



Renewal Recommendation Report **KIPP: Tech Valley Charter School**

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INTRODUCTION

This report is the primary means by which the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a school’s Application for Charter Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a school’s case for renewal. The Institute has created and issued this report pursuant to the *Policies for the Renewal of Not-For-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York* (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”) (revised September 4, 2013 and available at:

<http://www.newyorkcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/SUNY-Renewal-Policies.pdf>).

Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended, the “Act”) are available on the Institute’s website at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/operate/existing-schools/renewal/>.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

BACKGROUND

Opened in 2005, KIPP Tech Valley Charter School (“KIPP Tech Valley”) is now in its 10th year of operation at the end of its second charter term. KIPP Tech Valley provides a high quality, college preparatory educational experience for middle school students in Albany, New York. The school’s mission is as follows:

KIPP: Tech Valley Charter School’s mission is to provide educationally underserved middle school students with the knowledge, skills and character required to succeed in top-quality high schools, college, and the competitive world beyond.

The school currently serves 298 students in grades 5-8 in a private facility at 1 Dudley Heights, Albany, NY located within the Albany City School District. The SUNY Trustees renewed the school for a full term of five years in 2010. KIPP Tech Valley affiliates with the KIPP Foundation (Knowledge is Power Program), a California based not-for-profit charter organization with a network of 162 schools nationwide, through a licensing arrangement. KIPP Tech Valley is currently the only SUNY authorized KIPP Foundation school.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KIPP Tech Valley, at the end of its second charter term serves 298 students in grades 5-8. In addition to its request for charter renewal, the school requests the authority to operate a primary school enrolling 356 students in grades K-4 over the next charter term.

In its current charter term, KIPP Tech Valley met or came close to meeting the goals in its Accountability Plan. With a full complement of data, as the school has served students in grades assessed on state exams since its inception, the school has posted commendable results in each year of the current charter term, outperforming its district of location by a significant margin in both English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics. Although student performance decreased sharply in the 2012-13 school year, resulting in negative effect sizes in both ELA and math, the school made appropriate adjustments to its program and exceeded its predicted percentage of students scoring proficient on state exams by a small degree in ELA and a large degree in math in every other year.

The school’s program, as analyzed using SUNY’s Charter Renewal Benchmarks,¹ is strong and effective. The school has strong instructional leaders who prioritize supporting teachers in

¹ The *State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks*, (version 5.0, the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”), available at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/SUNY-Renewal-Benchmarks.pdf>.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

delivering high quality instruction. The Institute finds KIPP Tech Valley provides strong instruction, a scholarly culture, and a curriculum that enables students to meet the challenges of state assessments in middle school providing a strong foundation for high school success.

The school or education corporation board (the “board”) performs its duties in focusing the school on academic achievement, targeting resources to support instructional leaders and classroom teachers. The board has maintained strong membership throughout the charter term. School leaders provide regular, detailed reports outlining academic, operational and fiscal performance data that allows the board to exercise proper oversight over the educational program. For these reasons, the Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees grant KIPP Tech Valley a subsequent full-term renewal of five years.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: FULL-TERM RENEWAL

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Charter Renewal of KIPP Tech Valley Charter School and renew its charter for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten through 8th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 667 students.

To earn a Subsequent Full-Term Renewal, a school must demonstrate that it has met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.²

REQUIRED FINDINGS

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the school has met the SUNY Trustees' specific renewal criteria, the Institute makes the following findings required by the Act:

- The school, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- The education corporation can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and,
- Given the programs it will offer, its structure and its purpose, approving the school to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.³

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it has, and will, put in place to meet or exceed SUNY's enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners ("ELLs"), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch ("FRPL") program. SUNY⁴ and the New York State Board of Regents finalized the methodology for setting targets in October 2012, and the Institute communicated specific targets or proposed targets for each school in July 2013.

Given the date the school was originally chartered, it does not have statutory targets. However, in accordance with the Act, the Institute, acting on behalf of the SUNY Trustees, considered the school's plans for meeting its future enrollment and retention targets during the next charter term prior to recommending the renewal application for approval. The Institute found that while the school's numbers of ELLs and students with disabilities are low, the plans to meet or exceed the targets, and the plans to educate students with disabilities, ELLs and FRPL students, are

² SUNY Renewal Policies at page 14.

³ See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

⁴ SUNY Trustees' Charter Schools Committee resolution dated October 2, 2012.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

satisfactory in light of current efforts and future ability of the school to recruit directly to Kindergarten parents if SUNY approves the school's elementary expansion. The Institute also found the school to be making good faith efforts to attract and retain such students in accordance with the Act.

CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the district in which the charter school is located regarding the school's Application for Charter Renewal. The Albany City School District superintendent provided comments in opposition to the renewal of KIPP Tech Valley by letter dated January 7, 2015, attached as an Appendix to this report. The Institute reviewed the letter and did not find its argument persuasive. As a result, the Institute did not change its Full-Term Renewal recommendation.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

REPORT FORMAT

The Institute makes the foregoing renewal recommendation based on the school's Application for Charter Renewal, evaluation visits conducted and information gathered during the charter term and a renewal evaluation visit conducted near the end of the current charter term. Additionally, the Institute has reviewed the strength and fiscal health of the not for profit education corporation with the authority to operate the school. Most importantly, the Institute analyzes the school's record of academic performance and the extent to which it has met its academic Accountability Plan goals. This renewal recommendation report compiles the evidence below using the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, which specify in detail what a successful school should be able to demonstrate at the time of the renewal review. The Institute uses the four interconnected renewal questions below for framing benchmark statements to determine if a school has made an adequate case for renewal.

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school an effective, viable organization?
3. Is the school fiscally sound?
4. If the SUNY Trustees renew the education corporation's authority to operate the school, are its plans for the school reasonable, feasible and achievable?

The report's Appendix provides a School Overview, copies of any school district comments on the Application for Charter Renewal, the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the school, and, if applicable, its education corporation and additional evidence on student achievement contained in the School Performance Summaries.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

KIPP Tech Valley is an academic success given its record of meeting or coming close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goals, and based on evidence demonstrating the educational program is sound as compiled on school evaluation visits during the charter term and at the time of the renewal review using the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

At the beginning of the charter term,⁵ the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and math. The Institute examines results for five required Accountability Plan measures to determine ELA and math goal attainment. Because the Act requires charters be held “accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results”⁶ and states the educational programs at a charter school must “meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents”⁷ for other public schools, SUNY’s required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by state wide assessments. Historically, SUNY’s required measures include measures that present schools’:

- absolute performance, i.e., what percentage of students score at a certain proficiency on state exams?;
- comparative performance, i.e., how did the school do as compared to schools in the district and schools that serve similar populations of economically disadvantaged students?; and,
- growth performance, i.e., how well did the school do in catching students up – and then keeping them up to grade level proficiency?

Every SUNY authorized charter school has the opportunity to propose additional measures of success when crafting its Accountability Plan. KIPP Tech Valley did not propose or include any additional measures of success in the Accountability Plan it adopted.

Because of testing changes made by the state, the Institute has since 2009 consistently de-emphasized the two absolute measures under each goal in schools’ Accountability Plans. The Institute continues to focus primarily on the two comparative measures and the growth measure while also considering any additional evidence the school presents using additional measures identified in its Accountability Plan. Institute identifies the required measures (absolute proficiency, absolute Annual Measurable Objective attainment,⁸ comparison to local district, comparison to demographically similar schools, and student growth) in the Performance

⁵ Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. In the case of subsequent renewal, the Accountability Plan covers the last year of the previous charter term through the second to last year of the charter term under review.

⁶ Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

⁷ Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

⁸ While the state has recalibrated the absolute Annual Measurable Objective, the Institute will only report on the 2013-14 results, not on those for 2012-13.

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Summaries appearing in the Appendix at the end of the report.

The Accountability Plan also includes science and No Child Left Behind Act (“NCLB”) goals. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. Please note that for schools located in New York City, the Institute uses the Community School District (“CSD”) as the local school district.

Academic Attainment. KIPP Tech Valley has met or come close to meeting its key academic Accountability Plan goals in ELA and mathematics during every year in the charter term with the exception of 2012-13. During 2012-13, New York State administered more rigorous ELA and mathematics assessments to students in 3rd grade through 8th grade for the first time. That year, the school did not meet its ELA goal or its mathematics goal. The school met its science goal throughout the charter term. KIPP Tech Valley is not identified by the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”) as requiring a local assistance plan, a focus school, or a priority school and thus met its NCLB goal throughout the charter term.

The Institute analyzes key comparative and growth measures under the school’s ELA and mathematics goals to determine goal attainment. The Institute calculates a comparative effect size to measure the performance of KIPP Tech Valley relative to all public schools statewide that serve the same grade levels and that enroll students who are similarly economically disadvantaged. It is important to note that this measure is a comparison measure and therefore not dependent on any changes in New York’s assessment system. As such, the measure, and the school’s performance on the measure, is not relative to the test, but relative to how strong KIPP Tech Valley performs in improving student learning compared to other schools’ performance in improving student learning.

The growth measure provides an opportunity to see how KIPP Tech Valley performs in catching students up to performing academically at grade level or at or above “proficiency.” It also provides a look at how well a school does at keeping students proficient, or on grade level, every year. For a student who is proficient, keeping up to grade level means the student should make one year’s progress in one year’s time. For a student below grade level, in order to reach proficiency, the school must help the student grow *more* than one grade level every year in order to catch up.

The Institute uses the state’s mean growth percentiles as a measure of a school’s comparative year-to-year growth in student performance on the state’s ELA and mathematics exams. The measure compares a school’s growth in assessment scores to the growth in assessment scores of the subset of students throughout the state who performed identically on last year’s assessments. According to this measure, median growth statewide is at the 50th percentile. This means that to signal the school’s ability to help students make one year’s worth of growth in one year’s time the expected percentile performance is 50. To signal a school is catching students who were previously below grade level up to grade level proficiency, the school must post a percentile

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performance that exceeds 50. A percentile performance below 50 indicates that students are losing ground, not catching up or keeping up with grade level proficiencies.

By these key measures, KIPP Tech Valley came close to meeting its ELA goal during 2009-10. Although the school outperformed the district and posted a growth score above the state median, the school posted an effect size of 0.03, meaning the school performed as expected compared to demographically similar schools statewide and below the Institute's standard of 0.3. The school's ELA performance increased during 2010-11 when it continued to outperform the district and post strong growth scores. In contrast to the previous year, the school performed higher than expected to a meaningful degree and posted an effect size of 0.34. During 2011-12, the school's ELA achievement fell when its effect size fell to 0.2 and its mean growth score of 46.3 fell below the state's median score. During 2012-13, the first year of implementation of the state's new, more rigorous ELA assessment, KIPP Tech Valley narrowly outperformed the school district and performed lower than expected relative to demographically similar schools statewide. Although the school's growth score of 54.2 exceeded the state's median score, KIPP Tech Valley did not meet its ELA goal that year. During 2013-14, the school once again met its ELA goal when it performed higher than expected to a meaningful degree according to the Institute's effect size, it outperformed the district by 17 percentage points, and it exceeded the state's median growth score when it posted an ELA growth percentile of 61.7.

In math, KIPP Tech Valley outperformed the district throughout the charter term and consistently exceeded the state's median score in mathematics growth. The school met its mathematics goal during every year in the charter term with the exception of 2012-13. Although the school narrowly exceeded the district's performance by 6 percentage points and posted a growth score of 59.2, it performed lower than expected compared to schools serving the same grades and that serve similarly economically situated students statewide. Thus, the school did not meet its mathematics goal. The school's mathematics performance increased during 2013-14 when it again outperformed the district, posted mathematics growth that exceeded the state median, and performed higher than expected to a large degree according to the Institute's effect size analysis. In addition to the state's 8th grade mathematics assessment, the school also administered the Algebra I assessment to every 8th grade student during 2013-14. Forty-two of 48, or 87.5 percent of 8th grade students scored at or above proficiency on the exam.

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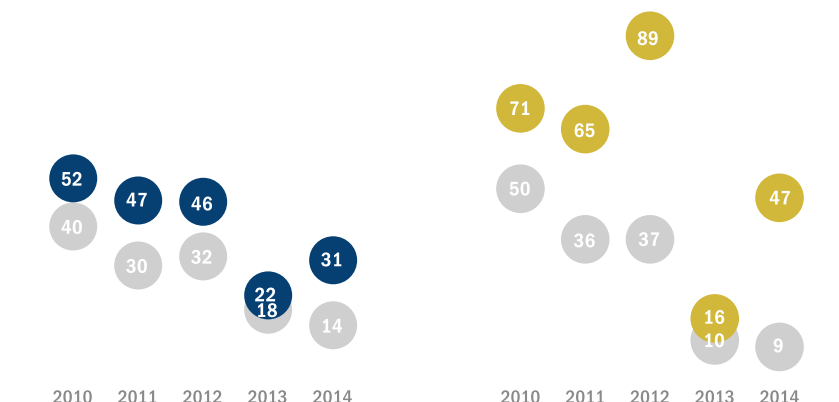
KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

DESCRIPTION	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL	MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL
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Comparative Measure:

District Comparison.

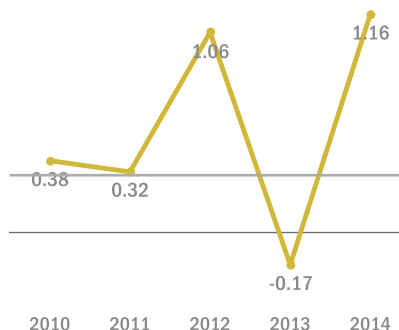
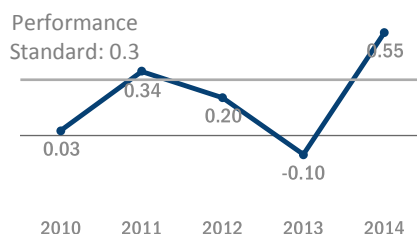
Each year, the percent of students enrolled at the school in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in **ELA** and **mathematics** will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the **local school district**.



Comparative Measure:

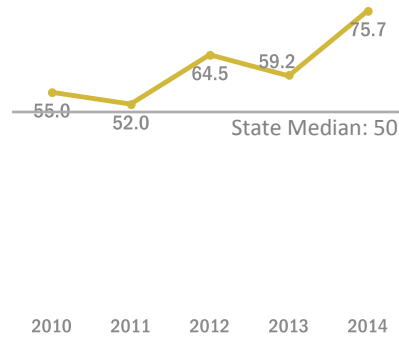
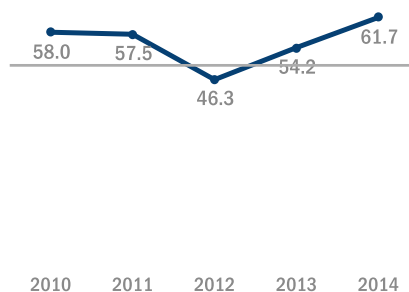
Effect Size.

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above in **ELA** and **mathematics** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Comparative Growth Measure:

Mean Growth Percentile. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile in **ELA** and **mathematics**.



RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

Instructional Leadership. KIPP Tech Valley’s instructional leadership supports the effectiveness and development of the school’s teachers. Notwithstanding extraordinary demands of time and performance placed on the school’s executive director and academic dean, the instructional leaders are able to effectively support and professionally develop teachers such that the school’s academic program is strong.

- Instructional leaders establish their expectations for teacher performance early in the school year. The executive director distributes to each teacher a one-page document containing clear performance goals measured by internal assessment results, state assessment results, and nationally normed assessment results. The executive director and the academic dean meet with each teacher three times per year for formal evaluations of class performance.
- The school’s executive director and academic dean provide all academic coaching and evaluation to teachers. The academic dean is also responsible to develop all internal weekly and biweekly assessments and monitor teachers’ lesson planning for high quality. By itself, the role of academic dean is not sufficient to perform the duties outlined; however, because the school has retained a particularly effective employee in the role of academic dean, the school continues to meet or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals.
- Instructional leaders use assessment data and classroom observation data to detail observation and coaching plans for teachers. Some teachers receive regular although less frequent observations and coaching feedback. Teachers who are new to the school and teachers who are on performance improvement plans have received intensive, two week coaching and professional development sessions aimed at improving pedagogical skill and classroom management techniques.
- Teachers are responsible to plan instruction. The academic dean provides feedback about planned instruction on a weekly basis to new teachers and to teachers that underperform according to the school’s expectations. The academic dean does not closely monitor instructional planning for those teachers who meet the school’s expectations.
- KIPP Tech Valley’s instructional leaders deliver a comprehensive professional development program during grade level team meetings and at professional development sessions held before commencement of the school year. The leaders use results from the school’s internal assessments and classroom observation data to identify topics for these sessions. The academic dean informs expects teachers to demonstrate mastery of professional development concepts during subsequent observations.
- The school’s executive director and academic dean conduct performance evaluations three times per year using criteria set forth at the beginning of the school year. The academic dean is the school’s primary instructional coach and acts as a teacher advocate during performance reviews to ensure that the quantitative data accurately reflect a teacher’s strengths and weaknesses.
- The school has a strong culture of holding teachers accountable for student achievement. Teachers display student work and assessment scores in hallways and on classroom walls. The academic dean assumes responsibility for improving teacher performance but,

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ultimately, instructional leaders hold teachers responsible for clearly defined level of student achievement at each grade level.

Curriculum and Assessment. KIPP Tech Valley implements a clearly defined curriculum framework that supports teachers in their instructional planning. The school uses a constant and continuous feedback cycle of assessment and data analysis to improve instructional effectiveness and meet students' learning needs.

- The school's academic dean develops assessments that the school administers every one to two weeks depending on the subject area. The dean compiles items from multiple sources and teachers vet the assessments for face validity and for alignment with scope and sequence documents. Teachers report that the assessments are sufficiently rigorous to prepare students for the demands of the state's assessments and instructional leaders report that internal assessment results align with state assessment outcomes.
- The academic dean leads the teachers through a norming procedure during grade level meetings four times during the school year wherein teachers grade an assessment paper and discuss their grading procedures and differences in results. Thereafter, teachers score papers independently. The academic dean reports monitoring teachers' scoring procedures outside of the grade level team meetings.
- The school's culture of data use for decision-making pervades every instructional content area. Teachers, leaders, and trustees have access to internal assessment and nationally normed assessment data. The school's analysis procedures are tight, focused and enable teachers to use data from internal assessments, 'do now' activities, and end of class assessments to adjust classroom instruction effectively meeting students' learning needs. Teachers also use assessment data to identify which students to assign to remediation groups. Instructional leaders monitor internal assessment data to identify students for more intensive interventions.
- Instructional leaders measure teacher performance almost entirely based on internal and state assessment results. Coaches corroborate assessment data with data collected during classroom observations to identify areas of focus and coaching strategies for teachers. School leaders also use the school's assessment data to identify topics for teacher professional development.
- KIPP Tech Valley asks parents to sign all assessments and return them to the school thus informing parents of student achievement in real time. The school also distributes grade reports five times per year and, at the same time, hosts parent conferences to discuss student progress and achievement. The schools issues every teacher a phone and email address. Teachers distribute this information to parents and students on all printed materials.
- The school uses the state standards as its fixed underlying framework for its curriculum and for student performance expectations. The school's curriculum map acts as a bridge between the standards and lesson plans and establishes for teacher what to teach and

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

when to teach it. Teachers use the school's internal assessments to establish the level of rigor of instruction and to backwards map lesson plans.

- The school does not rely on commercial or prepared curriculum materials. Rather, the instructional leaders develop the curriculum internally and review its effectiveness consistently. During the review, instructional leaders adjust the scope and sequence documents and improve or replace curriculum resources as the school's need merits.
- Teachers use the school's scope and sequence documents to plan focused and purposeful daily lesson packets. The packets include introductory do now activities, mini lesson, and individual practice that follow a gradual release model (I do, we do, you do) sequence. The packets also include an exit ticket and student practice (homework).

Pedagogy. Elements of high quality instruction are evident throughout the school. Teachers plan purposeful instruction that includes opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking. The school has established a strong culture of learning. As shown in the chart below, during the renewal visit, Institute team members conducted 12 classroom observations following a defined protocol used in all school renewal visits.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION METHODOLOGY: NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS

		GRADE				
		5	6	7	8	Total
CONTENT AREA	ELA		1	1		2
	Math	2	1	1	1	5
	Writing	1		1		2
	Science			1		1
	Soc Stu				2	2
	Specials					
	Total	3	2	4	3	12

- Teachers deliver tightly constructed lessons that are purposeful and align with the school's curriculum and state performance standards (12 out of 12 observations). All teachers create daily work packets that include a Do Now activity, notes for a mini-lesson and independent assignments, all of which tie directly to stated lesson objectives.
- A majority of teachers regularly and effectively check for student understanding (7 out of 12 observations) though all teachers are building efforts to do this on a regular basis. In classrooms where checks for understanding fall short, teachers tend to continue with lessons after only very light questioning of student volunteers or monitor the written work of a select number of students.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

- KIPP Tech Valley has begun to focus on developing students' higher-order thinking skills with appropriate activities included in designed lessons (6 out of 12 observations) but teachers are not yet universally skilled in implementing the lessons such that they challenge students as intended. In some cases, teachers miss opportunities to deepen students' understanding by allotting too little time for discussion. In other instances, teachers diminish the effectiveness of planned activities by shouldering the cognitive burden themselves rather than passing, as intended, the responsibility for grappling with problems to students. A math assignment illustrates one of the school's successful attempts at building students' higher-order thinking skills: Instructions direct students to "create three multiple choice responses to the following question [word problem]. Two must be common errors and one must be the correct answer. Circle the correct answer and explain why the other two are common errors." In other lessons, teachers sometimes fall short in using effective questioning techniques to ensure less teacher talk and more student talk and thinking.
- KIPP Tech Valley has established a strong culture of learning. Across the school, teachers maintain classroom environments singularly focused on academic achievement (12 out of 12 observations). Students clearly understand behavioral expectations, and teachers consistently utilize the school's paycheck behavior management system. Students celebrate each others' successes by giving "shout outs" for work well done, and teachers reinforce this positive behavior by including time for the shared praise in some daily lessons.

At-Risk Students. The school has provided sufficient resources to the remediation program in order to address students' academic needs with daily periods of targeted support. Teachers generally align remedial instruction with the daily curriculum to reinforce concepts in the present time; this does not allow much flexibility for teachers to address foundational gaps students may have. The school has in place a number of supports for students at-risk of academic failure and successfully addresses student learning needs before students lag significantly.

- The school continues to use clear procedures for identifying students at-risk for academic failure, students with disabilities and ELLs. Teachers are proactive in identifying students as struggling if they fail an interval assessment in any subject area and use weekly and biweekly assessment data to assign them to an appropriate remediation group. The school indicates this data driven, intensive remediation results in increased student outcomes for a majority of children.
- The student support team refers students who do not demonstrate adequate progress towards grade level proficiency for special education evaluation. The school identifies ELLs through the administration of a home language information survey and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners.
- Throughout the charter term, KIPP Tech Valley has devoted ample time in the school wide schedule for remedial support groups, which may contribute to its low number of classified

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students with disabilities. There are multiple opportunities for students to receive additional academic support during the school day and during afterschool tutoring, as all teachers across the school have dedicated periods in their schedules for remediation groups. The school serves its eight identified students with disabilities through push-in and pull-out small group instruction, as mandated by their Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”). The school believes it serves more students with disabilities than enrollment numbers reflect due, in part, to reliance on the Albany City School District to classify students referred by the school. Additionally, KIPP Tech Valley successfully declassified three students from special education services in the last school year and is diligent in not making referrals until all internal interventions are exhausted.

- KIPP Tech Valley does not currently enroll any classified ELL students, but is in the process of formally identifying one student. The school does, however, have a sufficient program plan in place to both evaluate students who enroll who may be in need of ELL services (as noted in the first bullet above). The school contracts with a certified ESOL teacher on a part time basis as ELL students are identified and provided services.
- Although KIPP Tech Valley is not yet accountable for enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunch, the school is aware of the targets for which it will be accountable during a subsequent charter term. The school has sufficient recruitment and retention efforts in place that are likely to enable KIPP Tech Valley to meet its future targets. Specifically, KIPP Tech Valley employs a parent and community liaison who works with parents, the school community, and local social service and faith-based organizations to recruit students who are likely to classify in one of the target categories to the school. With an expansion to include elementary grades, the school might attract additional at-risk students in early grades and continue to serve them throughout middle school.
- The school also provides recruitment and application materials translated to Spanish. KIPP Tech Valley’s efforts to retain students include additional instructional time and academic supports to meet the needs of students living in poverty and ELLs, and pull out and push in instruction to ensure students with disabilities meet their IEP goals. As an additional assurance that income is not a barrier to remaining enrolled at the school, KIPP Tech Valley provides transportation, school supplies, and uniforms for all families.
- General education teachers adequately monitor the performance of struggling students using the same well-defined, school-wide criteria as the general student population. Teachers regularly analyze data from interval assessments, exit tickets – a shorthand term for quick and targeted end of lesson or end of class period assessment of student learning, and homework assignments to inform the materials used during remedial instruction and determine the effectiveness of interventions and supports. Classroom teachers are well aware of their struggling students’ current performance levels and needs, including their students’ with disabilities specific IEP goals although the special education teachers maintain primary responsibility for the weekly tracking of progress towards the latter.
- During extensive pre-service training over the summer and periodically throughout the school year, teachers receive limited professional development on differentiation and recommended intervention strategies; the special education coordinator personally guides

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teachers through students' IEPs and provides overview sheets for ease of reference, as well as informal, on-going training throughout the year. Due to scheduling constraints, there are few regular or scheduled opportunities for specialists, school leaders and classroom teachers to meet to review student progress or make programmatic revisions; the staff relies heavily on frequent, but informal, communication. However, with both the special education coordinator and a full-time special education teacher providing services for students and collaborating with classroom teachers, the staffing is sufficient to meet students' needs.

		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
RESULTS	Enrollment (N) Receiving Mandated Academic Services	(11)	(8)	(8)
	Tested on State Exams (N)	(11)	(8)	(8)
	Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	0	0	0
	Percent Proficient Statewide	15.5	5.0	5.2

		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
RESULTS	ELL Enrollment (N)	(0)	(0)	(0)
	Tested on NYSESLAT ⁹ Exam (N)	(N/A)	(N/A)	(N/A)
	Percent 'Proficient' or Making Progress ¹⁰ on NYSESLAT	N/A	N/A	N/A

⁹ New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, a standardized state exam.

¹⁰ Defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into four categories/proficiency levels: Beginning; Intermediate; Advanced; and, Proficient.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

KIPP Tech Valley is an effective and viable organization. The education corporation board understands its governance responsibilities and delivers rigorous oversight of the school's program and finances. During the current charter term, the board has generally abided by its by-laws and been in general and substantial compliance with the terms of its charter, code of ethics, and applicable state and federal law, rules and regulations.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Board Oversight. KIPP Tech Valley's board prioritizes student achievement and supports the school in meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals. Leadership consistency and critical self-evaluation have enabled the board to govern the school effectively and ensure the school's future as an academically successful, financially healthy and legally compliant organization.

- The school's trustees effectively apply a range of skills and areas of expertise relevant to school governance. The board chair has provided stable leadership throughout the school's history though the board has experienced some membership struggles. In the fourth year of the current charter term, the board experienced significant membership turnover; in the spring, four trustees comprised the full board (one less than the required five). The remaining trustees undertook a careful assessment of the board's needs and recruited new members with related expertise including a trustee with extensive experience in school finance. The combined skills of its members enable the board to govern and oversee management of day-to-day operations.
- KIPP Tech Valley's board requests and receives a wealth of performance, attendance and financial data in addition to operations updates from the executive director prior to all board meetings. The information, which the board reviews carefully, is sufficient to enable rigorous oversight of the school's program and finances.
- The board establishes clear priorities, objectives and long-range goals and has in place benchmarks for tracking progress as well as a process for regular review and revision. Prior to requesting the addition of elementary grades, the board studied the enrollment patterns of local schools and assessed parent demand in its annual survey. The board is keenly aware of the challenges of school start-up and has put in place structures to monitor progress at regular intervals.
- KIPP Tech Valley's board recruits, hires and retains key personnel, and provides them with sufficient resources to function effectively. The board remains confident in the leadership of the executive director, who has been with the school since its founding. The board regularly evaluates his performance and is thoughtful in providing leadership supports.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

Organizational Capacity. The school organization effectively supports the delivery of the academic program.

- The school has established a clear administrative structure that enables it to carry out its academic program. The executive director ensures that all school operations and academic systems function efficiently. According to the board, KIPP Tech Valley's finance and operations associate effectively forms relationships with students' districts of residence and acquires district payments in a timely fashion. The school evaluates and adjusts its systems when deficiencies exist.
- The school clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities among faculty and staff. Teachers report knowing who to turn to for various needs and having clear lines of accessibility to classroom materials and supplies.
- Early in its development, KIPP Tech Valley established a clear and effective student discipline system based on positive behavior interventions. Teachers and school leaders continue to apply consistently the system school-wide.
- KIPP Tech Valley recruits and retains high quality staff. The school effectively develops teacher talent internally and establishes strong culture, which contribute to staff members' reported satisfaction and commitment to the school. This year, seven of 17 teachers on staff have been with the school for five or more years. KIPP Tech Valley's executive director has been with the school since its founding.
- The school allocates sufficient resources to support the achievement of its academic goals. For instance, instructional leaders analyzed the school's data to determine the relationship between students' homework completion rates and achievement on assessments. To eliminate the potential barrier of students not completing homework, the school established after-school time wherein students complete homework assignments during an extended school day. In order to ensure that every student requiring this enrichment is able to receive it, the school pays for additional transportation for students after-hours. The school also runs a Saturday academy and expects teachers to participate at least three times per year.
- KIPP Tech Valley has maintained adequate enrollment throughout its charter term. At the time of the renewal visit, the school reported having no waitlist of prospective students, but it does not maintain waitlists from year to year as do some charter schools.
- The school board focuses on student attrition as it is committed to enrolling and retaining students throughout the middle school years. The board tracks the data the school collects on reasons students leave the school. The school reports students leave both because of family mobility out of the area as well as some mobility driven by families that determine the initial choice of KIPP Tech Valley was not what the family desired. The school retains approximately 77% of students year to year. No data on retention in Albany district schools is available to the Institute to provide comparison.
- The school has in place a process for recruiting and retaining students with disabilities and FRPL eligible students. The school actively recruits economically disadvantaged students and ELLs including on its website. KIPP Tech Valley monitors its retention rates for students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students and evaluates its retention

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

efforts for students in these subgroups. At the time of the renewal visit, the school did not enroll any ELLs, but was in the process of identifying an ELL.

- The school consistently uses assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of its programs. The school's board reviews a data dashboard that contains assessment, enrollment, and student discipline data at monthly meetings. This year, the school reorganized its ELA program to meet the literacy learning needs of its students more effectively by reorganizing classes and increasing instructional time.

FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER & PARENT SATISFACTION

As part of their initial applications and their Applications for Charter Renewal, schools identify the Key Design Elements that reflect their mission and distinguish the schools. The table below reflects the intended Key Design Elements and indicates for each if the school is implementing the element as included in the school's charter.

Key Design Elements	Evident?
Five KIPP Pillars: High Expectations, Choice and Commitment, More Time, Power to Lead and Focus on Results;	+
An extended school day and year, with additional enrichment experiences on select Saturdays;	+
Extended instructional time in English language arts and mathematics;	+
Daily enrichment periods in which students have an option of various activities, offset by mandatory physical education blocks every other day;	+
Mandatory three week summer school program;	+
An electronic scoring system to track each student's progress towards mastering each individual KIPP and New York State learning standard with monthly reports for parents, teachers and administrators; and,	+
A focus on the core values of "Choose, Improve, Respect and Support."	+

Parent Satisfaction. The KIPP Foundation administers its annual KIPP Healthy Schools & Regions survey to all students, teachers and families at each of its schools, and provides a summary overview of results to school leaders. The school has included this information with its Application for Charter Renewal that demonstrates parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school. 43 percent of survey recipients registered a response. Of those recipients, 91 percent indicate they are satisfied overall with the school's performance.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

Persistence in Enrollment. The Institute derived the following information from its database. No comparative data from NYSED is available to the Institute to provide district wide comparison. As such, the data presented is for information purposes but does not allow for comparative analysis.

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Percent of Eligible Students Returning From Previous Year	75.2	73.9	73.7

COMPLIANCE

Governance. In material respects, the KIPP Tech Valley board has implemented and abided by adequate and appropriate systems, processes, policies and procedures to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. The board demonstrates a thorough understanding of its role in holding the school leadership accountable for both academic results and fiscal soundness.

- The board of trustees has generally avoided conflicts of interest.
- The board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws and code of ethics, with the exception of having fewer board members than required by the by-laws and for a short period of time in 2014, required by the Act.
- The board's minutes reflect proper voting and recording of votes of trustees. The minutes also reflect reports from board committees or committee chairs but do not reflect proper committee meeting minutes.
- The board successfully financed its building with bonds, planned and purchased land for a K-4 expansion, and has planned for a similar bond financing for the expansion.
- Various competent legal counsel have assisted the school with bond financing and other legal issues including human resources issues.

Legal Requirements. During the charter term, the education corporation generally and substantially complied with applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.

- The Institute has received one formal complaint regarding the school's Section 504 disability accommodations and an informal complaint on the same subject. None of these complaints were founded. The school also generated a few informal complaints that the school board has handled and which did not require Institute action.
- None of the minor compliance issues noted in the Institute's prior renewal report generated further violations or corrective action.

The Institute noted exceptions to the school's compliance in the following areas.

- **By-laws.** Certain committee and notice provisions of the education corporation's by-laws need to be updated in order to be in compliance with the New York Not-For-Profit Corporation Law.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

As with all other compliance related adjustments identified here, the Institute will require the school to update the document prior to the commencement of a new charter term.

- [Code of Ethics](#). While the education corporation supplied a code of ethics that was updated to comply with New York General Municipal Law, the code still needs certain, minor corrections to be compliant with the statute. The Institute will work with the board to update the code of ethics to ensure its compliance.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on evidence collected in the renewal review and over the course of the charter term, KIPP Tech Valley is fiscally sound. The education corporation has successfully managed cash flow and has adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations in the future. The education corporation engages in effective budgeting practices and fiscal monitoring of revenues and expenses, and is making appropriate adjustments when necessary. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard, a multi-year financial data and analysis for SUNY authorized charter schools, appears below in the Appendix.

Through a trademark license agreement, the education corporation affiliates with the KIPP Foundation, a network of nationally recognized charter schools. The KIPP Foundation provides support and member services to the school to assist the school in fulfilling its mission of preparing all students for future opportunities.

Budgeting and Long-Range Planning. Throughout the charter term, KIPP Tech Valley has maintained fiscal soundness, implemented effective budgeting practices and routinely monitored revenues and expenses.

- The school leadership, business manager and the education corporation board together develop annual budgets.
- The business manager prepares, for the school leadership and board, monthly financial reports that include a current balance sheet, a profit and loss statement, a budget-versus-actual-expenditure report, and personnel expenditure projections.
- The KIPP Tech Valley board approves the annual operating budget and considers any significant adjustment to the budget on an as needed basis.
- KIPP Tech Valley's projected five year budget contains contingency reserves.
- KIPP Tech Valley's projected five year budget contains revenues for replication and expansion grants from the KIPP Foundation.
- The renewal application contained a projected five-year budget, enrollment chart and staffing plan for the next charter term that appears reasonable and feasible.

Internal Controls. KIPP Tech Valley has established and maintains appropriate fiscal policies, procedures and controls. Written policies address key issues including financial reporting, revenues, procurement, expenditures, payroll, banking, capital assets, and record retention.

- KIPP Tech Valley has accurately recorded and appropriately documented transactions in accordance with established policies. These policies are comprehensive and updated as needed.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

- KIPP Tech Valley's most recent completed audit reports of internal controls related to financial reporting and compliance with laws, regulations and grants, disclosed no material weaknesses, or instances of non-compliance.

Financial Reporting. KIPP Tech Valley has complied with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and NYSED with required financial reports that are on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles ("GAAP").

- KIPP Tech Valley presents its annual financial statements in accordance with GAAP, and the independent audits of those statements have received unqualified opinions.
- KIPP Tech Valley has filed key reports timely and accurately including: audit reports, budgets, cash-flow statements, un-audited reports of income, expenses and enrollment reports.

Financial Condition. KIPP Tech Valley maintains adequate financial resources needed to ensure stable operations.

- KIPP Tech Valley has posted on average over the charter term a fiscally strong composite-score ratings on the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard.¹¹ Although, in the two most recent years the composite scores have declined steadily since the 2012 bond financing and related facility development cost expenditures.
- In 2012, KIPP Tech Valley acquired the facility and adjacent land parcels through financing provided by the Industrial Development Authority of the City of Phoenix, Arizona. The loan agreement includes certain financial statement covenants for maintaining a debt service coverage ratio not less than 1.20 to 1 as measured quarterly and a liquidity requirement for maintaining not less than 45 days of cash on hand.
- For the year ended June 30, 2013, KIPP Tech Valley met the loan covenants as required. For the year ended June 30, 2014, the debt service coverage ratio and required days of cash on hand loan covenants were not met. The bond holder has issued a statement waiving the loan covenant default for 2014.
- For the Institute's financial analysis, KIPP Tech Valley recently reported poor cash flow, and on average over the charter term, 33 days of cash reserve on hand available to cover current bills and those coming due shortly. However, the most recent fiscal year reported only 18 days of cash on hand. With board oversight and ongoing communications with the bond holder, one time expenditures related to facility development costs caused the cash flow shortages in 2013-14. The Institute's recommended cash reserve is at least one

¹¹ The composite score assists in measuring the financial health of an education corporation using a blended score that measures the school's performances on key financial indicators. The blended score offsets financial strengths against areas where there may be financial weaknesses.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

month reserve. Therefore, the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard indicator has deteriorated over the charter term and is now showing a high risk in this category.

- KIPP Tech Valley board contains strong financial expertise.
- The New York State Comptroller conducted an audit of KIPP Tech Valley and in a February 2013 report found that adequate controls had been established and functioning in the areas of general governance, financial oversight and condition, purchasing, cash disbursements, payroll, personal services, inventory and asset controls. The audit found limited risk in those areas. The audit further found the resident school district billings were accurate and contained detailed supporting documentation, and year end reconciliations appeared reasonable.
- SUNY authorized charter agreements have changed to include a required \$75,000 dissolution reserve fund for the purpose of covering legal and administrative costs associated with the closure/dissolution of a school to be funded, at a minimum, by reserving \$25,000 per year during the first three years of the charter term. The fund must be held separately and identifiable in financial statements, and the notes to the financials, as the dissolution reserve fund. KIPP Tech Valley will need to establish and set aside the reserve.

The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard, provided in the Appendix, presents color coded tables and charts indicating that KIPP Tech Valley has demonstrated fiscal soundness over the course of its charter term.¹²

¹² The U.S. Department of Education has established fiscal criteria for certain ratios or information with high – medium – low categories, represented in the table as green – gray – red. The categories generally correspond to levels of fiscal risk, but must be viewed in the context of each education corporation and the general type or category of school.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE EDUCATION CORPORATION'S AUTHORITY TO OPERATE THE SCHOOL, ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE?

Because KIPP Tech Valley has met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals throughout the charter term, is an effective and viable organization that is also fiscally sound, the school's plans for a new charter term are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

Plans for the School's Structure. The education corporation has provided all of the key structural elements for a charter renewal and those elements are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

MISSION FOR THE NEXT CHARTER TERM

KIPP: Tech Valley Charter School's mission is to provide educationally underserved middle school students with the knowledge, skills and character required to succeed in top-quality high schools, college, and the competitive world beyond.

Plans for the Educational Program. KIPP Tech Valley plans to continue to implement the same core elements that have led the school to come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals for current grades served during the current charter term; these core elements are likely to enable the school to meet its goals in the future. If the school is renewed and the school's requested expansion is approved by the Trustees, KIPP Tech Valley plans to begin providing instruction in elementary grades starting with Kindergarten and 1st grade in the 2016-17 school year. The school would then add one grade per year for the remainder of the charter term. KIPP Tech Valley has taken a thoughtful approach to this grade expansion, including building in an additional planning year. The school plans to follow closely the KIPP Foundation elementary model, which has produced strong academic outcomes in New York City and in other states, and will employ a KIPP Foundation trained individual as the elementary principal.

	Current Charter Term	End of Next Charter Term
Enrollment	300	667
Grade Span	5-8	K-3, 5-8
Teaching Staff	21	41
Days of Instruction	200	200

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

Plans for Board Oversight and Governance. Board members express an interest in continuing to serve KIPP Tech Valley in the next charter term and may add additional members in the future.

Fiscal & Facility Plans. KIPP Tech Valley plans to continue serving middle grades in its current Dudley Heights facility and to build an additional facility for its elementary grades expansion, which will likely be financed with bond proceeds.

The school's Application for Charter Renewal contains all necessary elements as required by the Act. The proposed school calendar allots an appropriate amount of instructional time to meet or exceed instructional time requirements, and taken together with other academic and key design elements, should be sufficient to allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals. The school has amended or will amend other key aspects of the renewal application -- including bylaws and code of ethics -- to comply with various provisions of the New York Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, Public Officers Law and the General Municipal Law, as appropriate.

APPENDIX: SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

KIPP: Tech Valley Charter School's mission is to provide educationally underserved middle school students with the knowledge, skills and character required to succeed in top-quality high schools, college, and the competitive world beyond.

Board of Trustees

Board Member Name ¹³	Position
John P. Reilly	Chair
Jason DiGianni	Vice Chair
Carl Young	Secretary
Kelly Kimbrough	Trustee
Cornelius Murray	Trustee
Kelly Walborn	Trustee

School Characteristics

School Year	Proposed Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ¹⁴	Proposed Grades	Actual Grades
2010-11	300	280	5-8	5-8
2011-12	300	284	5-8	5-8
2012-13	300	291	5-8	5-8
2013-14	300	279	5-8	5-8
2014-15	300	298	5-8	5-8

¹³ Source: The Institute's board records at the time of the renewal review.

¹⁴ Source: The Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

APPENDIX: SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Student Demographics

	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14 ¹⁵
	% of School Enrollment	% of Albany CSD Enrollment	% of School Enrollment	% of Albany CSD Enrollment	% of School Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0	1	0	1
Black or African American	94	55	89	53	86
Hispanic	0	14	6	15	7
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	1	7	1	8	1
White	4	21	3	21	4
Multiracial	0	2	0	3	0
Special Populations					
Students with Disabilities	0	--	0	15	3 ¹⁶
English Language Learners	0	7	0	8	0
Free/Reduced Lunch					
Eligible for Free Lunch	71	60	52	60	-- ¹⁷
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	13	7	11	7	--
Economically Disadvantaged	--	--	71	76	59

School Leaders

School Year(s)

Name(s) and Title(s)

2010 to Present

Dustin Mitchell, Executive Director

¹⁵ The Institute derived the 2013-14 Students with Disabilities, ELL and Economically Disadvantaged statistics from the school's October 2013 student enrollment report to NYSED (2013-14 BEDS Report). District data are not yet available. Because NYSED releases data up to a full year after the conclusion of any one school year, the data presented in this table may differ from current information reported by the school and included in this report.

¹⁶ School self report as of December 12, 2014.

¹⁷ School FRPL enrollment data for 2013-14 and district Economically Disadvantaged enrollment data are not available.

APPENDIX: SCHOOL OVERVIEW

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2009-10	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	December 1-3, 2009
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	Institute	October 21, 2011
2013-14	Pre-Renewal Visit	Institute	September 23-24, 2013
2014-15	Subsequent Renewal Visit	Institute	December 9, 2014

Conduct of the Renewal Visit

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
December 9, 2014	Jeff Wasbes	Executive Deputy Director for Accountability
	Natasha Howard, PhD	Managing Director of Program
	Heather Wendling	Senior Analyst

APPENDIX: FISCAL DASHBOARD



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

KIPP Tech Valley Charter School

SCHOOL INFORMATION

FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents - **GRAPH 1**
Grants and Contracts Receivable
Accounts Receivable
Prepaid Expenses
Contributions and Other Receivables

Total Current Assets - **GRAPH 1**

Property, Building and Equipment, net

Other Assets

Total Assets - **GRAPH 1**

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses
Accrued Payroll and Benefits
Deferred Revenue
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable
Other

Total Current Liabilities - **GRAPH 1**

L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities

Total Liabilities - **GRAPH 1**

Net Assets

Unrestricted
Temporarily restricted

Total Net Assets

Total Liabilities and Net Assets

ACTIVITIES

Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment
Students with Disabilities

Grants and Contracts

State and local
Federal - Title and IDEA
Federal - Other
Other
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program

Total Operating Revenue

Expenses

Regular Education
SPED
Regular Education & SPED (combined)
Other

Total Program Services

Management and General
Fundraising

Total Expenses - **GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4**

Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations

Support and Other Revenue

Contributions
Fundraising
Miscellaneous Income
Net assets released from restriction

Total Support and Other Revenue

Total Unrestricted Revenue

Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue

Total Revenue - **GRAPHS 2 & 3**

Change in Net Assets

Net Assets - Beginning of Year - **GRAPH 2**

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

Net Assets - End of Year - **GRAPH 2**

Opened 2005-06

2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
91,396	123,291	673,175	814,245	247,689
58,008	160,384	175,529	57,616	32,457
158,889	512,828	596,102	527,519	421,788
6,044	4,398	56,294	9,609	11,696
-	-	-	9,676	9,676
314,337	800,901	1,501,100	1,418,665	723,306
167,444	99,594	57,856	7,246,371	7,163,162
-	-	-	1,194,776	1,565,626
481,781	900,495	1,558,956	9,859,812	9,452,094

254,872	274,097	110,645	62,005	254,777
106,663	128,164	117,137	169,070	177,368
-	-	-	6,147	-
-	-	-	130,000	145,000
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
361,535	402,261	227,782	367,222	577,145
-	-	-	8,270,000	8,125,000
361,535	402,261	227,782	8,637,222	8,702,145

120,246	498,234	1,331,174	1,222,590	749,949
-	-	-	-	-
120,246	498,234	1,331,174	1,222,590	749,949
481,781	900,495	1,558,956	9,859,812	9,452,094

3,422,310	3,960,427	3,879,318	4,200,846	4,095,339
129,644	214,012	207,256	80,957	87,789

-	-	-	-	154,104
182,869	192,030	150,947	170,626	168,832
-	43,430	52,500	47,042	105,048
900	-	-	-	1,773
130,080	150,137	162,616	202,592	221,521
3,865,803	4,560,036	4,452,637	4,702,063	4,834,406

2,416,735	2,161,684	2,284,180	2,538,240	2,646,537
107,788	169,689	179,184	222,878	211,435
-	-	-	-	-
537,446	512,111	545,030	638,460	650,468
3,061,969	2,843,484	3,008,394	3,399,578	3,508,440
750,624	1,345,353	728,473	1,430,049	1,799,807
-	-	-	-	-
3,812,593	4,188,837	3,736,867	4,829,627	5,308,247
53,210	371,199	715,770	(127,564)	(473,841)

-	-	-	-	-
11,691	463	249	-	-
3,593	6,326	116,921	18,980	1,200
-	-	-	-	-
15,284	6,789	117,170	18,980	1,200

3,881,087	4,566,825	4,569,807	4,721,043	4,835,606
-	-	-	-	-
3,881,087	4,566,825	4,569,807	4,721,043	4,835,606
68,494	377,988	832,940	(108,584)	(472,641)
51,752	120,246	498,234	1,331,174	1,222,590
-	-	-	-	-
120,246	498,234	1,331,174	1,222,590	749,949

APPENDIX: FISCAL DASHBOARD



KIPP Tech Valley Charter School

SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

Functional Expense Breakdown

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Personnel Service					
Administrative Staff Personnel	305,901	589,704	583,589	657,068	818,487
Instructional Personnel	1,465,743	1,279,319	1,412,735	1,620,667	1,691,726
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Total Salaries and Staff	1,771,644	1,869,023	1,996,324	2,277,735	2,510,213
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	318,945	378,579	423,004	534,928	636,621
Retirement	42,094	53,144	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	31,321	31,011	30,742	48,418	42,335
Building and Land Rent / Lease	450,000	450,000	450,000	204,435	-
Staff Development	10,011	-	878	25,875	6,213
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	70,221	64,919	58,928	69,935	78,506
Marketing / Recruitment	5,645	21,398	3,412	3,194	4,583
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	403,180	386,586	423,306	452,570	441,581
Depreciation	77,095	70,700	57,045	123,465	174,613
Other	632,437	863,477	293,228	1,089,072	1,413,582
Total Expenses	3,812,593	4,188,837	3,736,867	4,829,627	5,308,247

SCHOOL ANALYSIS

ENROLLMENT

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Chartered Enroll	300	300	300	300	300
Revised Enroll	-	-	-	-	-
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4	280	280	284	291	279
Chartered Grades	5-8	5-8	5-8	5-8	5-8
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-

Primary School District: Albany

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	11,712	14,072	14,072	14,072	14,072
Increase over prior year	0.0%	20.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

Revenue

Operating	13,806	16,286	15,678	16,158	17,328	15,851
Other Revenue and Support	55	24	413	65	4	112
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	13,861	16,310	16,091	16,224	17,332	15,963

Expenses

Program Services	10,936	10,155	10,593	11,682	12,575	11,188
Management and General, Fundraising	2,681	4,805	2,565	4,914	6,451	4,283
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	13,616	14,960	13,158	16,597	19,026	15,471
% of Program Services	80.3%	67.9%	80.5%	70.4%	66.1%	73.0%
% of Management and Other	19.7%	32.1%	19.5%	29.6%	33.9%	27.0%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	1.8%	9.0%	22.3%	-2.2%	-8.9%	3.2%

Student to Faculty Ratio

11.7	12.7	7.5	11.2	12.1
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Faculty to Admin Ratio

4.0	3.7	9.5	5.2	3.3
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Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

Score	0.9	2.2	3.0	1.4	0.6	1.7
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Adequate	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Strong

Working Capital - GRAPH 7

Net Working Capital	(47,198)	398,640	1,273,318	1,051,443	146,161	564,473
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	-1.2%	8.7%	27.9%	22.3%	3.0%	12.1%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	0.9	2.0	6.6	3.9	1.3	2.9
Risk (Low > 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	HIGH	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	Poor	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Poor	Good

Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score	0.9	2.0	6.3	3.8	1.2	2.8
Risk (Low > 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	Poor	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent

Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

Score	0.8	0.4	0.1	0.9	0.9	0.6
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good

Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

Score	0.3	0.4	2.2	2.0	0.6	1.1
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	Poor	Poor	Good	Good	Poor	Good

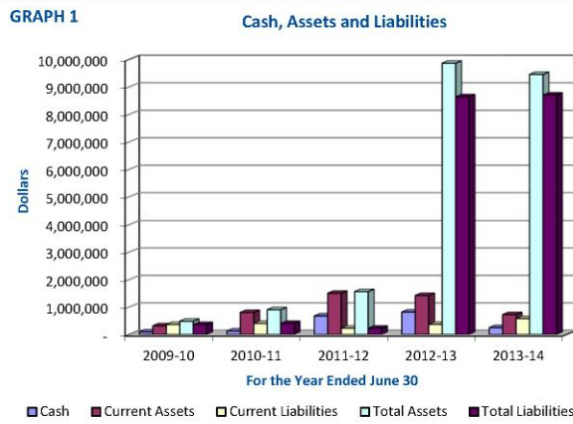
Average -
5 Yrs.
OR Charter
Term

APPENDIX: FISCAL DASHBOARD

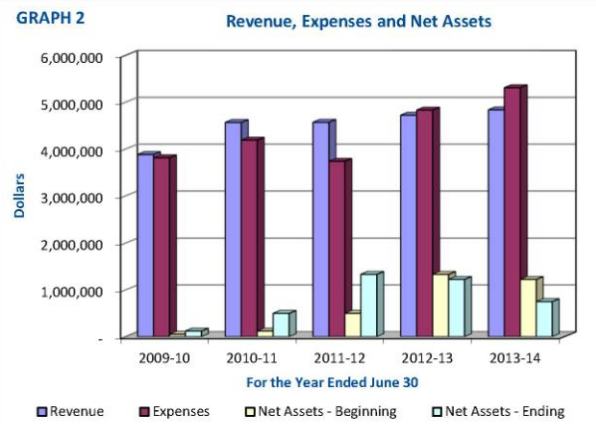


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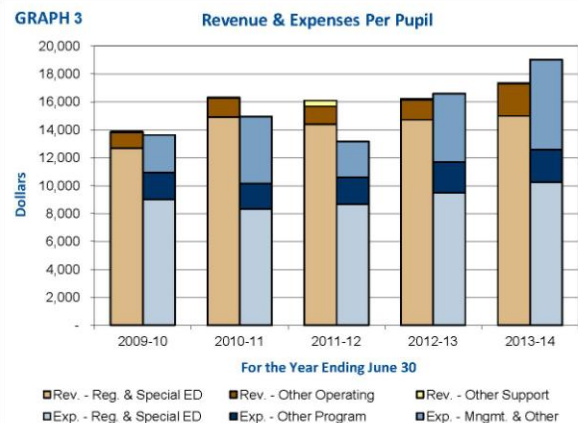
KIPP Tech Valley Charter School



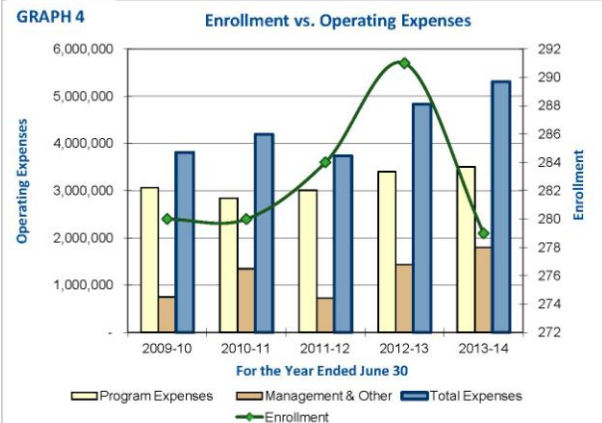
This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-to-year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year building a more fiscally viable school.



This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right; and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.



This chart illustrates the breakdown of revenue and expenses on a per pupil basis. Caution should be exercised in making school-by-school comparisons since schools serving different missions or student populations are likely to have substantially different educational cost bases. Comparisons with similar schools with similar dynamics are most valid.



This chart illustrates to what extent the school's operating expenses have followed its student enrollment pattern. A baseline assumption that this data tests is that operating expenses increase with each additional student served. This chart also compares and contrasts growth trends of both, giving insight into what a reasonable expectation might be in terms of economies of scale.

APPENDIX: FISCAL DASHBOARD



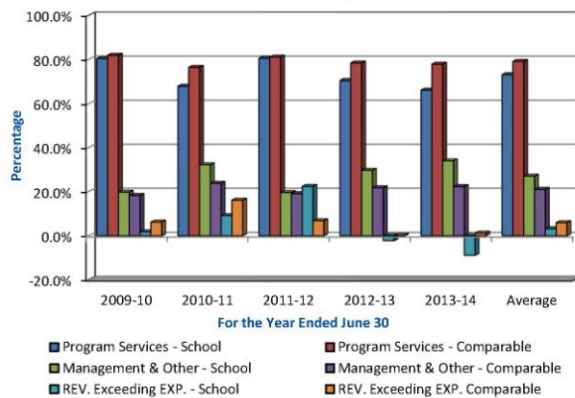
Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

KIPP Tech Valley Charter School

Comparable School, Region or Network: Capital District & Hudson Valley Schools

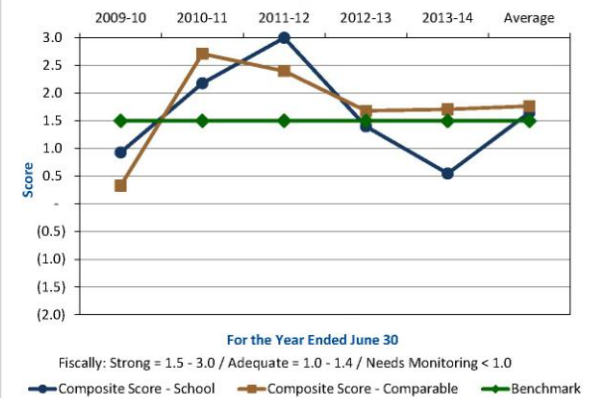
* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term

GRAPH 5 % Breakdown of Expenses



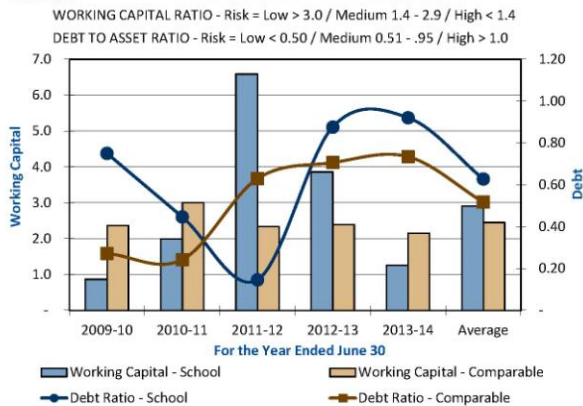
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding expenses should not be negative. Similar caution, as mentioned on GRAPH 3, should be used in comparing schools.

GRAPH 6 Composite Score



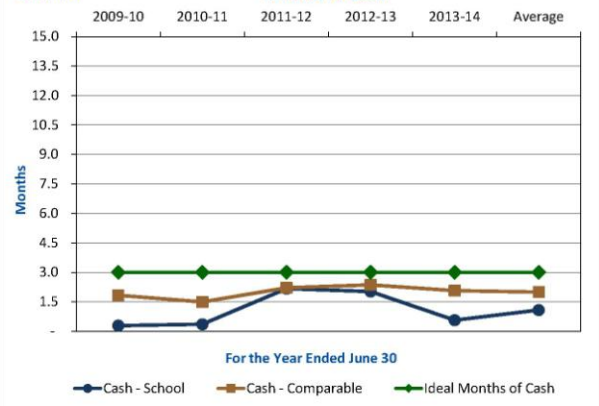
This chart illustrates a school's composite score based on the methodology developed by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to determine whether private not-for-profit colleges and universities are financially strong enough to participate in federal loan programs. These scores can be valid for observing the fiscal trends of a particular school and used as a tool to compare the results of different schools.

GRAPH 7 Working Capital & Debt to Asset Ratios



This chart illustrates Working Capital and Debt to Asset Ratios. W/C indicates if a school has enough short-term assets to cover its immediate liabilities/short term debt. Debt to Asset indicates what proportion of debt a school has relative to its assets. The measure gives an idea to the leverage of the school along with the potential risks the school faces in terms of its debt-load.

GRAPH 8 Months of Cash



This chart illustrates how many months of cash the school has in reserves. This metric is to measure solvency – the school's ability to pay debts and claims as they come due. This gives some idea of how long a school could continue its ongoing operating costs without tapping into some other, non-cash form of financing in the event that revenues were to cease flowing to the school.

APPENDIX: PERFORMANCE SUMMARIES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts

KIPP Tech Valley Charter School



	2011-12 Grades Served: 5-8			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: 5-8			MET	2013-14 Grades Served: 5-8			MET			
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)				
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	(0)	(0)	NO	3	(0)	(0)	NA	3	(0)	(0)	NA			
	4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)				
	5	31.2 (77)	16.7 (6)		5	9.1 (88)	0.0 (8)		5	21.6 (74)	0.0 (9)				
	6	49.3 (75)	63.2 (38)		6	12.2 (90)	13.6 (44)		6	22.2 (90)	23.2 (56)				
	7	35.3 (68)	34.3 (67)		7	27.1 (59)	27.1 (59)		7	21.2 (66)	21.0 (62)				
	8	51.9 (52)	51.9 (52)		8	26.9 (52)	26.9 (52)		8	59.2 (49)	59.2 (49)				
	All	41.2 (272)	46.0 (163)		All	17.0 (289)	22.1 (163)		All	28.3 (279)	31.3 (176)				
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO	NO	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO	NA			
	5-8	133	135		5-8	83			5-8	103	89				
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Albany City Schools			YES	Comparison: Albany City Schools			YES	Comparison: Albany City Schools			YES			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	6-8	46.0	32.2		6-8	22.1	18.3		6-8	31.3	14.3				
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO
	71.1	41.2	39.2	0.20		83.3	17.0	18.0	-0.10		59.2	28.3	26.8	0.07	
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	NO	Grades	School	State	YES	Grades	School	State	YES			
	4				4	0.0			4	0.0					
	5				5	0.0			5	60.2					
	6				6	0.0			6	60.6					
	7				7	0.0			7	61.5					
	8				8	0.0			8	65.2					
	All	46.3	50.0		All		50.0		All	61.7	50.0				

APPENDIX: PERFORMANCE SUMMARIES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

KIPP Tech Valley Charter School



	2011-12 Grades Served: 5-8			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: 5-8			MET	2013-14 Grades Served: 5-8			MET			
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)				
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	(0)	(0)	YES	3	(0)	(0)	NA	3	(0)	(0)	NA			
	4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)				
	5	48.1 (77)	66.7 (6)		5	14.8 (88)	0.0 (8)		5	32.4 (74)	22.2 (9)				
	6	81.3 (75)	94.7 (38)		6	12.2 (90)	15.9 (44)		6	45.6 (90)	53.6 (56)				
	7	86.8 (68)	86.6 (67)		7	10.2 (59)	10.2 (59)		7	36.4 (66)	37.1 (62)				
	8	88.5 (52)	88.5 (52)		8	25.0 (52)	25.0 (52)		8	57.1 (49)	57.1 (49)				
	All	74.6 (272)	88.3 (163)		All	14.9 (289)	16.0 (163)		All	41.9 (279)	47.2 (176)				
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO	YES	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO	NA			
	5-8	172	148		5-8	80			5-8	125	86				
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Albany City Schools			YES	Comparison: Albany City Schools			YES	Comparison: Albany City Schools			YES			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	6-8	88.3	36.5		6-8	16.0	10.3		6-8	47.2	8.7				
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES
	71.1	74.6	51.8	1.06		83.4	14.9	17.6	-0.17		59.3	41.9	31.4	0.53	
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	YES	Grades	School	State	YES	Grades	School	State	YES			
	4				4	0.0			4	0.0					
	5				5	0.0			5	63.2					
	6				6	0.0			6	76.5					
	7				7	0.0			7	83.8					
	8				8	0.0			8	79.3					
	All	64.5	50.0		All		50.0		All	75.7	50.0				

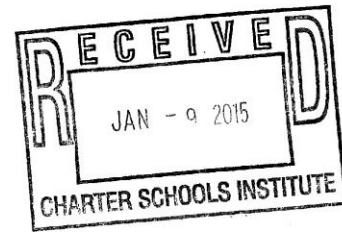
APPENDIX: SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS



MARGUERITE VANDEN WYNGAARD, PH.D., SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

January 7, 2015

Mr. Ralph A. Rossi II
Vice President and General Counsel
Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York
41 State Street, Suite 700
Albany, NY 12207



Dear Mr. Rossi:

I am writing in regard to the SUNY Board of Trustees' Charter Schools Committee's pending consideration of the application for renewal for KIPP Tech Valley Charter School and KIPP's application to expand with a new 400-seat elementary school. The City School District of Albany respectfully asks that you deny both requests in the best interests of all students, families and taxpayers in the City of Albany. As justification we cite the following:

- The significant financial burden charter schools have created in Albany – on public education and the community at large – with many unanswered questions about how the charter schools have spent more than a quarter-billion in taxpayer dollars. This situation is highlighted by New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli's continued findings of imprudent management of public funds at several Albany charter schools.
- Approving another charter school in Albany would add to the city's problem of tax-exempt property by taking still more property off of the tax rolls, increasing financial pressures on the community at large.
- The State University of New York's commitment to partnering with our school district through The Albany Promise to improve public education in Albany's Arbor Hill community. The presence of yet another charter school in our already oversaturated school district, and specifically in the Arbor Hill community, could be devastating to the schools that already serve Arbor Hill and are engaged with SUNY and all of our Albany Promise partners.
- The current KIPP middle school's substandard academic performance and history of discrimination in its enrollment and retention policies.

KIPP and other Albany charter schools routinely fail to retain the significant majority of students who enroll in their programs, and also fail to provide equal opportunities to students with disabilities. In fact, KIPP has hit a new low in this area during the current school year. Moreover, KIPP's academic performance has failed to consistently surpass that of the school district in several areas, even for the students that KIPP does choose to retain. That failure certainly does not justify an expansion of its enrollment by 130 percent to add elementary grades.

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PHONE: (518) 475-6010 • FAX: (518) 475-6014
EMAIL: MVANDEN@ALBANY.K12.NY.US

We believe that it is critical to the future of public education in Albany for the Board of Trustees to acknowledge that the oversaturation of charter schools in Albany is adversely affecting all students, families and taxpayers. We ask that instead of authorizing yet another charter school in Albany, you demand that KIPP and all SUNY-authorized charter schools do more to raise the achievement and retention of their current students, end the practice of excluding students with special needs and provide real transparency and accountability for the tens of millions of taxpayer dollars they receive each year.

I. A significant financial burden with little public accountability to local taxpayers

The financial pressures that charter schools have put on our school district and our community have been significant. Charter schools in Albany educate approximately 20 percent of the students but consume the equivalent of 45 percent of the district's total state aid.

By the end of the current school year, our district will have sent nearly \$300 million in payments and state-mandated services to Albany's charter schools since 1999 while receiving approximately \$33 million in charter transition aid – a net loss of \$260 million over that time. Approving a new KIPP elementary school for 400 students would increase that burden by at least \$5.6 million annually.

Approving the new KIPP elementary school also could exacerbate the already significant problem our community has with tax-exempt property. As the state capital and a city with one of the highest concentrations of charter schools, colleges and universities in the United States, as well as numerous medical and religious facilities, 57.5 percent of Albany's property is tax-exempt. In 2013, KIPP partnered with the Brighter Choice Foundation to propose construction of a new 48,000-square-foot addition and parking for 110 vehicles. If reintroduced and approved by the City of Albany, this would take additional taxable property off the rolls, further increasing the financial burden on all of Albany's taxpayers.

Furthermore, Albany's charter schools – as well as the foundations and umbrella groups that support them – continue to be largely unaccountable to local taxpayers for the management of the public funds they receive through our district. As Comptroller DiNapoli's recent audit of Albany's Henry Johnson Charter School suggested – as well as his similar audit findings at several other Albany charter schools – there are serious questions about where public tax dollars go after our school district sends them on to charter schools. The conviction in 2013 of a Brighter Choice employee accused of embezzling more than \$200,000 in public funds also highlights the grave concerns about how charter schools manage and allocate public funds.

In light of these critical and unanswered questions about how Albany charter schools spend tax dollars, we ask that the Board of Trustees honor its commitment to close failing charter schools and deny both of KIPP's applications. Without this safeguard of public finances and the public trust, the city's long-term financial health and stability will continue to erode.

II. The Albany Promise

In 2012, SUNY convened a group of school and community leaders to launch The Albany Promise. This partnership with the City School District of Albany supports a growing cradle-to-career vision for the future of public education. It is focused primarily on three of our city's neighborhoods: Arbor Hill, South End and West Hill.

The Albany Promise is a shining example of the growing and deep commitment throughout our community, and from the school district outward, to form powerful partnerships that will benefit all of our students and families. This level of two-way partnership was not in place in our community when the first charter school came to Albany in 1999 and as the charter movement continued to expand in our city through the first decade of this century. However, we are building momentum in that critical direction thanks in large measure to The Albany Promise. Leaders from the Capital Region's higher education, business and government sectors, and from a range of community organizations, increasingly are seeking to pool their human and financial resources to support Albany's public schools. Our district is embracing that support in alignment with our new strategic plan – our 2020 Vision.

Approving a 13th charter school in a public school district that has only 15 schools – and that already has seen three SUNY-approved charter schools fail permanently – would contradict that work. It would be a harsh and demoralizing blow at a time when we all can see progress and promise. It would be another impediment to the advancement our community so desperately needs and wants for all of our students and families.

There currently are three district elementary schools and three charter elementary schools – two authorized by the Board of Regents, one authorized by SUNY – that are conveniently located to serve Arbor Hill families. Allowing another charter elementary school to open in Arbor Hill – in another new school facility that our community does not need and cannot afford – would be potentially fatal for one or both of the district elementary schools serving Arbor Hill, and for one or more of the current charter elementary schools.

III. Unequal opportunities at KIPP

In theory, charter schools provide valuable choice options for students and families. However, in practice KIPP has a consistent history of failing to enroll or retain certain students, especially those students who may need additional help to succeed academically. KIPP serves students with disabilities in disproportionately low numbers in spite of its regulatory charge to “increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning opportunities for students who are at-risk of academic failure.”

KIPP, like the rest of Albany's charter schools, does not practice a philosophy of providing equal access to all students. Continuing to reward this well-documented pattern of discriminatory behavior would be harmful to Albany's children and families.

- Of the 79 Albany fifth-graders reported in the November 2005 billing, 27 (34%) finished on time, according to the school's year-end report for 2008-09.
- Of the 82 Albany fifth-graders reported in the November 2006 billing, 17 (21%) finished on time, according to the school's year-end report for 2009-10.
- Of the 83 Albany fifth-graders reported in the November 2007 billing, 25 (30%) finished on time, according to the school's year-end report for 2010-11.
- Of the 94 Albany fifth-graders reported in the November 2008 billing, 34 (36%) finished on time, according to the school's year-end report for 2011-12.
- Of the 85 Albany fifth-graders reported in the November 2009 billing, 31 (36.5%) finished on time, according to the school's year-end report for 2012-13.
- Of the 56 Albany fifth-graders reported in the November 2010 billing, 19 (33.9%) finished on time, according to the school's year-end report for 2013-14.

During the 2013-14 school year, 51 KIPP students returned to district schools. That is equal to 22 percent of KIPP's average bimonthly enrollment of Albany students. From July 1-Dec. 31 of the current school year, 23 KIPP students have returned to district schools.

KIPP also capitalizes on its statutory right to open its doors only to the students it chooses, not to all students who choose it. For example, KIPP has just six students with disabilities from Albany enrolled in the current school year – 2.5 percent of its total Albany student population. That is its lowest percentage over the past six years, with the highest being 6.5 percent (16 students in 2010-11).

In total this year, our city's nine charter schools enroll 88 Albany students with disabilities, or less than 4 percent of the total population of Albany students enrolled in those schools. By comparison, about 12 percent of the students enrolled in our district's 15 public schools are students with disabilities. Our district also serves another 202 Albany students in out-of-district placements.

Perpetuated annually at KIPP since the school opened, this pattern of failing to retain students and excluding students with disabilities is harmful to the needs of all students, who are most successful in stable, consistent learning environments. KIPP has failed to provide this type of environment for all of its students and should not be rewarded with a renewal of its current charter or a new charter to open an elementary school.

IV. Substandard academic performance

As one of Albany's longest-tenured charter schools, KIPP has established a consistent and troubling academic record. Along with the school's annual high attrition rates and continued failure to serve students with disabilities, KIPP also has failed to consistently outperform its district counterparts in the new era of state testing aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards.

APPENDIX: SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

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January 7, 2015

Table 1. Percentage of KIPP and CSDA students achieving Levels 3-4 in 2013 and 2014. Results in red indicate areas in which KIPP equaled or underperformed CSDA in one or both years. Results in bold indicate areas in which CSDA results were comparable (within 2 percentage points). (Source: New York State Education Department).

Grade/Subject	KIPP 2013	KIPP 2014	Hackett 2014 (2013)	Myers 2014 (2013)	CSDA Grade 5 2014 (2013)
5 ELA	9	22	NA	NA	10 (18)
5 Math	15	33	NA	NA	13 (14)
6 ELA	12	23	22 (22)	21 (17)	NA
6 Math	13	47	16 (16)	27 (15)	NA
7 ELA	28	22	10 (20)	10 (21)	NA
7 Math	10	37	6 (10)	12 (8)	NA
8 ELA	27	59	19 (17)	21 (20)	NA
8 Math	25	58	0* (8)	1* (12)	NA

* 120 City School District of Albany eighth-grade students took the Algebra Regents only in 2014 and did not sit for the grade 8 math exam. Of those students, 104 (87%) achieved a passing grade on the Algebra Regents.

Combine this uneven academic achievement with the high rates of student attrition at KIPP annually since its inception, and there is no solid basis on which to reward KIPP with a renewal of its charter for grades 5-8. Clearly, it is not currently achieving its state-mandated goals under its current charter. In addition, we believe granting a new elementary charter to allow KIPP to expand its spotty record of academic achievement to as many as 400 additional students would further destabilize taxpayer-funded education in Albany.

It is our contention that allowing KIPP to expand would harm students and families, who need stable academic environments in which to learn, grow and thrive. Perpetuating and expanding the debilitating cycle of students moving back and forth between schools is not in the public benefit.

At the end of the 1998-99 school year, Albany had 17 publicly funded schools serving about 10,500 Albany students. Today, there are 25 publicly funded schools serving about the same student population. The addition of a new KIPP elementary school would make that 26 taxpayer-supported schools for the same student population.

APPENDIX: SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

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January 7, 2015

The inefficiencies and redundancies inherent in this model are threatening the future of an educational system charged with raising student achievement in an urban community with high poverty and large percentages of high-needs students and families. Albany's unique charter-school situation is threatening the goal it was intended to achieve: improving the quality of educational opportunities for all of the city's students. KIPP has failed to demonstrate a clear benefit and failed to provide equal opportunities to all of Albany's students. Allowing the KIPP middle school to perpetuate this damaging cycle with an extension of its current charter, and authorizing KIPP to open a new elementary school to further destabilize Albany's taxpayer-funded education system, would be harmful to children, families and the entire Albany community.

There is much work to be done on behalf of all students in Albany for public and charter schools alike. Granting either or both of KIPP's current requests will continue to undermine those efforts for everyone.

Once again, we respectfully ask that the Charter Schools Committee and the Board of Trustees reject both KIPP's request for a renewal of its middle-school charter and its request for a charter to open a new elementary school.

Sincerely,



Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools