



Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
2013-2014

**IMAGINE ME LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL
ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REPORT**

2013 – 2014 SCHOOL YEAR

Part 1: School Overview

School Information for the 2013-2014 School Year

Name of Charter School	Imagine Me Leadership Charter School
Board Chair(s)	Rev. David Brawley
School Leader(s)	Bevon Thompson
Management Company (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 11207
Facility Owner(s)	Private

School Profile

- Imagine Me Leadership Charter School (IMLCS) is a single-gender (all boys) elementary school, which served 221 students¹ in grades K-4 during the 2013-2014 school year. It opened in 2010-2011 and is under the terms of its first charter. The school's authorized full grade span is K-5, which it expects to reach in the 2014-2015 school year. The school is located in privately-operated facilities in Brooklyn within Community School District (CSD) 19.²
- IMLCS enrolls new students in kindergarten, but backfills empty seats in first through fourth grades. There were 124 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2013 lottery.³ The average attendance rate for the 2013-2014 school year to date as reported in February 2014 was 94.4%.⁴
- IMLCS will be up for renewal in the 2014-2015 school year.
- The 2013-2014 school leadership team includes Katherine Corbett, Executive Director; Bevon Thompson, Principal; and Taryn Guy, Director of Human Resources and Finance. The Executive Director and Principal joined the school in the 2012-2013 school year as a transitional leadership team and in 2013-2014 took on their permanent roles. The Director of Human Resources and Finance joined the staff at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.
- IMLCS had a student to teacher ratio of 12:1 in the 2013-2014 school year, and served 13 sections across all grades, with an average class size of 17.⁵
- The lottery preferences for IMLCS's 2013-2014 school year included the New York State Charter Schools Act required preferences of returning students, students residing in the community school district of the school's location and siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school.⁶

¹ Enrollment reflects ATS data from 10/31/13.

² NYC DOE Location Code Generation and Management System database.

³ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

⁴ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

⁵ Self-reported information given on 9/29/14.

⁶ Imagine Me Leadership Charter School's 2013-2014 application.

Part 2: Summary of Findings

Essential Question 1: Is the school an academic success?

Overview of School-Specific Data through 2012-2013

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	-	-	-	6.4%
CSD 19	-	-	-	14.2%
Difference from CSD 19	-	-	-	-7.8
NYC	-	-	-	28.1%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	-21.7
New York State	-	-	-	31.1%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-	-24.7

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School	-	-	-	19.1%
CSD 19	-	-	-	18.8%
Difference from CSD 19	-	-	-	0.3
NYC	-	-	-	33.1%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	-14.0
New York State	-	-	-	31.1%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-	-12.0

* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served.

Performance on the NYC Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	-	-	D
Student Progress	-	-	-	C
Student Performance	-	-	-	D
School Environment	-	-	-	C
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	-	-	-

Progress Towards Attainment of Academic Goals

- According to its 2012-2013 Annual Report to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), Imagine Me Leadership Charter School met one of three applicable academic performance goals identified in its charter.

Responsive Education Program & Learning Environment⁷

- The school departmentalized third and fourth grades in the 2013-2014 school year.
- The school based lesson plans, unit plans, and scope and sequences on the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- The school moved to using Achieve 3000, an online reading program, to determine students' Lexile reading levels.
- The school moved to using the Danielson model for formal and informal observations. School leadership also conducts mini-observations and instructional walk-throughs that are unannounced, frequent, and short.
- The school participates in the Partnership for Innovation in Compensation for Charter Schools (PICCS) program which provides the school with professional development.

Representatives of the NYC DOE team visited the school on June 18, 2014. Based on discussion, document review, and observation, the following was noted:

- School leadership reported that:
 - The school uses Achieve 3000 for interim assessments. The school also monitors students' acquisition of learning standards by using i-Ready.
 - The school has also secured licenses for students to use Achieve 3000 over the summer for additional enrichment.
 - The school instituted after-school enrichment in two 6-week cycles. Additional enrichment was also provided to 3rd and 4th grade students in Saturday Academy.
- Nine classrooms across all grades and content areas were observed by members of the visit team and the following was noted:
 - Most of the classrooms were taught by one instructor, although a few classrooms had two to four teachers present, following a lead and assist model. In half of the classrooms, independent practice was observed. Class size varied from nine to 19 students.
 - In most classrooms, observing and student class work was used to check for understanding.
 - Based on debriefs with instructional leaders after classroom visits, most classrooms had instruction that was aligned with the school's instructional model and current academic priorities.
- On the day of the visit, one-on-one interviews were conducted with two teachers, a Grade Advisor, a Literacy Coach, and the Director of Curriculum, and the following was noted:
 - Most staff interviewed reported that teacher evaluations are based on the Danielson framework, with teachers receiving three to four formal observations during the school year. They also reported that informal observations are conducted along with coaching provided by the content-area coaches,
 - Most staff interviewed reported that SETSS is provided for students with IEPs in grades three and four, and that grades K through two have ICT classes. They also reported that the special education teachers coordinate with the grade-level teachers to ensure that students are working towards their IEP goals.
 - Most staff interviewed reported receiving some form of professional development, such as at the school during club time or offsite with the Special Education Collaborative.

⁷ Self-reported information from school-submitted self-evaluation form on 2/13/14.

Essential Question 2: Is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization?

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

After reviewing information and documentation concerning Board turnover, Board minutes, reporting structure, organizational chart, annual accountability reporting documents, Board agendas, and the school's website, the NYC DOE notes the following:

- The Board has six board members, all voting, including the parent representative. The Board Chair, Reverend David Brawley, has been on the Board since February 2010.
- As evidenced from a review of Board rosters, the Board has not experienced any turnover in the 2013-2014 school year.
- As recorded in the Board's minutes, there is a clear reporting structure with school leadership providing regular updates on academic, financial, and operational performance to the Board and its committees.
- Board minutes and agenda items have been provided via the school's website for inspection by the public.

School Climate & Community Engagement

After reviewing information and documentation concerning leadership turnover, staff turnover, attendance rate, student turnover, NYC School Survey results and response rates, and PTO meetings, the NYC DOE notes the following:

- The school had an interim leadership team in the 2012-2013 school year who then became the permanent leadership team as of the 2013-2014 school year.
- Instructional staff turnover was 60.9% with two out of 23 instructional staff choosing not to return for the 2013-2014 school year from the prior year, and 12 instructional staff who were asked not to return. The school's new leadership team had all staff re-apply for the 2013-2014 school year accounting for the high rate of turnover. As of February 2014, during the 2013-2014 school year, four teachers had left the school.⁸
- As of February 2014, average daily attendance for students during that school year was 94.4%, which is lower than the school's charter goal of 95%.⁹
- Student turnover was 10.6% of students from the prior school year who did not return at the start of the 2013-2014 school year; 15.3% of the students left the school between the start of the school year and February 2014.¹⁰
- The school reported having a parent organization, called the IMLCS Parent Association, as evidenced by the agendas for the association's meetings.

2012-2013 NYC School Survey Results¹¹

Categories	Result	Community	Response Rate	Citywide Rate
Academic Expectations	Well Below Average	Parents	36%	54%
Communication	Well Below Average	Teachers	29%	83%
Engagement	Well Below Average	Students	N/A	83%
Safety & Respect	Well Below Average			

⁸ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

⁹ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

¹⁰ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

¹¹ Results are particular to the school type as identified in the 2013 School Survey.

Financial Health

Near-term financial obligations:

- Based on the FY13 financial audit and follow up, the school's current ratio indicated that the school may be unable to meet its current liabilities.
- Based on the FY13 financial audit and follow up, the school's unrestricted cash availability indicated a risk that the school may be unable to cover at least one month of its operating expenses without an infusion of cash.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2013-2014 budget to the actual enrollment as of the last day of the FY14 school year revealed that the school had met its enrollment target, supporting its projected revenue.
- The school met all debt obligations.

Financial sustainability based on current practices:

- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY13, the school operated at an aggregate deficit over the past three fiscal years.
- Based on the FY13 financial audit and follow up, the school's debt to asset ratio indicated that the school had more total liabilities than it had total assets.
- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY13 and follow up, the school generated an overall positive cash flow, though the school had negative cash flow for FY11.

Annual Independent Financial Audit

- An independent audit performed for FY13 showed three findings, which were:
 - The school failed to maintain the \$70,000 cash balance in its escrow fund by April 1 of its third year of operation as required by NYSED.
 - The school was missing an I-9 form for an employee, which is required by NYSED.
 - The school was missing support for cash disbursements during the year ending June 30, 2013.

Based on document review and an interview during the June 18, 2014 visit to the school, the following was noted:

- The school ended FY13 with a net deficit of \$243,920. Staff members noted that several internal controls and changes were made in order to reduce the deficit to \$0 by December 31, 2013. Those controls included:
 - Mid-year audit and monthly audits reviewed by all finance staff
 - Summer school funded by grant funding instead of school budget
 - Contact made with all vendors and account balances negotiated down
 - Payment plans established for outstanding balances
 - Reduction of computer lab leasing program and monthly payment plan established
 - Received furniture donations instead of making furniture purchases
 - Establishment of a science lab delayed
- No documentation was provided by the school to support the reduction of the FY13 net deficit to \$0. Furthermore, it must be noted that the school's FY13's beginning balance was -\$411,990.
- The school updated its Financial Control Procedures in October 2013. During the visit, in reviewing the new Financial Control Procedures document, it was noted that some of the school's current financial control procedures reported to the NYC DOE by IMLCS staff members do not align with the recently updated Financial Control Procedures document. A listing of the procedures not in alignment as noted by IMLCS staff members included:
 - One member of staff acts as both a purchaser and approver for debit card purchases. This may impede the separation of duties control.
 - The cash collection process for student lunches does not have an established procedure for providing receipt or invoice documentation.

Essential Question 3: Compliance with charter and all applicable laws and regulations?

After a review of documentation submitted for the NYC DOE annual accountability reporting requirements for the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE finds the following:

Board Compliance

The Board is in compliance with:

- The Board's membership size falls within the range of no fewer than five and no greater than 13 members, as outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws.
- Currently, officer positions outlined in the Board's bylaws are filled.
- The Board has held the minimum number of Board meetings of 10, as outlined in its bylaws. Based on posted Board minutes, the Board held 11 meetings for the 2013-2014 school year in which quorum was reached.

School Compliance

The school is in compliance with (as reviewed during May 2014):

- The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification.
- The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to NYC DOE.
- The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.
- The school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 24, 2014 adhering to the charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1.
- The school leader was trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.
- The school has posted its 2012-2013 NYSED Annual Report and annual audit to its website, as specified in charter law.

The school is out of compliance with:

- All staff members do not have appropriate fingerprint clearance as of November 2013.
- The school does not have the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification as of May 2014.

Essential Question 4: What are the school's plans for the next charter term?

As reported by the school's leadership, the following is noted:

- The school has not yet reached its full grade span of K-5 which it expects to reach in the 2014-2015 school year.
- The school is in the fourth year of its first charter and will be up for renewal in the 2014-2015 school year.
- The school and St. Paul Community Baptist Church Economic Development Corporation are negotiating immediate renovation and expansion in anticipation of the 2014-2015 school year to include an additional six classrooms and a gymnasium/auditorium.
- For its next charter term, IMLCS is considering expanding to include middle school grades 6-8.

Enrollment and Retention Targets

As a reminder regarding accountability in the next charter term:

- 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.
- In school year 2013-2014, IMLCS served a higher percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch as compared to the citywide average, though a lower percentage compared to the CSD 19 average. The school enrolled students with disabilities and English Language Learner students at lower rates than both the CSD 19 and citywide averages.

Special Populations

	Free and Reduced Price Lunch					Students with Disabilities					English Language Learners				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
	School	-	80.3%	76.4%	75.1%	80.1%	-	13.7%	14.0%	12.4%	12.7%	-	1.7%	1.9%	1.6%
CSD 19	-	80.1%	80.4%	82.8%	86.2%	-	13.6%	13.5%	14.2%	16.2%	-	11.3%	10.8%	10.4%	10.3%
NYC	-	65.3%	68.1%	69.8%	73.5%	-	15.9%	15.7%	16.1%	17.1%	-	16.1%	15.5%	15.0%	14.7%

Additional Enrollment Information					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	-	K-1	K-2	K-3	K-4
CSD(s)	-	19	19	19	19

Comparisons to both the CSD(s) and City are made against students in grades K-8, 9-12 or K-12 depending on the grades the school served in each school year. Special population figures are as of October 31 for each given school year, with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.