

## **Hanlin International Academy Charter School**

Questions as derived from panel review

### **Mission and Vision**

1. Which mission statement is the mission statement? Executive Summary talks about the “American-Asian charter school.”
  - It is the mission in the body of the application.
2. How do you define:
  - a. “International Readiness”;
    - Understanding of different cultures, different ways of life, and having an international mindset, being culturally aware.
    - Getting students up to par with their international peers.
  - b. “College Readiness”;
    - Students should be prepared for the changes that take place between high school and college, the social and educational aspects. Prepared to go the extra distance.
    - Scoring well on the SATs and getting admitted to college. When they are in college not having to take remedial classes. We want students to be resourceful, write good research papers, and think critically, etc.
  - c. “Greatness”?
    - Having exemplars and role models, standards to strive for.
    - Also being independent and self sufficient. To be able to identify issues and solutions. That goes into being a great person.
    - From a simplistic Chinese classical position, it’s being the best at your position.
3. How will the school be the “city’s cultural bridge between various linguistic communities? How will this school serve as a “community center”?
  - I heard a school committee member talk about the over fifty different languages in the Quincy Public Schools. This charter school proposes to lessen that burden on the Quincy public school system.
  - The purpose is to bring out the cultures that exist and celebrate the cultures of all of the community.
  - We plan to have extended school time, the Saturday Academy, and afterschool. This is about relationship building with parents as well.

### **Statement of Need**

1. Describe the students this charter school intends to serve. What are the characteristics of the students you expect to apply to Hanlin International Academy Charter School (HIACS)? What do you think they need to become successful?
  - The school is going to serve all of the immigrant groups as well as their native born peers.
  - We are also teaching Mandarin in order to serve them.
  - We will help them succeed by immersing students in an eight hour school day with more international themes and topics.

- For English language learners, the classical Chinese method is good because it focuses on understanding short stories and short quotes, with more simple language. Classical far eastern education was built to serve very low income populations.
  - We will have more supplementary programs and as a charter school we can move much quicker to address the needs of students.
- 2. In the application you state that “New American parents will finally get a viable education option for their children so that the American Dream can be fully realized.” What did you mean?**
- It may be unintentional, but we have found that immigrant communities are sometimes suppressed. The city can address some of these issues by integrating fully through English language learning, community development, and cultural affairs. This will help folks adapt to American culture and adapt to foreign culture.
  - In terms of choice options, only Quincy High School offers a program for English language learners. Parents of English language learner’s have never had the option to go to North Quincy High School, a college preparatory school. Quincy High School is a vocational school. Some parents don’t want that kind of program.
- 3. How did you determine the need for a college preparatory school?**
- a. Quincy High School – Can students there take AP courses?**
  - b. Statistics on public versus private colleges- do you know about private college admissions?**
- The students at Quincy High School do have AP classes. The issue is who are the populations in those AP level classes? Also, if there are AP level classes, what types of classes do English language learners go in to? Some of the English language learners are taking AP Mandarin. That won’t help them in college. They may end up needing remedial work in college in English.
  - As a student who had to learn English in Quincy Public Schools, I needed a lot of help to make it through college.
  - We are a true community building school.
  - This is not a slight on the Quincy Public Schools. It’s a great City to live in. We want to help lift the burden from the school district.
- 4. How did you determine the need in Quincy for a school that focuses on “international competitiveness/readiness”?**
- We determined this through our personal relationships. Many of our friends and families are immigrants. I have a cousin who came from China. When he got here, he entered 4<sup>th</sup> grade and kids were still doing multiplication and division. But while he was in China he was doing advanced mathematics. He was afraid he was regressing. We need to be competitive with the world.
  - The need for an international education is not just Quincy, it’s the whole United States. There is no disputing the fact that students who get an international education excel much greater. We can no longer operate as if we are living in an isolated little bubble.

**Educational Philosophy, Curriculum and Instruction**

**1. Briefly define multicultural classical education.**

- In this golden age of information technology, we no longer need to have a limited idea of classical education. We are able to look at fundamental roots of particular cultures. That's the vision of multicultural classical education. We can study multicultural history from a variety of perspectives. That brings more critical thinking that helps to understand the social reality of the world.

**2. What models have you looked at for classical education, particularly far eastern classical education?**

- We are looking at the Taiwanese model. They are about 60 percent western and 40 percent eastern, but recently there has been a mandate to increase the classical far eastern by 20 percent. Taiwan is rated high in international achievement.
- While we are talking about classical education, it is very cutting edge. Professor Fallou Ngom from Boston University is on the front line of reclaiming knowledge that was lost on the content of Africa. Multi-classical education reflects a variety of cultures.

**3. How will this look day-to-day in the classroom?**

- In the classroom we would like to implement western critical thinking, with east discipline and respect for the teachers.
- You'll see a lot of anthropological lessons. Ben Franklin writes in sage format, which is classical. He learned from the Greeks and he was very pro-Confucian.
- Different teaching techniques – eastern includes more commentarial learning, when given a topic a student writes about what they think something means, along with a western Socratic method of debating issues.
- It's a fusion of beautiful ways of learning. It will be found in the instructional methods and content.

**4. You talk about the “weakness” of classical education being the focus on homogenous populations and that this school will have “modern American research and educational techniques” that will “complementarily (be) used for English language learners.” What do you mean?**

- In order for all students to be incorporated in to the school, we have to have a strong school culture that allows “greatness”.
- When we talk about modern research we are talking about working with English language learners and/or just learning a foreign language. Not just sheltered instruction observation protocols but, also software and other technical means. For example, we may use Rosetta Stone. That's something we have to look into during our planning year.

**5. How will national, international, classical standards be used in this process of developing the curriculum? How will it be aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF)?**

- a. Who is going to develop the standards and/or benchmarks?
- b. Who oversees this?
- c. How will you be able to develop a curriculum that is interdisciplinary?
- d. How will the Quincy curriculum fit into the school? Is it a course?

- We will probably use the math standards from Taiwan.
- *One of the founders, a retired mathematician, volunteers to do the math part.*
- The board of trustees will have different committees that will handle academic and student affairs. We will lean on the executive director and the curriculum team to develop this during the planning year to not only meet but exceed the Massachusetts curriculum standards.
- The Quincy curriculum will be supplemental curriculum. If the class was studying about World War II and America's entry into the war, in the classical periods, we may address Quincy's contribution to the war effort, maybe a field trip about the Quincy shipyard. We are trying to integrate Quincy into the curriculum.
- Not only learning about history, but we also want to get students involved in their community. Being civically engaged.

**6. How will you evaluate whether the curriculum is effective and successfully implemented?**

- We need a holistic approach. We will track the goals in the action plan. We will set internal controls regularly. We will evaluate the executive director.
- We will have weekly staff meetings where teachers will talk about how the curriculum is working and how they are going to implement it. It is an ongoing feedback process. The principal will oversee any kind of assessment system and the curriculum development, but will be supported by the executive director and the assistant executive director.
- We want to go beyond MCAS. We don't see MCAS as our benchmark. Maybe we will take international assessments.
- Some of the curriculum is already pre-developed. Primary Sources is a wonderful resource. We may need to pump it up. There is about 25-50 percent of our curriculum is already done. We need to add more details and technique.
- At the end of the semester we will have a survey from students, staff, and family. The board will discuss it with the executive director.

**7. How are teachers supported at this school? How do evaluations take place? How is professional development determined? Please talk about the pop-evaluations on page 22.**

- Weekly staff meeting, on Friday afternoon from 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- We will have a professional development program, which will take place at staff meetings and on the weekends. We will also have some external support networks. We will reach out to the local businesses to give perks to our teachers.
- We hope to have an international exchange program for the teachers. We will partner with the Swiss Consulate.
- Professional development will be determined by the executive director seeing future trends, or teachers may determine that they need to learn about specific material. We will look at test scores to guide what teachers need.
- Pop-evaluations by the assistant executive director, executive director, and/or principal. The principal has responsibilities for evaluating teachers.

**Assessment, Promotion, and Graduation Standards**

**1. Who is going to be responsible for the assessment system?**

- The principal.

**2. Please describe the weekly progress reports.**

**a. What data will be used? How will a schoolwide analysis be done? Who will have access to this information?**

- The weekly progress reports will include behavioral issues, quizzes, tests, attendance, etc. At the end of the week teachers will collect the data and give the reports to the principal who will analyze the data and discuss it with the executive director.
- In order to do schoolwide analysis we are going to try to look for trends.
- The executive director will report this information to the board of trustees. The academic affairs committee will review this material every two weeks. Not in the micro sense, but to make sure the executive director is addressing these issues.

**3. Please describe your performance, promotion, and graduation standards.**

- *The group was silent and trying to look at the final application to find the answer.*

**a. Need performance levels of 2-5 in order to pass and pass 4 of the 5 core courses? What happens if you fail the 5<sup>th</sup> class?**

- We understand that we don't want to fail a student immediately if they aren't able to succeed. We would have them attend the Saturday Academy so they can keep up. We need to look at what the student needs. The Saturday program is optional.
- We also have time after 2:30 for extra help and study time.
- If a child fails a class they get promoted to the next grade, but they don't get promoted in that subject.

**b. Are the following a part of the promotion, and graduation standards?  
(Portfolios, Leadership Development, Classical Block Expectations, Teacher-Student Plan, and Greatness)**

- The portfolios still need to be worked out during the planning year.
- The non-academic goals are not part of the graduation standards. We are an academic program.
- Teachers will assess greatness, leadership, and other non-academic goals. A lot of that grading is holistic. You have to observe students over time.
- We can also be very creative as a charter school. You don't necessarily count how many hours a child does community service; you can just see how they participate.
- The Teacher-Student Plan is a breakdown of the strengths and weaknesses as the student enters our school. It's an academic plan that tracks yearly progress and states how the school improves student performance. That is created by the teachers that we hire that interview the parents. All teachers have access to this data.
- Teacher advisor is a role model or mentor, a confidant for the student for support.

**4. How will you be able to tell if your school reaches its mission? How will you know if this school is successful in these areas?**

- It is difficult to measure character building.
- We can come up with qualitative and quantitative measures.

### **School Characteristics**

- 1. In the vision you mention “specialized instruction and supplemental services” “so that students can realize the American dream.” What do you mean? Please describe: (Tutoring, Saturday Academy, Homework Center, Advisors. Classical Block(s), Teacher-Student-Learning Plans, Study, and Support Blocks)**
  - There will be study block every day between 3:00 p.m. and 3:45 p.m. – students do homework and help each other.
  - There will be support block every day between 3:50 p.m. and 4:50 p.m. – open school; students go to see specific teachers to help with specific subjects.
  - Saturday Academy will include tutoring and parent support for learning English as a second language.
  - The Homework Center related to the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) partners with schools to give extra help. So at 4:50 p.m. BCNC will come into the school to provide homework help for students who need it. We still need to work that out. Also hoping that BCNC can come in during study hall time.
  - This is a start-up. For the first couple of years we are going to utilize as many resources that are available for free.
  - The classical block is everyday and it serves as an opportunity to reinforce other classroom learning. Whatever class proceeds the classical block it becomes an hour and a half class in that subject.
  - The far eastern enrichment block still needs to be worked out. But it’s mostly cultural.
- 2. Where are you in the process of developing relationships with community agencies and organizations in order to support the school’s educational program?**
  - a. In the application you mention several potential external programs the school might offer. Please explain the additional student services.**
  - b. What is your agreement with the Kennedy Center?**
  - c. How will Boston classes work logistically? Transportation?**
  - One of the strengths of our team is that we are all very active volunteers with a network of community agencies.
  - While some of our partners are situated in Boston, the reality is that they serve a lot of people in Quincy.
  - BCNC – not clear, but they will provide after-school youth services. They are hoping to get some grants to expand to Quincy.
  - Asian American Civic Association (AACA) – has expertise working with adults teaching English, and conducts job skills training – they would help with the family services and are hoping to provide English classes and other classes for the family. They will probably share space and rent from the school.
  - The Saturday Academy won’t be staffed by our teachers. We will enlist volunteers, college students, etc.
  - There are also two other organizations in Cambridge: Public Diplomacy Collaborative and the Swiss Consulate are interested in working with us.
  - The board will try to underwrite all these community services. Our initial goal is to raise close to a million dollars corporately. We can’t promise that, since fundraising is difficult in this day and age.

- We don't have an agreement with the Kennedy Senior Center, but we have talked with the executive director about involving seniors as academic and life tutors and surrogate grandparents.
- The Quincy historical society is letting us use their archives.

**3. How will you develop the culture of the school, from the first day of school?**

- Culture is difficult to define with numbers. Comradery brings the community together. That is the ethos of the school.
- The culture will be developed through the early information sessions, and the extracurricular activities. Culture will also be developed through the Asian enrichment period and cultural enrichment period. We will also have a discipline code, school uniforms, and great quotes all around the school. We will also have pot-luck dinners for parents.

**Special Student Populations and Services**

**1. How will the school provide supports for English language learners and special education students? Is the Saturday Academy required?**

- We plan on hiring as many teachers as we need. We anticipate having at least 50 percent of our students be English language learners, so we want to make sure that we have enough certified staff with specialized languages to service those kids.
- We will service those kids through classroom instruction, if a kid is fluent in Mandarin they won't take Mandarin.
- Once the child enrolls and we can identify him as being an English language learner then they take the MELA-O and then we will schedule their classes based on English level proficiency. The student achievement plan will include different ways and different types of software programs for the students, like computer translators. The achievement plan is critical to describe what the student needs for teachers. Services will include the Rosetta Stone program, having teachers who are trained in the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocols, and intense immersion. In the classroom English language learners will receive texts that they can understand. If they don't understand it we will have supports that will help with content understanding. Another teacher will come in to the class and help the student understand things.
- We will service special education students by providing all the legal range of services. The IEP, 504, and the Teacher-Student Learning Plan will provide information about how to serve these kids. Kids who are dyslexic will use technology so they can listen to material on tapes. We will have push-in services. The special education teacher will help the classroom teachers. So they can present their lessons and coordinate that.

**2. Is there any research that looks at third language learners or specifically English language learners learning a third language?**

- Our main goal is to close the achievement gap for English language learners. Mandarin is not required.

**3. How will mental health needs be met?**

- We will initially outsource these services and will evaluate on an ongoing basis to determine the need.

### **Enrollment and Recruitment**

- 1. What will you do if you lose students in the later grades?**
  - a. Why didn't you plan for attrition?**
    - We don't expect high attrition in our later grades. We need to look in to this during our planning year. Also we need to consider the new laws.
- 2. Since the application, what outreach have you done?**
  - The public hearing itself served as outreach. A number of local Chinese newspapers covered the hearing.
  - Don't underestimate the power of mothers.
  - We had four information sessions.
  - We have been in talks with a Brazilian organization in Quincy. We also have to be sure to send out marketing materials in different languages.

### **Capacity**

- 1. How and why did this group come together?**
  - The exceptional leadership of Dean Chin has motivated each of us in different ways.
- 2. In writing the application, how did you divide roles and responsibilities?**
  - We were naturally suited to different roles in writing the application. If not writing portions of the application we gave input.
- 3. Who of you is planning to be on the board of trustees?**
  - *Five of the group hopes to be on the board of trustees.*
- 4. Who of you is hoping to work at this school?**
  - *Three of the group hopes to work at the school.*
- 5. Do any of you have any programmatic experience with English language learners?**
  - *Some have worked with English language learners.*
- 6. Who has expertise in classical eastern and western curriculum development?**
  - One member has written several lesson plans about classical eastern and western education and is an expert in classical eastern education. One founding member has a degree in classics.
- 7. Are there any skill sets you are missing on the board of trustees and how do you plan to fill them?**
  - We still need people to help jump start the school with strong administrative experience to help with strategic thinking.
  - We would like more board members with an educational background in teaching English language learners.

### **Governance and Management**

- 1. What is the role of the board of trustees for a charter school?**
  - The board has three distinct roles: financial, academic, and fundraising. All combined that's what brings the whole school together. We hope to have strong governance.
- 2. How did you determine the criteria for the executive director?**
  - We need to make sure the executive director adheres to the mission of the school and can execute, plan, and be accountable for the results.
- 3. How will the board evaluate the executive director?**



- The evaluation will flow up. The executive director is ultimately accountable for all of the goals in the application. It's not the responsibility of the board to micromanage; it's the responsibility of the board to hold the executive director accountable.
- 4. Please walk us through the organizational chart.**
- The organization chart is just a start-up chart.
  - a. What does the assistant executive director do? Have you seen this model used at another charter school?**
- The assistant executive director does the coordinating work with community partners and external programs and families.

### **Facilities and Transportation**

- 1. Since you can't use start-up charter school grants for renovation, what might your other financing options be?**
- One of the models we use for charter schools is the federal new market tax credit. Great way for private investment into public service.
  - Fundraising initiatives, private grants, and federal funds.

### **Budget**

- 1. Please walk us through the budget.**
  - a. What's the "local" revenue?**
  - Local revenue refers to private fundraising – anticipate raising \$130,000 dollars in the first school year.
  - b. What's "business services/fixed charges"?**
  - These charges include insurance, payroll taxes, health benefits, and some of the facility costs.
  - c. What's the \$16,956 per pupil revenue?**
  - It is an aggregate of federal grants, fundraising, and state dollars.
  - d. Renovation costs – states \$440,00 on page 22, each budget is different**
  - It should be less, it should be \$200,000. The initial estimate was probably the commercial rate. Still, not in the budget. It's a bare bones budget. If we can get some of those programs that we talked about, we will be able to do more renovation.
  - Hopefully we will utilize Quincy College the first year, which is already an educational facility. If we have to renovate something else, renovation will be more expensive.
  - e. Private foundation start-up grant? Why do you think the Walton Foundation will fund charter schools in Massachusetts?**
  - That's just one of example that we intend to go after. But, we are making inquiries through other contacts, maybe even the Gates Foundation.
  - f. What is the federal renovation grant money?**
  - Special federal grant for a first year charter school. We might be wrong, but that's what we read.
  - g. Line item 14 – executive director and assistant executive director?**
  - The executive director and assistant executive director will start in March 2010 and be paid over the course of 18 months, \$75,000 and \$60,000.