Superintendent of the Hawaii Department of Education. She has over 40 years of experience in education having served as an administrator at the state and school levels, and as a teacher. She served as a school administrator at Maui High School, Nanakuli High and Intermediate School, Pearl City Highlands Elementary, Princess Miriam Likelike Elementary School, and President William McKinley High School. She has taught at Highlands Intermediate School, Ilima Intermediate School, Pearl City High School, McKinley Community School for Adults, Waipahu Community School for Adults, and Kaimuki Community School for Adults. Ms. Hamamoto has a Bachelor of Arts, Fifth Year Teaching Certificate from Long Beach State College, and a Master of Education from the University of Hawaii.

### **Jennifer Higaki**

Ms. Higaki is the Commission's Academic Performance and Data Systems Manager. She has been involved in education in Hawaii since 2003, working in school-level and state-level positions in the Hawaii Department of Education and at the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Italian Studies from Wellesley College and a Master of Science in Comparative and International Education from the University of Oxford.

### **Randolph Moore**

Mr. Moore is a Vice Chair of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents. He also currently serves as Board Chair and Director of the Hawaii Housing Development Corporation and as a Director of Grove Farm Company, Inc. He also chairs the advisory board of the Hawaii Budget & Policy Center. Mr. Moore is a retired business executive having a career that spanned 35 years which included serving as President of Oceanic Properties, President of Molokai Ranch, and Chief Executive Officer of Kaneohe Ranch. Following his retirement from Kaneohe Ranch, Mr. Moore taught mathematics at Central Middle School, and then became the Assistant Superintendent at the Hawaii Department of Education, Office of School Facilities and Support Services. Mr. Moore retired from the Hawaii Department of Education in 2012. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in mathematics from Swarthmore College, a Master in Business Administration from Stanford University, and completed post-baccalaureate teacher training at Chaminade University.

### **John Rizzo**

Dr. Rizzo has over 30 years of leadership service in the role of Superintendent of Schools, Independent Head of School and as Principal of Public Schools in Massachusetts. He also served as an Adjunct

Professor of Graduate and Undergraduate Education for 17 years at a Massachusetts State University, and has served as a High School Head Football and Lacrosse Coach. While in Hawaii, Dr. Rizzo served as the Founding Head of School at Maui Preparatory Academy and also Head of School at St. Theresa School. Dr. Rizzo earned a Bachelor of Science in History and Education from Springfield College, his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership at Westfield State University, and his Doctorate in Teacher Education and School Improvement with a concentration in Supervision and Evaluation at The University of Massachusetts.

**Sylvia Silva**

Ms. Silva is the Commission's Organizational Performance Officer. Prior to working at the Commission she worked for its predecessor agency, the Charter School Review Panel. Before her work in charter school authorizing she had seven years of experience in operations at the school level which included school pre-opening/start-up phase systems and policy development, registrar functions, and school bookkeeping. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Chaminade University of Honolulu.

**Danny Vasconcellos**

Mr. Vasconcellos is the Commission's Finance and Control Manager. He previously worked at the State Office of the Auditor as an Analyst where he worked on or lead projects that required him to identify internal control weaknesses and analyze the effectiveness of state agencies. While at the Office of the Auditor, he worked on the audit of Hawaii's charter schools and a study of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board. He also served as a researcher for the Hawaii State Legislature's House Finance Committee and has extensive knowledge of Hawaii's legislative process and funding. He holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.