



State Public Charter School Commission 2014 Final Application Recommendation Report

Charter Application for
IMAG Academy

Evaluation Team

Team Lead: Danny Vasconcellos

Evaluators: Beth Bulgeron

Jeff Poentis

Kirsten Rogers

Kenneth Surratt

GG Weisenfeld

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 2014 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.

Final Application Evaluation Process

The Commission examined feedback from its 2013 Application Cycle and researched the application processes from several states to develop a new, multiphase charter school application evaluation process. Building off of the advice and training from national experts and experience gained in the last application cycle, the Commission's Operations Section created standardized evaluation forms, provided evaluator training, and assembled the Evaluation Team based on the national best practices, policies, and standards needed to authorize high-performing charter schools. The highlights of the Final Application phase of the application evaluation process are as follows:

Final Application Evaluation. The Evaluation Team conducted individual and group assessments of completed Final Applications (including Initial Proposals and Initial Proposal Amendments). The Commission's Operations Section conducted a completeness check to ensure the Evaluation Team only reviewed complete submissions.

Capacity Interview. After the initial review, the Evaluation Team conducted an in-person or virtual assessment of the applicant's capacity. The interview also served to clarify some areas of the application.

Request for Clarification. After receiving initial clarification through the capacity interview, the Evaluation Team identified any areas of the application that required further clarification. Applicants had the opportunity to respond to the Evaluation Team's Request for Clarification in writing to address these issues.

Due Diligence. The Evaluation Team considered any other available information relevant to each application. The Commission's Operations Section produced informational reports on Charter Management Organizations and Educational Management Organizations associated with applicants for the Evaluation Team to consider.

Consensus Judgment. The evaluation teams came to consensus regarding 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 Commission's Executive Director, with assistance from the Operations Section, is charged with reviewing this recommendation report, the testimony at public hearings, comments from the Department of Education, and other information obtained during the application process in making his final recommendation to the Commission. The authority and responsibility to decide whether to approve or deny each application rests with the Commissioners.

Report Contents

This Recommendation Report includes the following:

Proposal Overview

Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the Final Application.

Recommendation

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

Evaluation

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

The rating given to each primary area is based on a holistic evaluation of the Final Application Evaluation Criteria and its impact on the overall plan.

Rating Characteristics

Rating	Characteristics
Meets the Standard	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.
Does Not Meet the Standard	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.
Falls Far Below the Standard	The response does not meet the criteria in most respects, is undeveloped or significantly incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan; or the applicant's capacity to carry it out.

Proposal Overview

Proposed School Name

IMAG Academy

Mission and Vision

Mission: “The IMAG Academy will be a school with high social and academic expectations. Community centered projects ensures our students experience how their knowledge and skills bring life to their surroundings, triggering their innate curiosity and creativity regardless of socioeconomic background or language challenges. A family environment of acceptance and support will uncover their strengths and potential, one student at a time. Each student will have an Individual –Achievement Goals and Learning (I-AGLs) plan, enabling all stakeholders to collect the evidence and celebrate their accomplishments and mastery, freeing their confidence and value within themselves to excel academically and within their community.”

Vision: “The IMAG Academy will provide a positive view of the world as we give our students and staff the permission to dream, environment to thrive, confidence to succeed, skills to act and the expectation to create a collaborative and peace-filled society. Our students will be creators of innovative, mindful, and creative solutions to unpredictable situations as they transfer, adapt, and act upon their thinking, knowledge and skills obtained through The Academy’s high expectations and rigorous academic standards. Our student’s will have a deep understanding that everyone and everything is connected and that innovation, collaboration, and mindfulness are pillars to sustainable and successful communities. They will excel in their social and academic abilities and they will be well-prepared and confident to make important decisions and succeed throughout their life; college, career or business ownership.”

Geographic Location

IMAG Academy proposes to be located in Waipahu in office space on Waipahu Street between the cross streets of Mokuola Street and Waipahu Depot Street. The applicant plans to use available space in the International City of Refuge and the Filipino Community Center.

Anticipated Student Population

IMAG Academy proposes to serve primarily students in Waipahu. The applicant states, “we should expect approximately 70% of our elementary, and 59% of our intermediate and high school students will qualify for free and reduced lunch, about 6% would require SPED services, and 27% elementary and 15% of intermediate and high school students will not consider English as their first language. In addition we believe the majority of the students will be Filipino (60+%) with a number of other culturally diverse and strong ethnic groups being represented, such as Native Hawaiian, Micronesian, and Samoan. The percentage of students having attended preschool will be approximately 30-40%.”

Contribution to Public Education System

IMAG Academy proposes to offer educational choice based on “community centered V-BASE projects,” which “[build] connection and value of our learned subjects to the applied issues of Business, Art, Science, and Engineering.” The applicant also states IMAG Academy will “increase the complex capacity...in a much needed area in Waipahu” while providing a “much more personable and family like

atmosphere.” Lastly, the applicant asserts the way it will incorporate community partners could “serve as a model for other schools.”

Enrollment Summary

Grade Level	Number of Students											
	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Capacity	
	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2022	
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	60	--	60	--	60	--	60	--	60	--	60	--
1			60		60		60		60		60	
2					60		60		60		60	
3							60		60		60	
4									75		75	
5											75	
6											75	
7	75		75		75		75		75		75	
8	75		75		75		75		75		75	
9			75		75		75		75		75	
10					75		75		75		75	
11							75		75		75	
12									75		75	
Subtotals	210	0	345	0	480	0	615	0	765	0	75	0
Totals	210		345		480		615		765		915	

Executive Summary

IMAG Academy

Recommendation

Deny

Summary Analysis

The Evaluation Team recommends that the application for IMAG Academy be denied. The applicant did not meet the standards in any of the four areas, and the Financial Plan and Evidence of Capacity falls far below the standard.

The Financial Plan falls far below the standard because it is unrealistic and infeasible. The plan depends on grant funding to almost completely fund start-up activities in Year 0 and operational expenses in Year 1, due to staffing costs that require most of the state per-pupil funding. The Financial Plan also fails to provide a viable contingency plan should funding not be received or be less than anticipated. Instead, the applicant’s proposal for a contingency plan is a reduction in grant revenues. These significant flaws demonstrate the applicant’s lack of financial capacity.

The Organizational Plan does not meet the standard due to the heavy reliance on grant funds for start-up activities and a lack of evidence of the applicant’s ability to raise the necessary grant funds and implement the start-up plan, which is completely dependent on a sole individual, the proposed school director. Further, the Organizational Plan wholly lacks a professional development program.

The Academic Plan does not meet the standard because it does not provide a comprehensive academic framework that is aligned to standards, and the plan does not explain how the instructional strategy concepts will be implemented. Further, the plan lacks a comprehensive course scope and sequence and is even missing information about courses and curriculum for some grade levels.

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

Fall Far Below the Standard

Organizational Plan

Does Not Meet the Standard

Evidence of Capacity

Fall Far Below the Standard

Academic Plan

IMAG Academy

Rating

Does Not Meet the Standard

Plan Summary

IMAG Academy proposes a traditional face-to-face, “brick and mortar” school focused on a student’s mastery and accomplishments in acquiring knowledge, capabilities, and skills prescribed by the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics. There are multiple elements to the academic framework. Those elements include Value-added Business, Art, Science, and Engineering (“V-BASE”) community-centered projects; Individual Achievement Goals and Learning plans; evidence of achieved goals and learning; and a rigor/relevance framework.

The foundation of the IMAG Academy learning environment, teaching community, and school organization is a safe and nurturing family culture. Students’ social-emotional and communication development is modeled through social expectations and authentic interactions between all members of the school family.

Analysis

The Academic Plan **does not meet the standard** for approval because it has substantial gaps, lacks detail, and requires additional information in the area of curriculum and instructional design. The plan does not reflect a thorough understanding of key issues and fails to present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate.

The Academic Plan does not provide a comprehensive framework for rigorous, high-quality instructional design that is aligned to academic standards. The Academic Plan identifies three concepts as its key instructional strategies: a safe and nurturing family environment, which will be promoted by “School Family,” a framework focused on social-emotional and communication development; academic rigor, which will be demonstrated by student mastery of Common Core State Standards (“CCSS”); and real-world relevance, which will be taught through community-centered V-BASE projects.

The applicant states that all three concepts are intended to align with the school’s mission and vision and meet students’ needs, with a safe and nurturing culture that is guided by the School Family framework acting as the primary driver. While the application does describe these concepts and their theoretical components, it fails to explain how they will be realized and implemented at IMAG Academy. Furthermore, although mastery of CCSS is cited as a significant component of the instructional design, the application does not describe how the concept of academic rigor, nor any of the other concepts, are aligned to CCSS and will be used to deliver standards-based instruction.

The Academic Plan does not provide a comprehensive course scope and sequence that aligns from grade to grade. IMAG Academy’s course scope and sequence clearly identifies the overarching outcomes for courses in kindergarten through grade 10 but fails to demonstrate alignment to standards or illustrate alignment from grade to grade. Particularly concerning is the fact that the application does not contain information about any courses or curriculum for grades 11 or 12.

The core curriculum that has been selected for grades 7 through 10 is sound and research-proven for the target population, but there are non-core courses, such as art, for which there is no selected or developed curriculum. As stipulated by the application instructions, if a curriculum has not been identified, then the application must include a curriculum development plan; however, no such plan is included, nor does the application include a realistic timeline for the creation or selection of the curriculum for these courses that is aligned with professional development calendars. The low number of proposed professional development days raises significant concerns about the applicant's understanding of the time and resources that will be required to implement the planning, curriculum development, and project coordination tasks outlined in the Academic Plan.

The Academic Plan does not demonstrate understanding of, and capacity to fulfill, state and federal obligations and requirements pertaining to students with special needs, including English Language Learners ("ELL") students. Due to a misunderstanding regarding funding provided by the Hawaii Department of Education ("DOE"), the applicant drastically changed the way that ELL students would be serviced by the school. Based on demographic data from the Waipahu Complex, the DOE complex in which IMAG Academy's proposed campus is located, the applicant anticipates that approximately 21% of the total student population will be ELL students. To accommodate an ELL population of this size, IMAG Academy budgeted for two dedicated ELL teachers in Year 1, with a plan to increase the number to 11 when the school reached full capacity. When developing the Academic Plan, the applicant was mistakenly under the impression that the DOE would provide the funding for the ELL teachers. When informed that this would not be the case, the applicant adjusted the staffing plan by eliminating the dedicated ELL teachers and focusing instead on hiring regular classroom teachers with ELL training.

Although IMAG Academy may be able to meet the needs its ELL students without having dedicated ELL teachers on staff, there is also the possibility that the school may not have the staff necessary to provide the appropriate level of service for this particular student population, which raises concerns about the Academic Plan.

Organizational Plan

IMAG Academy

Rating

Does Not Meet the Standard

Plan Summary

IMAG Academy proposes a governance structure made up of the governing board, the IMAG Foundation (a nonprofit organization the applicant intends to form to support the school), the school director, and an advisory board, made up of representatives from different stakeholder groups.

The Organizational Plan describes a start-up plan that identifies the proposed school director as the individual responsible for the completion of start-up activities. A major component of the start-up plan is the hiring of staff beginning in February 2016, approximately six months before the opening of the school.

Analysis

The Organizational Plan **does not meet the standard** for approval because it has substantial gaps, lacks detail, and requires additional information in multiple areas and does not reflect a thorough understanding of key issues. It does not provide enough accurate, specific information to show thorough preparation and fails to present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate.

The Organizational Plan does not provide a sound plan for the development of the school during its pre-opening phase. The entirety of the start-up plan is based on the efforts of one person, the proposed school director. The overwhelming majority of the tasks listed in the start-up plan (which include grant inquiry and writing, marketing and outreach to the community, hiring and training of teachers, and identifying and recruiting potential governing board and advisory board members) depend on the proposed school director. In the Request for Clarification, the applicant was asked to identify individuals that could complete start-up period activities should the director not be available for an extended period. The applicant identified two individuals but added that they would be limited to no more than ten to twelve hours a week. Despite being identified as the sole person responsible for implementing the start-up plan, the proposed school director has not provided evidence of capacity to successfully complete the start-up tasks, particularly the writing of grants. The proposed school director acknowledged that she would need to hire a grant writer during the start-up period, but the applicant has not accounted for the cost in the Financial Plan. Further and despite an understanding that grant funding is not guaranteed, the applicant has still developed a staffing plan that can only be successfully implemented with grant funding. This raises questions as to whether the start-up plan as a whole is realistic and sound as it is strictly contingent on the applicant's ability to secure the grant funding.

In addition, specific start-up roles for the team or individual are not identified. Student recruitment efforts are listed, but the plan for recruitment is sparse. The teacher recruitment plan also lacks important details and reflects a lack of understanding of key issues. There is a timeline for recruiting teachers but no substantive plan for how they will be recruited.

The Organizational Plan does not include appropriate goals and data-driven strategy for ongoing professional development, including the process for evaluating the efficacy of the professional

development, nor does the plan provide professional development opportunities and scheduling that effectively support the Academic Plan and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement, including an adequate induction program. The Organizational Plan wholly lacks a professional development program guided by a clear and specific vision. The application does state that teachers will be evaluated using the DOE's Educator Effectiveness System and attaches the DOE's description of that system. However, the application completely fails to identify and describe any appropriate goals or data-driven strategy for professional development. The applicant notes that professional development may be required based on a variety of triggers but does not describe how those deficiencies will be addressed. Further, the outline of teacher training prior to the school's opening is substantially inadequate for teachers to prepare for the academic year using the various components of the academic plan. Overall, the proposed professional development strategies are not realistic in supporting the teachers to differentiate their teaching, nor are they connected to a comprehensive professional development system that would support all teachers within the school.

Financial Plan

IMAG Academy

Rating

Fall Far Below the Standard

Plan Summary

The financial leadership team of IMAG Academy will be comprised of the governing board, board treasurer, school director, and business manager. The school director will be responsible for transaction-level oversight by ensuring that adequate financial procedures and controls are in place, while the business manager will be responsible for the overall financial administration.

IMAG Academy will be seeking a grant from the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation (“Castle Foundation”) in the amount of \$420,000, which would provide \$225,000 in Year 0 to fund start-up activities, \$150,000 to fund operating expenses in Year 1, and \$37,000 in fiscal agent fees.

The following chart provides the budget revenues, expenses, and operating gains or losses for Years 1 through 3:

	Total Operating Revenues	Total Operating Expenses	Total Operating Gain/(Loss)
Year 1	\$1,648,479	\$1,661,369	(\$12,890)
Year 2	\$2,416,195	\$2,432,010	(\$15,815)
Year 3	\$3,352,291	\$3,363,515	(\$11,224)

Analysis

The Financial Plan **falls far below the standard** for approval because the plan does not meet the criteria in most respects and is undeveloped. The applicant’s responses demonstrate a lack of preparation and raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan.

The Financial Plan fails to provide complete, realistic, and viable start-up and three-year operating budgets. The plan is severely flawed and unrealistic. A review of the start-up plan from the financial perspective further evidences the infeasibility of the staffing plan. According to the budget, the staffing costs for Years 1-3 account for 91%, 81%, and 80%, respectively, of the total per-pupil allocations that would be received. To offset these significant costs in Year 1, the applicant assumes that \$150,000 in Castle Foundation grant funding will be provided. Therefore, the applicant’s Year 1 budget is predicated on unsecured funding for operational costs and facility funding since almost all the per-pupil funding will be used on staffing. This approach raises serious doubts as to the viability and sustainability of the Financial Plan and budget.

Additional evidence that the Financial Plan is inadequate is demonstrated by the fact that the applicant intends to hire a grant writer using grant funds from the Castle Foundation. It is unclear how the applicant plans to write the Castle Foundation grant that will allow it to hire the grant writer. The only funding source identified in the Year 0 budget, other than the Castle Foundation grant, is an in-kind donation of \$6,000, in the form of a rent discount from the lessor of a preferred facility the school wishes to operate in.

The Financial Plan fails to provide a detailed budget narrative that clearly explains reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions. The applicant's failure to provide reasonable, well-supported revenue is demonstrated in the Year 0 budget, which is almost entirely predicated on grant funding. The budget narrative assumes \$225,000 of a total budget of \$231,000 in Year 0 will come from a Castle Foundation grant. Securing funding in Year 0 is crucial to the Financial Plan because the applicant intends to purchase instructional materials, such as textbooks, student and staff computers, and furniture during this time. In all, almost \$90,000 of the Year 0 budget would be used for these purchases. In addition, Year 0 funding is needed to facilitate the staffing plan, the success of which depends upon hiring key staff members (such as the Curriculum Resource Teacher, Business Manager, and SASA) in the start-up period.

The Financial Plan does not provide a sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than expected. The contingency plan provided by IMAG Academy fails to describe the actions that will be taken if the grant funding from the Castle Foundation is not received, and instead the contingency plan reduces the amount of Castle Foundation grant funding from \$420,000 to \$240,000. The reduced funding would result in a start-up budget of \$140,000 in Year 0 and \$100,000 for operating expenses in Year 1. When asked specifically what the applicant would do if Castle Foundation grant funding was not received, the applicant responded that it would seek other grants, such as the Charter School Program grant from the U.S. Department of Education and a grant from ING Foundation. The absence of a contingency plan that is not dependent on grant funding further undermines the validity of the Financial Plan.

The overall weakness of the Financial Plan, evident in unrealistic staffing costs and a dependence on grant funding, demonstrates the applicant's lack of financial capacity and increases the likelihood that the budget, as described, will not sustain the operations of the school.

Evidence of Capacity

IMAG Academy

Rating

Fall Far Below the Standard

Plan Summary

IMAG Academy has identified the following individuals as key members of its applicant team:

- Sheila Buyukacar, the proposed school director who served as an officer in the Air Force over a 20 year career and has recently provided educational consulting services in professional development and leadership;
- Joseph Evans, the proposed Business Manager who has financial experience in the Hawaii charter school system and in the banking, investment, and nonprofit industries;
- Keoni Inciong, an administrator and educational specialist in the Hawaii Department of Education with over 30 years of experience; and
- Cheryl Cudiamat, the director of a preschool care facility in Central Oahu with experience in marketing and human resources management.

Analysis

The Evidence of Capacity **falls far below the standard** for approval because the applicant does not inspire confidence in its capacity to carry out the proposed plan effectively. The applicant failed to provide sufficient evidence that its key members possess the collective qualifications—including a demonstrated understanding of challenges, issues, and requirements associated with running a charter school—to implement the proposed school’s Academic, Organizational, and Financial Plans.

Foremost, the applicant demonstrated a lack of financial capacity as evidenced by a Financial Plan that heavily depends on substantial grant funding to be implemented. The applicant provided no evidence of capacity to obtain the grant funding on which it relies, and the applicant has not identified a grant writer with the necessary capacity. The lack of capacity is further demonstrated in the applicant’s failure to provide a viable contingency plan that addresses the applicant’s dependence on grant funding. Instead, the contingency plan provided only reduces the grant revenues the applicant hopes to receive.

This substantial lack of financial capacity resulted in a Financial Plan that is unrealistic and infeasible. The applicant’s failure to provide a viable Financial Plan is the primary factor in rating the applicant’s overall capacity as falling far below the standard.

The lack of organizational capacity is demonstrated in the applicant team’s overreliance on the proposed school director to implement a start-up plan that requires substantial fundraising, including grant writing as previously described. This lack of capacity is further demonstrated by the applicant’s apparent inadequate understanding of professional development strategies.

The Evaluation Team expressed concerns regarding the applicant’s capacity to deliver rigorous instruction that is aligned with both IMAG Academy’s stated mission and guiding concepts and academic standards for a number of reasons.

Not only does the application fail to explain how the key concepts and frameworks that form the basis of the Academic Plan will be integrated into a cohesive, comprehensive instructional plan, but it is also missing information about the curriculum for both certain non-core courses and entire grade levels and does not provide a formalized process for the analysis of student achievement data. In addition, the applicant's proposal to use different assessments if students do not perform well demonstrates a troubling lack of understanding of basic principles of sound data collection and analysis and raises concerns that the applicant may be planning to adjust academic expectations to the achievement levels of low-performing students.

Evaluator Biographies

Danny Vasconcellos

Mr. Vasconcellos is the Commission's Organizational Performance Manager. He previously worked at the State Office of the Auditor as an Analyst where he worked on or lead projects (such as the audit of Hawaii's charter schools and a study of the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board) where he analyzed agency effectiveness and efficiency and identified internal control weaknesses. 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.

Beth Bulgeron

Ms. Bulgeron is the Commission's Academic Performance Manager. She previously worked as an administrator in charter schools in Chicago, Illinois and Santa Cruz, California. She has developed standards-based curriculum and assessments for public school districts and charter schools and has served as a curriculum consultant. Prior to that, she taught for five years in charter high schools. She earned her BA at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and her JD and LL.M. in Education Law and Policy at the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law.

Jeff Poentis

Mr. Poentis is the Commission's Financial Performance Specialist. He has extensive accounting experience and is a Certified Public Accountant with over 18 years of experience in both the private and public sectors. He holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Kirsten Rogers

Ms. Rogers is an Evaluation Specialist in the Department of Education's Accountability Section, which administers the public school system's statewide accountability program with a focus on developing and implementing educational indicators on school performance. She formerly served the Commission as its Academic Performance Specialist. She has experience as a middle school teacher at both a charter school in Tennessee and at Wheeler Intermediate, a DOE school in Hawaii. She is a Teach for America alumnus, a former corps member advisor, and former content community leader for the organization. She also holds a Master of Education in Teaching from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Kenneth Surratt

Mr. Surratt has nearly 20 years of business and operations management and analysis experience, half of which has been in education-related roles. He has worked for Charter Management Organizations, including management positions with KIPP (the largest charter school network in the nation) and as the Chief Financial Officer of Breakthrough Charter Schools. He also served as the Assistant Director of CREDO (Center for Research on Education Outcomes) at Stanford University when it authored one of the largest charter school studies in the country. He holds an MBA from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business.

GG Weisenfeld

Dr. Weisenfeld has nearly 28 years of experience in education, specializing in elementary and early childhood education. She most recently served as the Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning in the Office of the Governor and wrote the state's federal Preschool Development Grant application for Hawaii's charter schools. She also has extensive experience teaching, training, and managing teachers and served as Board President of Lanikai Elementary Public Charter School. She holds an MS in Elementary Education from Bank Street College and an Ed.M. and Ed.D. in Educational Administration from Columbia University's Teachers College.