

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent

APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE PETITION AND CHARTER FOR
THE HIGH TECH MIDDLE INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL

MAY 25, 2004

Introductory Statement

The petition and charter for the High Tech Middle International Charter School are presented to the Board of Education for approval.

Background

On March 19, 2004, representatives from High Tech High Charter School delivered the complete High Tech Middle International Charter School petition and charter on behalf of the charter petitioners. A copy of the petition and the proposed charter are included with this report as Attachment A.

Education Code section 47605(b) provides that a school district governing board shall hold a public hearing on the provisions of the charter at which time the governing board shall consider the level of support for the petition by teachers employed by the district, other employees of the district, and parents. The petition and proposed charter for the High Tech Middle International Charter School were presented at a public hearing of the Board of Education on May 11, 2004.

Education Code section 47605 states that a petition for a charter school may be signed by a number of teachers that is equivalent to at least one-half of the number of teachers that the charter school estimates will be hired for the first year of operation. The charter school estimates that three hundred students will be enrolled in the first year of operation. Nine teachers have signed the petition, and that number meets the statutory signature requirement.

High Tech Middle International Charter School will be a grade 6 through 8 school with a first year enrollment of 300 students. The school will matriculate mainly from students who charter elementary and private schools, and students from elementary schools within and without of the boundaries of the San Diego Unified School District.

High Tech Middle International believes its initial student body population will reflect, at a minimum, the current combined demographic diversity of High Tech High and High Tech Middle: 44% Caucasian; 14% African American; 18% Hispanic; 10% Asian; 6% Filipino, and 9% other. About 6% of students require special education services and 4% are English Language Learners.

The whole-school reform strategies of the New Urban High School Project form the basis of the High Tech Middle International instructional program. The core organizational principles are: personalization, adult world connection and common intellectual mission. Using the three program design principles, High Tech Middle International expects students to achieve competency in six learning areas: collaboration, technology, communication, art and design, ethics and responsibility, and

habits of mind. High Tech Middle International will accomplish these goals by pairing High Tech High's proven approach to education with an International studies focus.

High Tech Middle International will offer, at a minimum, the same number of minutes of instruction as required by education code. High Tech Middle International will seek WASC accreditation as already conferred upon High Tech High.

The school will seek to join a special education local plan area (SELPA) as its own local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of special education service delivery as allowed in Option 3 of the San Diego Unified School District Policy and Guidelines for charter schools.

The school will organize as a legally separate entity from High Tech High, directly funded by the State, operating under a separate charter and by a non-profit corporation.

Students at High Tech Middle International will meet all academic standards as adopted by the California State Board of Education applicable to charter schools.

Education Code section 47605 generally requires that, following the initial review and public hearing on the petition, a school district governing board shall either grant or deny the charter school petition within sixty days of receipt of the petition. However, that date may be extended by an additional 30 days if both parties agree to the extension. District staff has determined compliance with the requirements of the charter school law, and other applicable requirements of the District.

Instructional Program Implications

The curriculum and instructional program are described in the charter proposal. Approval of the charter petition will not impact district instructional programs.

Facilities Implications

High Tech Middle International Charter School is currently seeking a suitable site in the City of San Diego. The school is expected to submit a request for facilities under Proposition 39 for 2005-2006.

Budget Implications

The computation, allocation and disbursement of public funds for charter schools is now governed by Education Code section 47630 et seq. Generally, the State Superintendent of Education is required to annually compute and allocate to each charter school the school's general purpose entitlement and categorical block grant.

A charter school may elect to receive its general purpose entitlement and block grant funds directly from the state or through the sponsoring school district. In addition, a sponsoring school district must annually transfer to each of its charter schools the school's prescribed share of property taxes.

The School envisions using minimal District services. It will purchase administrative services from High Tech High such that both benefit from economies of scaled. Consistent with AB 1137, the charter school will provide quarterly financial reports to the district.

Public Support and Engagement Implications

Education Code section 47605(b) provides that a school district governing board shall hold a public hearing on the provisions of a charter school petition. At that time the governing board shall consider the level of support for the petition by teachers employed by the district, other employees of the district, and parents. Holding the public hearing of May 11, 2004 fulfilled the district's responsibilities in this regard.

Board Policy Implications

Approval of an adequate charter, or denial of a charter where warranted, is consistent with existing Board of Education policy contained in H-1800.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board approve the proposed petition and charter for the High Tech Middle International Charter School subject to the following conditions: (1) should operational funds be used for renovation of the school facility, the charter school shall submit a revised budget and secure approval by district staff; (2) quarterly financial statements in accord with AB 1137 will be provided to the district; (3) a revised budget will be presented to the district for approval by June 1, 2004.

Report prepared by Chief of Staff

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Attachment A. High Tech Middle International Charter School Petition and Charter