

Evaluation Criteria for Requested Changes in Maximum Enrollment and/or Grades Served for Match Charter Public School

The following criteria define the basis on which the request will be evaluated.

Section A: Statement of Need

1. How will this amendment enhance or expand the educational opportunities currently available to the targeted student population?
2. How has the need for the amendment request been determined?

This amendment will expand the educational opportunities for the targeted student population because it will allow Match Charter Public School to meet its maximum enrollment of 550 students. Two changes to Match—one academic and one structural—have taken place since the Match Charter Public School applied to expand from a 9-12 to a 6-12 six years ago.

First, the attrition rate at Match High School has fallen dramatically. In 2008 the attrition rate was more than 20%. Since then, the attrition rate has fallen dramatically at the high school and has hovered between 9%-12% during the last three years.

Second, the Massachusetts Education reform law that was passed in 2010 compelled schools to backfill students in certain grades. For Match, those grades are 6-8.

Because of these two changes the original enrollment pattern has changed significantly and is no longer a viable one for the existing Match facilities. The high school currently holds 250 students. It is now close to its maximum enrollment. Match is currently below its maximum enrollment of 550. The only way for Match to reach its 550 enrollment is to increase the number of students taken at the middle school level. To do so would mean increasing the enrollment of our 6th grade entry point. In this scenario, because of the backfill requirement and the significantly lower attrition at the high school, the high school would not be able to physically hold the number of students arriving each year from the middle school. Therefore, by adding a 5th grade, Match Charter Public School will be able to add students and meet its maximum enrollment without creating cohorts so large that the high school facility no longer meets the high school's enrollment needs. Under this scenario, after one or two years of fluctuating enrollment across the schools because of large cohorts at the middle school, we would target the middle school to enroll approximately 80 students per grade (320 total) and the high school to enroll approximately 58 students per grade (230 total).

As the leadership of Match discussed potential solutions to this enrollment change, we wanted to find a solution that also enhanced the educational opportunities available to our students. This amendment will enhance the educational opportunities currently available to the targeted student population by adding an additional year to a student's time at Match Charter Public School. Match Middle School students often arrive at our current 6th grade entry point significantly behind grade level and having scored needs improvement or warning on their 5th grade MCAS exam. We believe that, by adding another year to a student's time at Match, the students will have a greater opportunity to

succeed at the most rigorous college-prep classes once they enter high school.

Section B: Educational Philosophy and Evidence of Academic Program Success

1. How does the educational program meet the diverse needs of individual students?

The educational program meets the diverse needs of individual students by first setting a high expectation for all students. We believe that all kids (even if they have an IEP, even if they are an ELL, even if they have a hard family life) can succeed in college and beyond. From those high expectations flows mega-support. We work tirelessly to find strong, rigorous teachers who are able to build authentic relationships with kids. We also provide every single one of our students with individualized tutoring support from our Match Corps—a group of recent college grads who spend the year tutoring Match School students. Our curriculum is tied to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and our students' progress is assessed regularly. Teachers and tutors are given feedback on all facets of their work at least once every two weeks throughout the school year. In all cases we strive to meet students where they are and work with them closely to help them prepare to succeed in college and beyond.

2. What evidence shows that the school's instructional approach has led to improved student performance?

In 2012, Match Charter Public School students had higher Student Growth Percentages than their peers in their sending district in 7 of 9 subjects across its four grades that take the MCAS exam. In 10th grade, Match Charter Public School students were one of four schools in the state to receive 100% proficient or advanced in both math and English. While MCAS scores are important, we view them not as the ceiling but the floor. For our students to truly be college ready they need to experience college-level work in high school. All of our students are required to take an AP class and a class at BU in their senior year. They must pass this class (with a 70 or higher) to graduate. 98% of Match Charter Public School graduates have been admitted to four-year colleges.

Section C: Curriculum (if also proposing to expand grades served)

1. What is the curriculum that will be used and how does it provide clear content and skills that are ambitious yet realistic for each grade or performance level?

The 5th grade program at Match will contain 6 academic periods in a day: Math, Math Applications, Reading, Writing, and Math Tutoring and Literacy Tutoring. This program follows the current entry point grade program and is focused on significant remediation for students who enter well below grade level. This is why students will focus on math and English. We believe that basic skills mastery is important to set the students up to be truly

successful in science and History/social studies classes in the later middle school grades. Starting in 5th grade would enable us to introduce Science and History classes in the 6th grade instead of 7th grade.

We will work closely with our charter school cousins across Boston to identify the best 5th grade curricula available in math and English. Many of the other proven charters in Boston that we admire begin in the 5th grade and we'll work closely to them. Tobey Jackson, our Chief Academic Officer, will lead this effort. His previous position was as Middle School Principal of Boston Collegiate Charter School, which starts at 5th grade . He will lead the curriculum development work in conjunction with the Middle School Principal.

2. Is the curriculum described in the amendment request aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks?

Yes

3. How is the school's existing curriculum based on rigorous academic standards, in terms of content and implementation?

Our existing curriculum is also fully aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. In addition, our Middle School Principal and High School Principal, in conjunction with the teaching staff, are working to vertically align the course curricula so that students are prepared to enroll and be successful in AP-level courses in English, Math, Science and History.

4. Who will be in charge of implementing this request if granted?

The principal, under the direction of the Chief Academic Officer.

Section D: School Characteristics

1. How is the amendment request consistent with the school's mission and education program?

The mission of the Match Charter Public School is to prepare students to succeed in college and beyond. The education program is built on this mission. All students take rigorous, college-prep courses and are given significant support from tutors and teachers in their effort to prepare to succeed in college and beyond.

This amendment request is consistent with the school's mission because it allows Match to reach its maximum enrollment figure and serve more students and it allows Match to do so while also giving Match Charter Public School an additional year to work with its students as they prepare to succeed in college and beyond.

2. How will the school's culture and norms be maintained?

The school's culture and norms will be maintained in two ways. First, we'll continue to hire teachers and tutors who believe in the school's mission and who fully buy-in to the school's culture and norms. These teachers and tutors will receive the same

training that existing teachers and tutors receive throughout the year, and will receive feedback and support, as existing teachers currently do. While this will add additional time to the management staff, we believe that the tradeoff still favors the expansion of grades served.

Section E: Enrollment and Recruitment

1. Can the school demonstrate that there is sufficient demand for existing seats at the school? How?

More than 600 families applied for approximately 70 6th grade spots in 2012. We expect this same level of demand at the 5th grade level.

Section F: Capacity

1. How will the school's staff and Board of Trustees implement the request effectively and evaluate its success?

The school's staff and Board of Trustees will roll the evaluation of the 5th grade into the larger evaluation systems already in place at Match. The Chief Academic Officer meets regularly with school leaders to evaluate data, develop plans for improvement, and make management decisions. The CAO at all Board meetings provides an Academic Dashboard that the Board reviews and discusses at each Board meeting. The Academic Dashboard evaluates data such as number of students passing, standardized test data, and attrition data.

2. Has the school managed public funds effectively and responsibly?

Yes, Match Charter Public School has received clean audits for the past five years.

3. Does the school's governance model utilize viable processes for policy development and a strong plan for ongoing Board self-evaluation and development?

Major policy decisions are first discussed by key stake-holders (school leaders/CEO/Chief Academic Officer) before being brought to the Board of Trustees for discussion. The Board discusses and approves major policy decisions, including this current amendment request. Each year the Board holds an annual retreat that tackles strategic priorities for the organization.

If also using an Educational Management Organization (EMO): (N/A)

4. Is the EMO's educational philosophy and academic program consistent with the school's mission?
5. Is there evidence that the EMO has demonstrated positive academic results and responsible fiscal management?

6. Is there evidence of a clear understanding and agreement about the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board and the proposed EMO, and that the Board of Trustees retains the authority to hire and fire the EMO?
7. Is there evidence of a clearly defined, performance-based relationship between the EMO and the school's Board of Trustees?

Section G: Facilities

1. What are the options for an adequate school facility that is accessible to and will accommodate all students?

Match Charter Public School recently purchased a permanent home for its middle school that will adequately hold a 5th grade. There are four additional classrooms in addition to the classrooms currently used by Match Middle School. These four classrooms are currently being leased to a growing charter school. They will only use these classrooms for one year.

The high school location on Commonwealth Ave will be able to accommodate all students coming from the middle school if the cohorts become smaller because of the addition of the 5th grade.

Both school facilities have been reviewed by the Charter School Office federal programs office for its accessibility and ability to accommodate all students.

Section H: School Finances

1. What financial resources are necessary to implement the school's expansion?
2. What are the projected sources of revenue that are adequate to ensure the fiscal viability of the school?

The per-pupil tuition for the 5th grade students will sufficiently support the costs associated with the growth into the 5th grade.

Section I: Action Plan for Implementation

1. What is the proposed strategy and timeline that will lead to a successful implementation of the proposed changes?
2. Provide information that defines an action plan that is specific and consistent with the proposal's objectives.

The 5th grade, if approved, would open in the fall of 2013. The action plan would contain three big pieces:

- a) Staff recruitment. We would begin hiring teachers for the 5th grade immediately and we would increase our targets for tutor recruiting. For the 5th grade to be successful we'd need a strong teaching staff.

- b) Student recruitment. We would adjust our student recruiting to recruit both 5th and 6th grade students in the spring of 2013.
- c) Academic Planning. A team, led by the CAO and Principal would begin planning weekly the work that will need to take place to open a 5th grade in the fall of 2013.

The Chief Operating Office of Match Schools would oversee this entire process.

Section J: Compliance

1. Does the school have an approved Accountability Plan on file, or is the school actively working with Charter School Office staff on developing an Accountability Plan?

Yes

2. How has the school worked to disseminate its best practices?

The school has focused its dissemination on its tutoring program. The school hosts many visitors a year who are interested in learning more about the program. Match has also worked closely with district schools in Boston, Houston, and Lawrence to begin rigorous tutor programs.

3. How does the school identify, assess, and serve special student populations?

The Match Charter Public School identifies students in special populations in two ways: we pursue all data and information about a student's previous school including whether or not the students had an IEP or the student was an ELL student. Match also often tests students who did not arrive with an IEP to determine if they should have an IEP and tests all incoming students who speak a language at home other than English for their ELL status.

The Match Charter Public school serves students in special populations by meeting their needs. In addition to the resources that all students receive (strong teachers/individual tutoring), students in special populations also receive the support designated in their IEP either by Match staff or outside providers. ELL students receive the required individual support that is designated by their ELL level.

4. Does the school maintain an enrollment process that is open, fair, and in accordance with charter school statute and regulations?

Yes

5. Has the school self-identified and addressed any potential areas of concern regarding the implementation of its current program and the proposed program?

Yes

For Horace Mann charter schools only:

1. Does the school have a current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local school district that ensures the charter school's autonomy over its school operations and ensures that the school receives funds as scheduled?
2. The Amendment Request includes certification that the local school committee and teachers' union has approved the proposed changes.