

U.S. Department of Education
2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [X] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Karla Arellano Rodriguez
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name AcadeMir Charter School Middle
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 5800 SW 135th Avenue
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Miami State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 33183-5105

County Miami-Dade County

Telephone (305) 967-8492 Fax (305) 392-1928

Web site/URL http://www.academircharterschoolmiddle.com/ E-mail pr6082@dadeschools.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Albert Carvalho E-mail acarvalho@dadeschools.net
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Dade School District Tel. (305) 995-1000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Alexander Casas
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The electronic signature on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools.)

- Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
 - 284 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 74 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 81 High schools
 - 18 K-12 schools

457 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

- Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

- Number of students as of October 1, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

| Grade | # of Males | # of Females | Grade Total |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|
| PreK | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| K | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | 44 | 53 | 97 |
| 7 | 74 | 53 | 127 |
| 8 | 47 | 56 | 103 |
| 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 or higher | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Students | 165 | 162 | 327 |

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 0.5 % Black or African American
 - 98 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 1.5 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: 14%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

| Steps For Determining Mobility Rate | Answer |
|--|---------------|
| (1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year | 28 |
| (2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year | 21 |
| (3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)] | 49 |
| (4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019 | 361 |
| (5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4) | 0.14 |
| (6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100 | 14 |

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Spanish

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 12 %
38 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 79 %

Total number students who qualify: 257

8. Students receiving special education services: 4 %

14 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>2</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay | <u>7</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

| | Number of Staff |
|--|------------------------|
| Administrators | 2 |
| Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher. | 19 |
| Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc. | 4 |
| Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students. | 1 |
| Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc. | 1 |

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

| Required Information | 2019-2020 | 2018-2019 | 2017-2018 | 2016-2017 | 2015-2016 |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Daily student attendance | 95% | 95% | 94% | 95% | 95% |
| High school graduation rate | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2020.

| Post-Secondary Status | |
|---|----|
| Graduating class size | 0 |
| Enrolled in a 4-year college or university | 0% |
| Enrolled in a community college | 0% |
| Enrolled in career/technical training program | 0% |
| Found employment | 0% |
| Joined the military or other public service | 0% |
| Other | 0% |

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

AcadeMir Charter School Middle, promotes students' self-motivation to be successful in all subject areas, especially in science, mathematics, reading and technology, by progressively building on their individual talents and abilities. In order to foster students' life-long learning and allow them to reach their full potential as productive, responsible members of today's global and highly technological society, a nurturing, educational environment and the implementation of research-proven educational models will be utilized. These models focus on problem solving, collaboration, and communication through the integration of technology.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

AcadeMir Charter School Middle started the 2020-2021 school year remotely following Miami-Dade County District’s Covid-19 Emergency Phase I guidelines. Instruction was live from the classrooms and students had to connect using Google Meet. All teachers provided high quality remote learning lessons and assignments, aligned to the students progression plan and Florida Department of Education Benchmarks, for students using Google Suite. The school purchased additional technology (i.e. digital cameras) in order for the students and teacher to interact in “real time”. The Synchronous approach enabled the application of digital learning; and facilitated support for all users to continue learning while ensuring organizational effectiveness. Asynchronous opportunities also safeguarded learning experiences (i.e., I-Ready, Carnegie, tutoring/ intervention, ESE Accommodations, ELL services) and social well-being (i.e., virtual counseling, speech therapy, breakfast and lunch services) of students. ACSM secured additional laptops and made them available for all students requiring a device to access remotely. Revisions and implementations were made to the Student Handbook to reflect Digital Learning expectations for the 2020-2021 school year.

As of September 16, 2021, ACSM started the hybrid model. Parents had the choice of having their child stay at home remotely or come to school in person. All parents received a survey to select “Brick and Mortar” or “Remote Learning”.

* **Brick and Mortar:** Physically on campus for face-to-face learning. ACSM has and continues to adhere to all CDC health and safety guidelines. All students will be required to wear a mask and face shield (provided by the school). The school also installed transparent, plastic desks to shield each desk.

* **Remote Learning:** Learning remotely from home in synchronous with live instruction. Classrooms are equipped with digital cameras, to allow students to participate via webcam and through Google Meet.

All academic options presented require students to have a full day of instruction five days per week. As a result, ACSM provided an average of 6.5 hours of instruction. Both options will provide synchronous instruction equitable to face to face learning. Subsequently, parents have been urged to select the instructional delivery model they choose. Students are required to participate and attend school daily from bell to bell as if they were in a traditional school setting, meaning from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., as evidenced by the revisions made to the ACSM Student Handbook (Digital Learning Plan 2020-2021). All course offerings continue to meet all state and district required seat time for equitable education across all models. We have given parents the option of selecting their child’s instructional delivery model on a quarterly basis as we understand that as conditions may change parents’ needs and family circumstances may also change. Once parents select, they understand that this is a quarterly commitment. This allows schools time to prepare and make necessary changes and accommodations to the learning and building environment to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

17. For public schools only, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

ACSM will hold an enrollment period when parents can register their children online or in-person. The school will implement the enrollment policies and procedures and lottery process, as described in the approved Application and in accordance with its controlled open enrollment plan. ACSM shall enroll an eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. All applicants shall be given an equal chance of being admitted through a random selection process. ACSM will also strive to achieve a racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community it serves or within the racial/ethnic range of other traditional public schools in the school district that are in close proximity. If there is availability for every interested student, the school does not need to hold a lottery. Unlike district magnet schools, charter schools do not have any kind of admissions process, which means students do not need to worry about essays, interviews, or auditions. If a lottery is necessary, the school will begin its random drawing process, either handling the applications manually, or using a computer program. ACSM gives local families an opportunity to choose an experience that best fits their students' needs and—like every other public school—we are tuition-free for any student to attend.

PART III - SUMMARY

Our community school was founded in 2012, although the AcadeMir brand name has been well- established since way before that, in Early Childhood Education. The purpose of AcadeMir Charter Middle School (ACSM) is to prepare students to reach their maximum potential in all subjects with special emphasis on mathematics, science and reading using reform-based model curricula and enhancement programs. The school's governance, management partner, and leadership are committed to the collectively created mission that defines the beliefs and expectations for all learners and has created actions to communicate the purpose of the school. In addition, the school operates under a model to create meaningful conversations, connections, and relationships among students. Resources are available for all students, as well as access to outside agencies. Activities are designed for students to interact with each other and community members in positive ways.

We serve a diverse population of students by providing academic programs that meet the needs of the 21st Century Learner. The school is impacted by a learning culture that promotes creativity, innovation, collaborative problem-solving, and digital learning implemented across grade levels. The vision for ACSM is to provide students with challenging and rigorous curricula, enabling students to be well prepared for higher education and life through adherence to an unwavering mission, shared purpose, and clearly articulated goals. Students will experience a cross-curricula instructional approach using the Florida Standards and benchmarks. ACSM's philosophy is to fully prepare students to carry the torch of knowledge through its proven curricula.

Encouraging the use of innovative learning methods such as inquiry-based learning is a vital part of providing an educational program that truly meets the needs of all children. Continuous improvement is embedded within the culture of the school based on a data-driven process. All learners possess areas of strength and areas of weakness and therefore, they express and receive knowledge in many ways. Effective teachers understand the need to differentiate instruction for all students for learning to occur. The focus of coaching and mentoring conversations for school improvement is to build the competency and capability of teachers, so that they can take steps towards achieving the school's strategic vision and priorities in the curriculum, teaching and learning, and assessment, and can effectively make judgments about students' progress and outcomes. Understanding a student's area of intelligence, learning style, and/or learning preference is one-way teachers can positively impact a student's ability to learn.

The role of the teacher is to develop direct interactive instructional lessons that will cater to each individual child. Students must be included in the strategic plan and formal and written plans for facilities, technology, curriculum, and professional development, along with the school's short-term and long-range budgets and school improvement plan. Continuous improvement is embedded within the culture of the school based on a data-driven process. The school's administration continuously assess programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning and instructional practices. The school provides opportunities for students, staff, and parents to lead on various initiatives that improve the learning and school culture. The principal and staff are committed to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, leadership, and life skills. All learners are provided with opportunities to develop communication skills and experiences that teach self-direction. Some opportunities include Junior Honor Society, digital broadcasting, dance, competitive sports and Vex-IQ Robotics.

During the unprecedented times of Covid-19, our school has focused on quality implementation of technology tools and resources to better develop instruction and learning. ACSM has benefited from several critical results of such implementations. These include job embedded professional developments for faculty and staff. Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) with a purposeful focus on remote learning and innovative ways to engage the students in the same process.

The school operates under a model to create meaningful conversations, connections, and relationships among students. As such, the embedded core ideology permeates and guides all aspects of the school and related endeavors. Providing a safe and nurturing learning environment is one of the pillars for our

institution. The school's partnership with Miami-Dade College, a nationally recognized and accredited college, ensures that our dual-enrollment students are offered an array of opportunities, programs and services for the student's educational futures and career planning. Simultaneously, ACSM offers elective courses to further assist students with their learning and life skills. Supports such as tutoring, mentoring, interventions, counseling, and individualized instruction allow students to thrive and succeed, making for equitable learning experiences for all learners.

The school is well on the way to get the desired "A" letter grade based on students' State of Florida Standardized Tests for a third year in a row. The assessment results for 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, Florida Department of Education's school report card, revealed that ACSM students mostly performed above the state average across all grade levels in 2017-2018 & 2018-2019 (last available data). ACSM uses data to guide instruction and improve organizational effectiveness. Initiatives are in place to collect, analyze, and inform future direction and achieve the goals identified within the School Improvement Plan (SIP). This practice is aligned to both Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the Florida Department of Education standards and benchmarks. There are quarterly data chat cycles, where information is gathered and analyzed, and decisions are made based on that analysis. This process establishes procedures for analyzing and disaggregating data. Data tools to measure student success in ELA, Civics, Algebra, Geometry, Math, Science and Biology are in to continually assess student learning progress, and to adjust instruction to increase identified areas of student academic needs. The school's administration collaboratively with academic coaches, lead teachers and faculty develop and fully implement an academic focus calendar, to include professional learning, identified resource utilization, and leadership support, enabling teachers to integrate digital resources and to utilize best practices to enhance student engagement and organizational effectiveness. The governing board has reviewed and approved the use of federal funds to provide digital resources intended to improve teaching, reduce academic gaps in learning, school operations, and overall organizational effectiveness. The existence of digital resources, such as web-based programs for academic support, (i.e., I-Ready™, USATestprep™, Mathia™ Scholastics™ Kami™ Google Educational Suite®), and effective digital remote learning accessibility.

Recently, ACSM engaged in an eighteen-month self-study to receive initial accreditation from Cognia™/ AdvancEd™/CASI- SAAC™. Cognia™ is a world leader in accreditation and school improvement, supporting schools at all levels in their pursuit of excellence in serving students. In November of 2019, an External Engagement Review Team visited the school and spent time with stakeholders, reviewed evidence and artifacts and it was determined that ACSM was to receive initial accreditation. The Engagement Review Team engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the team. These findings are organized around themes guided by the evidence. The school was commended for achieving an IEQ® of 326.50, well above the national standard (278.34 - 283.33). The Index of Education Quality® (IEQ®) provides a holistic measure of an institution's overall performance based on a comprehensive set of indicators and evaluative criteria. As a formative tool for improvement, it pinpoints areas of strength as well as those in need of support or focus.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

AcadeMir Charter School Middle (ACSM) takes pride when it comes to our curriculum and instruction. The students are continuously challenged via their instructional sessions with both core and supplemental curriculum. As a charter school, AcadeMir Charter School Middle has and continues to take autonomous initiatives with curriculum planning and decision-making. Via the decision-making process, ACSM explores the various standard-aligned programs that best fit the needs of our students across all the content areas. In making these decisions, student data is reviewed by the leadership team and then training sessions are conducted via curriculum webinars, video conferencing and/or live training sessions - thus, our teachers are part of this decision-making process.

With AcadeMir's current operating schedule, our stakeholders continue to be cognizant of the increased demand of online learning - particularly when exploring new curriculum. For example, during the fourth quarter of 2020, the Reading coach along with the English Language Arts (ELA) department participated in various webinars exploring different standard-aligned curricula - until the decision was made to choose the best reading and writing curriculum for ACSM's students. That curriculum has been in use since day one of this school year and both teachers and students are benefiting from its multiple facets and rendering results. This process can be seen across all the content area departments at AcadeMir Charter School Middle. With ACSM's hybrid model (simultaneous in-person & virtual students) in the classroom today - this core curriculum is meeting the needs of our virtual learners through its comprehensive, online platform that addresses all the Florida standards in the area of English Language Arts. All in all, teachers develop high quality remote learning lessons/assignments for students that address course standards and benchmarks while balancing online learning, volume of work assigned, and student/teacher interaction in every single class (subject area).

In formulating these decisions, professional development is of utmost importance for our key stakeholders (instructional coaches, teachers and administrators) in regards to curriculum and instruction. The team conducts data review and analysis based on the previous year's success in student achievement (i.e. increases in proficiency in the areas of Reading and Math), the leadership team decided to continue with the focus on data-driven professional development topics. For example, in the summer of 2019, the AcadeMir faculty participated in a PD titled "Data Cluster Analysis," where the instructional coaches trained the teachers about the various clusters in the areas of Math, Reading and Science along with the standards that are assessed in the statewide tests such as FSA and Statewide Science Assessment Grade 8. The teachers also discussed and analyzed the results from each assessment (based on their subject area). They were able to see where both the strengths and weaknesses were within each cluster. Hence, the leadership team along with the faculty was able to make decisions about student placement for the upcoming school year (i.e. advanced classes) along with strategizing about future intervention groups for Reading, Math and Science. This also led to an important curriculum decision - purchasing a research-based standard-aligned platform titled USA Test Prep.

Continuing the pattern with our supplemental learning platform, teachers continued training sessions with I-Ready and USA Test Prep - two of ACSM's standard-aligned supplemental curriculum (digital) programs. This allowed the new staff to learn about the program and how it allows them to make instructional decisions based on ongoing data; ACSM's returning faculty continued to learn about changes and updates to the program. Both standard-aligned platforms allow teachers to gather summative and formative standard-aligned data - using this continuous data to drive their instruction. This software expands to other subject areas (besides Reading & Math). For example, our 7th grade Civics teacher, utilizes USA TestPrep for both formative and summative data as she prepares her students for the End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments in Civics. Both programs also contain student item analysis reports that allow the teachers to create their Differentiated Instructional groups - based on the students' area of weaknesses and strengths, as per this standard-aligned data.

These technology-based support programs continue to be two of ACSM's key assessment platforms with today's hybrid model.

Due to the needs of our learners today, Google Classroom became AcadeMir's virtual platform since the spring of 2020. Google Classroom is a blended learning platform that enables teachers to create an online classroom in which they can manage all the documents that their students need. Documents are stored on Google Drive and can be edited in Drive's apps, such as Google Docs, Sheets, and so on. Teacher lessons are embedded within each Google Classroom (by period): from bell ringers to classwork and homework assignments. Students have access to this content and are able to interact with their teachers (questions; constructive feedback from teachers, etc.) via Google Stream. Students can also view their grades from the assignments posted in Google Classroom. Hence, all these features are utilized by both our distant and in-person learners across all subject areas (including electives).

Since ACSM engaged in distant learning back in March 2020, teachers have and continue to assess their students by utilizing Google Educational Suite's various features. Via Google Forms, Google Docs, Sheets and Slides, formative assessments allow teachers to gather this continuous data to gauge their students' understanding of the content. Once gathered, the data leads teachers to focus on targeted instruction via small groups (Differentiated Instruction) and Intervention (pull-out small groups) for different content areas.

Here is a brief description of AcadeMir Charter School Middle's CORE curriculum (this includes our course offerings for the core classes):

English Language Arts classes in grades 6-8 utilize Into Literature as the primary curriculum along with novel studies in the advanced Language Arts classes; Performance Assessment is used for writing instruction in the ELA courses along with supplemental standard-aligned curriculum; Commonlit.org; i-Ready; and USA TestPrep. Developmental language (English language learners levels 1-4) courses utilize the language-based program titled Imagine Learning; i-Ready lessons and Scholastic magazines as their curricula.

In Science, students use a curriculum titled Envision along with USA TestPrep and J&J Science Bootcamp. ACSM's students taking Biology use Florida Biology along with our digital standard-aligned platform USA TestPrep. US History classes (grades 6 and 8) utilize Discovering our Past textbooks (both print and digital). Our seventh grade Civics classes utilize Florida Civics, Economics & Geography along with Gateway to American Government and Junior Scholastics. ACSM's students utilize Glencoe Math in regular math classes in grades 6 -8 along with Algebra 1 and enVision Florida Geometry for our advanced students taking these courses. These two math classes are supplemented with the online programs: Khan Academy and Carnegie Learning (MATHia).

1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):

Instruction at AcadeMir Charter School Middle follows the district's secondary model via block scheduling. Within 90 minutes of instruction (per course), students receive a total of 1,080 hours of instruction for the school year - when the minimum requirement is 900 hours. Therefore, teachers have ample time to utilize both primary and secondary curricula to best meet the needs of their students. In addition to meeting these needs, this curricula also supports college and career readiness via Dual Enrollment courses. ACSM is partnered with Miami-Dade College's prep courses. Students that meet specific criteria (i.e. GPA and state assessment data requirements; teacher recommendation) take a course called Pert Prep - which prepares them for a college-level assessment (in the areas of Reading and Writing). The students that pass the assessment are then placed in a Dual Enrollment course which allows them to build college credit. These further challenges take our students to the next level.

With the support of the Florida Department of Education, AcadeMir works with MyCareerShines to prepare our 8th graders in the area of career readiness. Via the Social Studies 8th grade curriculum, students complete career readiness lessons through the MyCareerShines website. Also both students and teachers are trained by a South Florida Field Trainer. The trainer discusses the toolbox at-home learning resources so students become familiar with the many tools that are available to them at all times.

In addition to our partnership with Miami-Dade College and MyCareerShines, ACSM also takes pride in its
NBRS 2021

National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) and its many generous deeds. Every school year, NJHS hosts several fundraisers that help communities in need, led by one of our middle school teachers. This past school year, ACSM's National Junior Honor Society hosted a shoe drive. New and used (in good condition) were collected and sent to Granada, Nicaragua.

1b. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

The school's vision and mission can be identified via our diverse elective programs at ACSM. Following the same hybrid model as the core classes and with our technological support programs (such as Google Educational Suite and all its components), ACSM's electives have smoothly adapted to the current operating schedule. These include: Dance; Physical Education; Spanish I and II; Spanish for Beginners; Introduction to Psychology (Dual Enrollment); Music; Guitar; Creative Photography; Broadcasting; Two-Dimensional Art; Robotics; Ecology; Forensics; Advanced Academics; Pert Prep; Speech/Law Studies; and Computer education. Each curriculum area allows students to gain essential physical, emotional, academic, artistic and/or social skills.

Although ACSM does not have a large student body, these assorted elective courses are offered to the entire student body (general education; students in the Special Education program; and English language learners) in grades 6-8. Our Student Services Department also engages in Character Education with the students through Project Wisdom - embedded in our morning announcements (i.e. "Make a great day or not, the choice is yours."). Teachers engage in discussions with their students about the theme of the day. In addition, each department is scheduled to create a lesson and deliver it - focusing on one of the character education traits.

A healthy competitive spirit is encouraged at ACSM - during the 2018-2019 school year, AcadeMir's Robotics team competed at the district level. Furthermore, ACSM students have earned recognition every year from Miami-Dade County's annual symposium in science - except this year due to COVID-19.

We also collaborate with the Everglades Foundation and Fairchild for the Ecology curriculum - this includes field trips and other kinesthetic lessons.

Additionally, our science teachers have been trained with Project Lead the Way (PLTW) which enriches our core science curriculum through its many hands-on lessons.

Sports is also a focal point at AcadeMir Charter School Middle. Volleyball, soccer, and basketball are offered at ACSM. We have both junior varsity and varsity teams that compete against other schools in the county. Last school year (2019-2020), our soccer team earned first place in the championship finals. Nonetheless, due to the current situation with COVID-19, the only sport offered this school year is volleyball.

3. Academic Supports:

To ensure we keep our families and stakeholders informed, AcadeMir Charter School Middle has created class websites designed to keep parents and students informed of daily and weekly class assignments, class resources and direct links to parent portal where parents can access daily grades, interim reports and report card grades. In addition, AcadeMir Charter School Middle is committed to provide parents with monthly progress reports for those students who have been identified as students who are not making adequate progress or at risk of failing. Students will be placed on a Progress Monitoring Plan, which will allow for tracking of student progress, addressing students' needs in a timely manner and provides ongoing parental communication.

Additionally, this past January (2020), the Florida Department of Education released an order (No.2020-EO-07) addressing students who are not making adequate progress. AcadeMir Charter School Middle since then has provided interventions to all students which are not making adequate progress. In our efforts to continue to provide needed instructional support for students not making adequate progress, our school has been providing monthly reports to parents and guardians of students identified as performing below grade level or showing no improvement. These reports identify targeted areas where students are failing to meet grade level proficiency and student progress.

Academir Charter School Middle also offers additional learning opportunities to close learning gaps without impacting core subjects. Through after-school tutoring, Saturday Academy and Summer Academy, students receive additional instruction of grade level standards in a small group setting. These are the various learning opportunities offered at ACSM every school year:

1) FSA Reading Tutoring: Tutoring takes place at least once a week for 1 hour. Participation will be extended to all lowest 25% students failing to make adequate progress. This may be a request from the teacher, administration and/or parent(s).

2) FSA Math Tutoring: Tutoring takes place at least once a week for 1 hour. This may be a request from the teacher, administration and/or parent(s).

3) Saturday Academy: Tutoring will continue to take place on designated Saturdays for 3 hours for grade 6 and 2 hours for grades 7 and 8. Participation in this academy is open to all students. Students receive instruction in Writing, Reading, Math, Biology, Civics and Science.

4) Science Tutoring: Tutoring takes place once a week for 1 hour for 8th grade. Participation will be extended to all lowest 25% students failing to make adequate progress. This may be a request from the teacher, administration and/or parent(s).

5) ELL Tutoring: Tutoring takes place twice a week for 1 hour and it is for all ELL students in grades 6-8th. This tutoring enhances students' developmental English language skills - teachers focus on language standards in the areas of phonics, phonological awareness, vocabulary and literacy.

AcadeMir Charter School Middle currently does not have other student body subgroups (homeless and/or migrant students); therefore, we do not offer these additional services.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

A strongly embedded and highly impactful practice for ACSM is its focus on the academic and socio-emotional well-being of its students. Formal structures exist to ensure learners develop and have positive relationships with adults and peers who support their educational experiences. The school operates under a model to create meaningful conversations, connections, and relationships among students. School resources are available for all students as well as access to outside agencies. Activities are designed for students to interact with each other and community members in positive ways. Interviews and survey results indicate strong student support for leadership and teachers. Through observations, the review team found many instances of strong support from all stakeholder groups for the students. There is a strong engagement in rigorous academic programs that include dual-enrollment credits (i.e., Miami-Dade College), advanced courses, and high school courses. In addition, the school offers an array of extra-curricular activities to engage both the mind and body. Diverse, individualized, creative, innovative, and personalized learning activities are well implemented. Many of the strategies and activities are well-conceived and beneficial to increasing student achievement and character development.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

ACSM is a vibrant, inclusive, and student-centered school, providing a loving, caring, and safe school culture. The school remains loyal to one of its main core values, to provide an inclusive, high performing learning environment, without losing sight of the school's innovative vision. Stakeholders are passionate about their commitment to the school's beliefs and values. In addition to the services and academic programs offered within the school, community partners (i.e. Florida Everglades Educational Foundation, Miami Dade Police Department Priority Response Team) and board members developed collaborations with local support service agencies to aid with the student learning , character education and safety programs. ACSM has continuously provided, during these unprecedented COVID-19 time, services to meet the needs of all the learners. Student service professionals make the development of the "whole student" and the student's intellectual capacity and achievement, emotional make-up, physical condition, social relationships, vocational aptitudes and skills a continued priority during this difficult time. Counselors, interventionists, tutors and special area teachers monitor students to ensure student's well-being and safety.

ACSM offers parental workshops in collaboration with a local educational consulting agency known as NAEP (National Academic Educational Partners). The AcadeMir Parent Academy aims to assist the parents with current issues that relate to the educational process. These interactive workshops address topics such as: "Navigating the E-Learning Environment", "Becoming a Successful Middle School Student", and " FSA & EOC Standardized Testing Preparation". The main purpose of these initiatives are to engage family and community members in students' school experiences, and to actively support students' development and learning, as well as improve school practices and operations by identifying the features that best support students, especially in a hybrid learning environment. Students genuinely enjoy being ambassadors for incoming students and really appreciate the faculty and staff members who take time off their busy schedules to be their mentors. The annual community engagements such as Career Day, Literacy Night, and Hispanic Heritage Day are embedded in the school's culture.

All stakeholders speak to the school's strong presence in the community and the impactful programs that stem from the healthy relationships. All stakeholder groups value and support the mission and vision and actively participate in numerous venues to strengthen student success. Nurturing a strong community/school culture where students are inclusive, collaborative, and caring is encouraged by the team and speaks well for future success and the school's continuous improvement journey. Parents are encouraged to participate through multiple opportunities that take place during the school year. Parental involvement is at the core of ACSM's aim to include parents in the decision-making process and student learning.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The school embodies the belief that the professional learning environment is a multi-faceted organism. This living entity is composed equally of academic, social, emotional, and physical elements. Professional learning communities (PLC's) consist of key stakeholders such as administrators and instructional personnel who are committed to student learning. As a result, the school provides ongoing opportunities via focused group collaboration for the goal of improving teaching skills and increasing the academic performance of students. Collaboration and collegiality are exhibited in abundance; expectations are observably high; staff and leaders support one another through a research-based mentoring and coaching program. Staff members and school leaders embraced their core belief that academic and social excellence is attainable for all students when they are met where they are. Continuous professional development initiatives to boost student advancement are provided for teachers through job embedded workshops. Additionally, the school's Reading, Math and Science coaches work directly with individual teachers to implement strategies that are used to enhance student performance. The school employs a continued systemic implementation effort to use embedded instructional strategies (i.e., learning targets, use of exemplars, active learning, differentiation, higher order thinking skills, student-centered technology, rigorous and challenging tasks and personalized learning) that establish equitable learning opportunities through student collaboration, self-reflection, and development of critical thinking skills to address individual learners' needs and interests.

4. School Leadership:

Expectations for teaching and learning are offered as a solid support from the administration, parents, and the governing entity. Every decision is made through the lens of the school's mission and guiding tenets. A safe and welcoming culture is identified as a major focus for the school's leadership team. Collaborative and supportive relationships among the district and school's leadership team facilitates the effective and consistent implementation of the mission, vision, and goals. The implementation of ACSM's School Improvement Plan ensures effectiveness. Administrators, curriculum coaches, faculty and staff are the force that drives the achievement of ACSM's mission, vision and goals clarity in direction. The commitment to initiate and collaborate with colleagues provide the momentum for achievement.

ACSM has opportunities to utilize partner resources like Miami Dade College, Cognia™/ AdvancEd™ Continuous Improvement Process, local health agencies, and local businesses to augment its ability to serve its students. ACSM's Leadership Team actively engages with these partners to create an optimal learning environment for our students. To ensure continuous school improvement, Cognia™ and AdvancEd™, provide in-depth diagnostic reviews for targeted or comprehensive support by collecting robust data about the school's current reality and where we need to go. This constant collection, analysis and implementation of data cultivates a continuous improvement mindset. These partnerships ensure assessments are aligned and can deliver useful desired results. As a result of this partnership, the school's leadership can enhance the use of research-based tools and processes, and develop practices and strategies that can engage stakeholders to implement plans that build on successes.

The school's main purpose in fostering these partnerships is the constant development of our vision, mission, beliefs and commitment to student success. The school engages in ongoing self-analysis and continuous improvement by using the tools provided by Cognia™ to support the efforts to improve policies and align standards to instructional practices. The tools available are, but not limited to, analysis of perception of data, analysis of experiential data, and student performance data. The anatomy of the Cognia™ Performance Standards include: Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity and Resource Capacity. The Domains are statements that define the capacity of our organization to provide quality instruction and meet the rigorous demands of continuous improvement. Each Domain is further defined by Standards, which in turn, are defined by Key Concepts. The Performance Standards are research-based statements that describe conditions that are necessary for institutions to support organizational effectiveness and improve student performance. In addition to the Domains and accompanying Standards, Key Concepts are aligned to the Standards to help provide measurable progress and an overall assessment of practices. The Key Concepts are organized around the three themes: of Initiate, Improve and Impact.

Our school has demonstrated, as evidenced by our most recent Accreditation visit (2019), that our ratings surpass the national average (Index of Education Quality® IEQ®). These ratings provide a holistic measure of an institution's overall performance based on a comprehensive set of indicators and evaluative criteria. As

a formative tool for improvement, it pinpoints areas of strength as well as those in need of support or focus. We embrace a school culture in which accountability is a vital component totally aligned to our School Improvement Plan (SIP).

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

A systemic implementation of a learning culture that promotes creativity, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving provide the level of instruction necessary to meet the individual needs of students and the learning expectations of the school. A sense of family prevails within ACSM's educational community. A philosophy of genuine caring for each child is apparent in the school's climate surveys. This characteristic is enhanced by the commitment to provide for each child's intellectual, emotional, and social needs. In support of the leadership team commitment to creating a culture of accountability, progress towards the ACSM's School improvement Plan priorities are closely and routinely monitored to ensure program effectiveness. Accountability is also enhanced by the school's definition of four non-negotiables: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBS), Response to Intervention (RTI), Formative Instructional Practices (FIP), and the use of multiple academic resources. The school's comprehensive strategic planning and monitoring efforts ensure that school resources, as well as the efforts of all staff and stakeholders, are tightly aligned with the ACSM's vision, mission, and values. There are well established, monitoring, and evaluation processes to ensure all students have equitable access to rigorous and differentiated instruction that includes active student engagement, multi-cultural exposures, and character education models. Communication with external and internal stakeholders had become a focus system-wide and was engrained into the day-to-day operations. A strategic communication plan guided the use of applications to encourage inclusivity and engagement from all stakeholders.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Using data to guide instruction and improve organizational effectiveness is a well embedded practice within ACSM. Initiatives are in place to collect, analyze, and inform future direction and achieve the goals identified within the School Improvement Plan. The school engages in best practices by developing and implementing a systematic process for monitoring and assessing data to drive instruction and enhance the decision-making process. ACSM has a continuous improvement plan that is aligned to the Florida State Standards with an overall focus on academic achievement, student experience and preparing students for a successful life. The school's strategic purpose is led by formative and summative data which is then used to monitor progress, measure impact, and modify instruction for student success. Resources to impact student learning are utilized - our learners are using technology to enrich their learning, career planning and social experiences. Recent emergency events, such as Covid-19 engages the school in a clearer focus on quality implementation of technology tools and resources to better develop instruction and learning for all stakeholders. ACSM has several critical results of such practices that include professional development for both faculty, staff and parental workshops. The purchase of technology and additional resource tools (i.e., Chromebooks™, G Suite K-12 Solutions, G Suite for Education) enable the application of co-planning and co-teaching opportunities for the faculty due to the increase in digital learning. The school's remote learning plan provides support for all users and is aligned to the school's instructional expectations. The school integrates digital resources into teaching, learning, and day-to-day operations that facilitate student learning, ensure organizational effectiveness, and enhance professional practices. A well-crafted curriculum serves as a reference to ensure that ACSM is on the right track in meeting set academic goals. Its components are designed to develop concepts, from a basic level to increasingly complex topics or skills. Our school engages many stakeholders to ensure the curriculum is recommended, professionally written, supported, tested, taught, and learned. Curriculum coaches in full collaboration with the school's administration reflect on the skills and knowledge that students must acquire.