

Ocean Academy Charter School

Section 3: Enrollment and Admissions Summary

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- a) Describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one and the basis for the growth plan illustrated in the Enrollment Summary in the first four years of the charter.

Ocean Academy Charter School founders decided on the enrollment of 60 students per grade level for several reasons. One, it provides the opportunity for even distribution of students in kindergarten and in subsequent grades while changing the number of students per classroom. Sixty students in a grade allow for the students to get to know their peers, and allows for the shifting of students in different class combinations exposing all to each other.

The total enrollment for the first year of the school will be 160; 60 students in Kindergarten (4 classes), 60 students in First Grade (3 classes), and 40 students in Second Grade (2 Classes). Classes are sized as 20 students in a class from first to eighth grade with 15 in a class for Kindergarten.

The growth of the school will be manageable from educational, administrative, and fiscal perspectives. After the first year new curriculum will be developed and tested by the smaller population of the highest grade. Resources will also be tested without having to make a full commitment so that adjustments can be made for the following years. Also, knowing that the highest grade of a new school is the one that usually gets the fewest applications allows for the effective use of limited financial resources.

The number of students also allows for the development of the community and the culture of the school in the early years and maintaining it as grades are added. With only 160 students, the teachers and administrators will get to know each child creating that sense of community and supporting each child in a positive and personal manner.

According to the National Council of the Teachers of English (<http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/why-class-size-matters>), "Overall, research shows that students in smaller classes perform better in all subjects and on all assessments when compared to their peers in larger classes. In smaller classes students tend to be as much as one to two months ahead in content knowledge, and they score higher on standardized assessments. It is worth noting, however, that some studies analyze student assessment results in terms of individual student performance and others in terms of class-wide aggregated performance, which can obscure the differences in individual students' performances.

These positive effects of small class sizes are strongest for elementary school students, and they become more powerful and enduring the longer students are in smaller classes. That is, students who have smaller classes in early elementary grades continue to benefit from this experience even if they are in larger classes in upper elementary or middle school (Bruhwiler & Blatchford, 2011; Chingos, 2013)."

- b) Describe the school's recruitment efforts and the school's target population. Provide evidence that the school will, to the maximum extent possible, seek the enrollment of a cross-section of the community's school-age population including at-risk, special education and English language learning students.

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Ocean Founders have already started the process of recruitment in support of the charter application and in potentially recruiting students by proactive outreach to various religious groups, community, and advocacy groups, and by attending public district school board meetings. (See community support attached to this application.) The targeted population is all elementary age children wanting to attend public school.

Recruitment efforts will strive to solicit applications from a cross section of the community's school-age population including at-risk, special education and English language learning students. The board of trustees will create a marketing campaign (direct mail) that will cover Lakewood Township with information regarding the new charter school with invitations for all age/grade appropriate students to apply. Posters, flyers, and press releases to local media (both English and Spanish newspapers) will explicitly state that all elementary age students are eligible to apply. All materials will be provided in English and Spanish. The board of trustees will hold community meetings in the evenings and on Saturdays that will offer parents the opportunity to learn about the school, ask questions and fill out applications. Spanish speaking representatives will be available at meetings.

Founders already have commitments from several churches and down-town stores to carry the school's informational flyers and brochures.

Ocean Academy Charter School shall not discriminate against any student based on race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or on any other basis that would be unlawful for a public school.