



**KIPP Tech Valley Charter School**

**2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN  
PROGRESS REPORT**

Submitted to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on:

September 16, 2021

By Halim Genus, Chief Schools Officer

321 Northern Blvd, Albany, NY 12210  
518-694-9494

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Halim Genus, Chief Schools Officer, and team prepared this 2020-21 Accountability Progress Report on behalf of the school’s board of trustees:

Trustee’s Name	Board Position	
	Office (e.g. chair, treasurer, secretary)	committees (e.g. finance, executive)
John P. Reilly	Chair	Executive, Finance
Dr. Shai Butler	Vice Chair	Executive, Finance
Carl Young	Secretary	Executive, Governance
Guy Alonge III	Treasurer	Executive, Finance, Development & External Affairs
Dr. Don-Lee Applyrs	Trustee	Development & External Affairs
LaSone Garland-Bryan	Trustee	Development & External Affairs
Katie Hohman	Trustee	Governance
Kelly Kimbrough	Trustee	Development & External Affairs
Ron Mexico	Trustee	Finance
Robert Bellafiore	Trustee	Development & External Affairs
Michael Strianese	Trustee	
Kelly Walborn	Trustee	Governance

Halim Genus has served as the Chief Schools Officer since 2020.

## SCHOOL OVERVIEW

### **Mission of Primary School**

Every KIPP Tech Valley student will acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and character habits necessary to succeed in middle school, high school, college, and beyond.

### **Primary School Background**

KIPP Tech Valley Primary School opened its doors in August 2016 to its founding class of 100 kindergarten students. The 2021-2022 school year welcomes 500 students ranging from kindergarten to fourth grade. In addition to building a strong foundation of literacy and math skills, every student participates in field trips and enrichment classes that include Physical Education, Science, Art, Theater, Dance, Music, and Spanish.

Over the years, KTV Primary has developed a robust student support team that allows for all students to be met where they are, differentiates instruction, and provides students with the tools and support necessary for their overall success. This team includes behavior specialists, a counselor, a psychologist, special education teachers, a social worker and interventionists.

KTV Primary develops student's character habits through the values of effort, engagement, empathy, empowerment, and excellence. These values are celebrated through weekly assemblies, quarterly ceremonies, and other positive incentives. The intent to create a strong culture, curriculum and abundant social and emotional supports is based in the Whole Child Approach to Learning.

Together with families and communities, we create joyful, academically excellent schools that prepare students with the skills and confidence to pursue the paths they choose—college, career, and beyond—so they can lead fulfilling lives and build a more just world.

### **Our Credo**

If there is a problem, we look for a solution.

If there is a better way, we find it.

If a teammate needs help, we give.

If we need help, we ask.

### **Mission of Middle School**

Together with families and communities, we create joyful, academically excellent schools that prepare students with the skills and confidence to pursue the paths they choose—college, career, and beyond—so they can lead fulfilling lives and build a more just world.

### **MS Background**

In August of 2005, KIPP Tech Valley Middle School (KTVMS) opened its doors with the promise that hard work would lead to academic success and pave a road to college and beyond for historically underserved children in Albany. Over ten years later, results show that KTVMS students have made impressive academic gains, proving that KIPP's "work hard, be nice" philosophy pays off.

The KIPP program of high-expectations and high-support, combined with more time in the classroom has paid off. Since the 2009 New York State Math and ELA assessments, KTVMS's eighth-graders have outperformed the Albany City School District average in both English language arts and mathematics. In 2009, KTVMS was one of only 11 schools in the entire state to receive 100% passing results in both math and ELA on the New York State Exams. In 2013, our founding class of students from 2005 graduated from a number of different high schools, and approximately 90% of those students were accepted to college. For the 2018-2019 school year, KIPP Tech Valley Middle School was named a Recognition School by the New York State Department of Education.

### **Learning During the Pandemic**

During the 2020-21 school year, KIPP Albany schools made several shifts to our programmatic offerings. All four schools started the school year 100% virtual. To aid in the effort to ensure all our students had the requisite access to technology and to their teachers, KIPP Albany issued a Chromebook to every student. We also provided Wi-Fi hotspots to families that requested them.

In considering our reopening plan, we grounded our decision making in safety, relationships, routines, and providing instruction that has a positive measurable impact on student outcomes. Considering all of those factors, it was our intention to provide 100% virtual instruction through October 30, 2020 for our students, with the fully virtual model designed to best prioritize and achieve safety, build positive and sustaining relationships, establish consistent routines and expectations, and deliver instruction that is measurable and achievable for our students.

We introduced KIPP Albany Supervised Learning Spaces were offered while school was completely virtual for all students 12 and under. The schools offered time in the classroom during virtual school for academic support and in-person, social interaction from 8 AM – 4 PM daily. Students registered for the program and were socially distanced and benefited from being in a quiet, structured setting while learning.

Beginning in November, we returned – usually by one grade at a time – students to in-person instruction using an opt-in model. Ultimately, about 50% of our students returned to in-person instruction while the rest remained fully

Our model relied on a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning, robust, grade-aligned learning management systems, curriculum that is adapted for virtual delivery, and a commitment to ensuring all students can access both instruction and the additional supports they need to be successful. A key component of this plan was providing every student with a Chromebook (including a touchscreen version for K-3) and other learning tools as needed, to include prepaid MiFi internet devices, noise-cancelling headphones, desks, white boards, and other essential school items. While instruction was delivered by our subject area teachers (and in some cases, by a master teacher model), students in all grades will be broken into pods of 10-15 students to ensure close progress monitoring and a significant bond with at least one adult staff member.

We remained committed to our robust ELA curriculum and so we adjusted the school day schedule to ensure every student had ELA and math instruction every day.

We remained committed to our robust ELA curriculum and so we adjusted the school day schedule to ensure every student had ELA and math instruction every day.

### **Mental Health, Behavioral, And Emotional Support Services And Programs**

Students and families will have access to our full social work, counseling, and family support staff, who are available for individual and group remote counseling and continued support to address all social emotional needs as well as case management and access to resources. We will continue to work with outside partners to provide additional resources to families and have applied for additional grant support to increase funding for our mental health and trauma resiliency work.

The emotional and mental health of our students remained of paramount importance to us. So, we made sure that teachers knew how to connect their students and families with our counseling and social workers. We also provided free meals for breakfast and lunch and offered meal delivery to families who expressed need.

Human resources and school leadership will continue to support staff and facilitate outside resources.

## ENROLLMENT SUMMARY

School Enrollment by Grade Level and School Year

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
2016-17	100					86	99	60	47	392
2017-18	100	100				87	99	62	35	483
2018-19	103	98	99			95	97	73	48	613
2019-20	100	104	102	100		93	97	83	60	740
2020-21	92	108	100	98	96	72	124	93	74	857

## GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

### ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

#### Goal 1: English Language Arts

Students at KIPP: Tech Valley Charter School will become proficient in reading and writing of the English Language.

#### BACKGROUND

KTV Primary has a student-centered approach to instruction that focuses on helping students draw connections between the work that is done at school and what they consider important in their present and future lives. Further, as we prepare students for college by using New York State Learning Standards, we will engage them in a variety of experiences, such as field trips and community projects, to help them apply their newly attained knowledge and skills to the real world.

KTV Primary’s curricular resources include KIPP Wheatley, Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading and Wilson’s Foundations®. The ELA program is made up of a phonics/vocabulary block (25-30 minutes), a Guided Reading block (60 minutes), and a humanities block (70-80 minutes) daily, which is more than the daily minimum of 120 minutes recommended by literacy expert Timothy Shanahan and well above what is considered the average of 90 minutes per day.

For the phonics block in grades K to 3, the Wilson’s Foundations® curriculum is used, and students are assessed using a mix of unit assessments from the curriculum and teacher-created quizzes. Additionally, in kindergarten and 1st grade, teachers use this time to review sight words (pulled from the Dolch word list). As we shift gears from a phonics to vocabulary focus for the upper grades (3rd and 4th), we plan to individualize instruction using Lexia and vocabulary resources from KIPP. We will still use the Foundations curriculum for students who need practice with foundational phonics skills.

For the Guided Reading block, students benefit from having two teachers in the classroom in all grades. Teachers plan lessons for small, homogeneous groups using data obtained from the University of Chicago's STEP Assessment. We use leveled texts from Scholastic and Reading A-Z to implement 20-minute mini-lessons. Students also benefit from the use of Lexia—a supplemental web-based literacy curriculum—and differentiated independent work created by teachers.

For the humanities block, the KIPP Wheatley curriculum is implemented. This curriculum is thematic, and students are engaged in standards-based exploration of texts as well as writing tasks that are typically text-based. This consists of a 30- to 40-minute reading block and writing block depending on the time required for the day's writing task. Themes of the modules include: "Under the Sea," "Down on the Farm," "Lessons from Leaders," and "My 5 Senses." Themes are typically based in social studies or science, and the skills taught are pulled from New York State Learning Standards.

KTV Middle's academic program is based upon the NYS Learning Standards, but the program is accelerated and taught rigorously to ensure that students are prepared for a college preparatory high school upon the completion of 8th grade. Our school places emphasis on reading, writing, and critical thinking. Students are expected to provide written responses and defend their positions with evidence in all classes, and we encourage students to develop multiple approaches in response to real-world challenges. We believe that the best way to prepare our students for college and careers is to ensure that they have mastery of content knowledge combined with strong academic habits and character traits that transfer across all subject areas and experiences.

KTV Middle's ELA curriculum has been derived largely from KIPP Wheatley as well as Fountas and Pinnell Readers Workshop, Scholastic Guided Reading, and Renaissance Learning Accelerated Reader program. Reading instruction totals a minimum of 360 minutes per week. The curriculum reinforces the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards' expectations of coherence, organization, style, and control of conventions in writing through a workshop approach structured around mini-lessons, student conferences, and rubric-based feedback. Every student at KTV Middle is assigned 20 minutes of daily independent reading. Every book in the KIPP Tech Valley library is coded with a reading level and corresponding Accelerated Reading point value to ensure that both students and teachers are monitoring the pace and comprehension of independent reading.

### METHOD

During 2020-21, the school(s) primarily used the following exam to assess student growth and achievement in ELA: KIPP Wheatley Unit exams, interim assessments, and NYS end of year exams. We made the commitment to continue to use data to monitor student growth and progress on our internal exams as they were the most relevant to the curricular material students were exposed to daily.

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

#### 2020-21 NYS ELA Exam

## 2020-21 ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

Grade	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient (Level 3 & 4)
3	38	39%	55%
4	27	28%	33%
5	28	39%	32%
6	46	37%	48%
7	11	12%	18%
8	24	33%	63%
Overall	174	32%	<b>45%</b>

For the 20/21 school year we did not update our academic goals. Both schools started the school year completely virtual so that also required shifts in the school day schedule. Each school leader ensured every student received blocks of ELA/reading and math instruction daily. Based on our internal interim assessments, the academics team decided to focus in on aligning ELA instruction across the region. We made sure that each teacher has an instructional coach and that instructional coaching receive targeted development on moving the needle in student outcomes.

Our major foci for the upcoming school year are lesson internalization and weekly data meetings. Through analysis of the data from our internal assessments, we realized that teachers need to plan rigorous unit and lesson internalization for students to engage in grade-level, curriculum based tasks. For the problem of below grade-level tasks, by developing content-focused unit and lesson-internalization skills, leaders and teachers will more likely stay true to the curriculum if they better understand how to identify the most rigorous parts of an upcoming lesson and plan carefully to teach towards it.

We also committed to increase the frequency of our data analysis, including analysis of data for exceptional learners. We will implement bi-weekly data meetings that include teachers of exceptional learners. We will also ensure general educators are accountable for knowing and responding to data for all students and increase special educator capacity to analyze grade level standards and develop appropriate reteach plans.

### SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GOAL

Although our NYS ELA exam participation rate was low at 32 percent, our ELA proficiency rate was 45 percent with grade 8 with the highest at 63 percent. Facing the instructional challenges of the

pandemic in 2020-21, we made the decision to emphasize ELA instruction in an attempt to minimize learning loss and ability to learn across other academic areas.

### ACTION PLAN

Our major foci for the upcoming school year are lesson internalization and weekly data meetings. Through analysis of the data from our internal assessments, we realized that teachers need to plan rigorous unit and lesson internalization for students to engage in grade-level, curriculum based tasks. For the problem of below grade-level tasks, by developing content-focused unit and lesson-internalization skills, leaders and teachers will more likely stay true to the curriculum if they better understand how to identify the most rigorous parts of an upcoming lesson and plan carefully to teach towards it.

We also committed to increase the frequency of our data analysis, including analysis of data for exceptional learners. We will implement bi-weekly data meetings that include teachers of exceptional learners. We will also ensure general educators are accountable for knowing and responding to data for all students and increase special educator capacity to analyze grade level standards and develop appropriate reteach plans.

## GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS

### ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS

#### Goal 2: Mathematics

Students at KIPP: Tech Valley Charter School will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving.

### BACKGROUND

KIPP Tech Valley Primary School has worked with its math department to ensure close alignment between the school's curriculum and assessment and the NYS Learning Standards. At KTV, there is a focus on development of mathematical fluency, conceptual understanding, and procedural knowledge. Daily, students participate in a 60-minute math block driven by the Engage NY curriculum, a 40-minute problem-solving block that implements the practice of Cognitively Guided Instruction from Dr. Stephanie Smith, and a 10-minute reteach block to provide quick feedback on the previous day's performance.

We use student independent work, exit slips, or Topic Assessments created by KIPP to attain data and plan reteaches in between the major mid-module and end of module assessments. Student's problem solving skills are also tracked via "CGI Quizzes" to assess the sophistication of their problem solving strategies and ensure they are within the grade-level range.

At the middle School, KTV has worked with its math department to ensure close alignment between the school's curriculum and assessment and the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards. The math curriculum is derived heavily from the material presented on EngageNY. Additionally, for grades 5 and 6, KIPP Tech Valley uses the KIPP math curriculum designed by Dave Levin at KIPP Academy Middle School (NY). This curriculum incorporates many aspects of the tactile and kinesthetic pedagogy of Harriett Ball's Fearless Learning instructional program. It is spiraled to introduce new mathematical concepts while simultaneously and constantly assessing previously introduced concepts and skills, allowing students to review basic ideas while developing increasingly sophisticated mathematical ability. Math assessments at the Middle School have also been recently redesigned to reflect progress monitoring of spiraled and newly presented material. The math department, in conjunction with the Middle School administration, has worked to increase the rigor of its internal assessments and more closely align the exams to the expectations of the New York State Testing Program. The Middle School prioritizes mathematical fluency and higher-order thinking skills. The goal of the Middle School mathematics program is to advance students' ability and thinking so that they will end the program not only on but above grade level as evidenced by performance on both the New York State 8th grade math test and the Algebra I Regents examination.

### METHOD

During 2020-21, the school(s) primarily used the following exam to assess student growth and achievement in mathematics: KIPP Created and teacher created math assessments.

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Overall, we discovered that students were not always being exposed to grade level tasks and instead needing to spend extra time remediating skills.

We administered the NYS math exam to use as our year end cumulative math data point.

## 2020-21 NYS Math Exam

Grade	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient (Level 3 & 4)
3	96	45%	42%
4	95	48%	24%
5	71	34%	21%
6	124	32%	18%
7	92	22%	15%
8	73	37%	19%
Overall	551	36%	<b>25%</b>

Unfortunately, just 36% of our students in grades 3-8 sat for the 2021 NYS Math exam. Of those tested, 25% scored at proficiency levels of 3 and 4. Grade 3 scored at the highest proficiency of 42 percent and also had a relatively high participation rate of 45 percent.

#### SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE MATHEMATICS GOAL

As evidenced by the table above, student participation rates ranged from the low of 22% in grade 7 to a high of 48% in grade 4. Overall, 25% of students in grades 3-8 demonstrated proficiency in math based on this assessment in 2021. Our staff has reflected on this performance and analyzed the many factors affecting instruction that presented in 2020-21.

#### ACTION PLAN

Our action plan for math instruction is similar to our plan for ELA instruction. Our major foci for the upcoming school year are lesson internalization and weekly data meetings. Through analysis of the data from our internal assessments, we realized that teachers need to plan rigorous unit and lesson internalization for students to engage in grade-level, curriculum based tasks. For the problem of below grade-level tasks, by developing content-focused unit and lesson-internalization skills, leaders and teachers will more likely stay true to the curriculum if they better understand how to identify the most rigorous parts of an upcoming lesson and plan carefully to teach towards it.

We also committed to increase the frequency of our data analysis, including analysis of data for exceptional learners. We will implement bi-weekly data meetings that include teachers of exceptional learners. We will also ensure general educators are accountable for knowing and responding to data for all students and increase special educator capacity to analyze grade level standards and develop appropriate reteach plans.

## GOAL 3: SCIENCE

### ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE

#### Goal 3: Science

Students at KIPP: Tech Valley Charter School will meet and exceed state standards for the mastery of skill and content knowledge in Science.

#### BACKGROUND

Our schools used a new science curriculum last year called Amplify Science. Amplify’s approach to science is more cooperative and hands-on. While this was our first year using this curriculum, we were not able to dedicate as much time and resources as we had initially planned. Teachers still followed the modified curriculum and administered curriculum based assessments with some frequency.

#### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

KIPP TV did not set science targets for the 2020-21 academic school year and did not have a robust assessment protocol throughout the year to monitor student performance in this subject. Some students did take the NYS Science exams in grades 4 and 8.

**2020-21 NYS Science Exam**

Grade	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient (Level 3 & 4)
4	49%	70%
8	24%	35%

#### SUMMARY OF THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCIENCE GOAL

Our science program continued in 2020-21 as we rolled out the Amplify Program. While our staff and students became familiar with the materials and protocols virtually, we did not utilize a year end assessment other than the NYS Science exams in grade 4 and 8. 70% of the students in grade 4 and 35% in grade 8 who sat for the exams scored at levels 3 and 4.

#### ACTION PLAN

Our action plan for science instruction is similar to our plan for ELA instruction. Our major foci for the upcoming school year are lesson internalization and weekly data meetings. Through analysis of the data from our internal assessments, we realized that teachers need to plan rigorous unit and lesson internalization for students to engage in grade-level, curriculum based tasks. For the problem of below grade-level tasks, by developing content-focused unit and lesson-internalization skills, leaders

and teachers will more likely stay true to the curriculum if they better understand how to identify the most rigorous parts of an upcoming lesson and plan carefully to teach towards it.

## GOAL 4: ESSA

Due to COVID-19 and the subsequent changes to the state’s testing, accountability, and federal reporting requirements, the 2020-21 school accountability statuses are the same as those assigned for the 2019-20 school year. The 2019-20 accountability statuses were based on 2018-19 exam results. Assigned accountability designations and further context can be found [here](#).

### Goal 7: Absolute Measure

Under the state’s ESSA accountability system, the school is in good standing: the state has not identified the school for comprehensive or targeted improvement.

### METHOD

Because *all* students are expected to meet the state's performance standards, the federal statute stipulates that various sub-populations and demographic categories of students among all tested students must meet the state standard in and of themselves aside from the overall school results. As New York State, like all states, is required to establish a specific system for making these determinations for its public schools, charter schools do not have latitude in establishing their own performance levels or criteria of success for meeting the ESSA accountability requirements. Each year, the state issues School Report Cards that indicate a school’s status under the state accountability system.

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

KIPP Tech Valley Charter School was labeled as “in good standing.” KIPP Tech Valley continues to satisfy this requirement annually.

### Accountability Status by Year

Year	Status
2018-19	Good Standing
2019-20	Good Standing
2020-21	Good Standing