



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

Initial Renewal Report

KIPP Tech Valley Charter School

March 9, 2010

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The final version of Institute renewal reports should be broadly shared by the school with the entire school community. This report will be posted on the Institute’s website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/pubsReportsRenewals.htm.

REPORT INTRODUCTION

This report is the primary means by which the Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a school’s Application for Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a school’s case for renewal. This report has been created and issued pursuant to the *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University Board of Trustees* (the “SUNY Renewal Practices”).¹

Information about the SUNY renewal process, including the Institute’s comprehensive Charter Renewal Handbook 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: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm.

RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY DISCUSSION

Recommendation

Full-Term Renewal

The Charter Schools Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Renewal of the KIPP Tech Valley Charter School and renew its charter for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in 5th through 8th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Renewal, with a maximum projected enrollment of 300 students.

Background and Required Findings

In initial renewal reviews, the SUNY Trustees evaluate the strength and effectiveness of a school’s academic program by the degree to which the school has succeeded in meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals during the Accountability Period² and by the quality of the instructional program in place at the school during the charter period, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks (a subset of the SUNY Charter Renewal Benchmarks). In giving weight to both student achievement and the emergent program, this approach provides a balance between an outcomes-based system of accountability in which a school is held accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results and a determination of the likelihood that the educational program will improve student learning and achievement going forward.

The KIPP Tech Valley Charter School (“KIPP Tech Valley”) has applied for an Initial, Full-Term Renewal of five years. The SUNY Renewal Practices provide three possible renewal outcomes for KIPP Tech Valley: Full-Term Renewal; Short-Term Renewal; or Non-Renewal. In order to earn a Full-Term Renewal, KIPP Tech Valley must demonstrate that it has met the criteria for such a renewal as described in the SUNY Renewal Practices. Specifically, the school must either: (a) have

¹ The *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University Board of Trustees* (revised September 15, 2009) are available at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/renewalPractices.doc>.

² For the purpose of reporting student achievement results, the Accountability Period is defined in the SUNY Renewal Practices as the time the Accountability Plan was in effect. In the case of an Initial Renewal, the plan covers the first four years that the school was in operation during the charter period.

compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, and have in place at the time of the renewal review an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is generally effective; or (b) have made progress towards meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals and have in place at the time of the renewal review an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is particularly strong and effective.

Based on the Institute's review of the evidence it gathered and that KIPP Tech Valley provided, including, but not limited to, the school's Application for Renewal, evaluation visits conducted during the charter period, a renewal evaluation visit conducted by the Institute in the last year of the charter period, and the school's record of academic performance as determined by the extent to which it has met the academic goals in its Accountability Plan, the Institute finds that the school has compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals and has in place an educational program that is generally effective.

Based on all the evidence, the Institute makes the following findings required by the Act. The KIPP Tech Valley Charter School as described in the Application for Renewal meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations. The school has demonstrated the ability to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter period. Finally, 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 set out in Education Law subdivision 2850(2).

Therefore, in accordance with the standard for Initial Renewal found in the SUNY Renewal Practices, the Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve KIPP Tech Valley's Application for Charter Renewal and renew the school's charter for a full-term of five years.

Consideration of School District Comments

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the school district in which the charter school is located regarding the school's Application for Renewal. As of the date of this report, no comments were received in response.

Summary Discussion

Academic Success

KIPP Tech Valley Charter School is meeting its key Accountability Plan goals in English language arts and mathematics. In 2006-07, when the school first tested students in enrolled in at least their second year at the school and many of the measures in the school's Accountability Plan first applied, the school was far from meeting its English language arts goal. In 2007-08, KIPP Tech Valley's overall performance improved, but the school did not meet its goal. In 2008-09, performance again improved and the school first met its goal. With regard to mathematics, since 2006-07, the school has met its goal each year. In the most recent year, aside from one cohort falling just short of its growth target, the school met each of the measures comprising its overall goal. Notably, in the most recent year, 100 percent of 8th grade students scored proficient on both the state English language arts and mathematics exams. Based on limited data, the school has also met its science and social studies goals during the Accountability Period. According to the state's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system, the school is deemed to be in good standing.

Throughout its Accountability Period, KIPP Tech Valley has improved its performance on the state's English language arts exam. In the first year of its charter, only 5th graders who had been enrolled in the school for less than a year were tested. In 2006-07, the school's absolute performance declined and the school underperformed the district and demographically similar schools. In 2007-08, KIPP Tech Valley improved its absolute performance such that it outperformed the local school district, but not sufficiently to exceed its absolute or Effect Size targets. With respect to growth, two of three cohorts achieved their targets and overall performance improved. In 2008-09, the school first exceeded its absolute target,³ again outperformed its local school district and performed about the same as expected in comparison to demographically similar schools state-wide. Each of the school's cohorts achieved their targets and overall performance improved markedly.

During its initial charter term, KIPP Tech Valley has improved its performance on the state's mathematics exam. In the first year of its charter, only 5th graders who had been enrolled in the school for less than a year were tested. In 2006-07, the school improved its performance considerably, first exceeding its absolute target, and outperforming demographically similar schools state-wide. Additionally, with respect to growth, the school's lone cohort achieved its target. Since then, with the exception of one cohort falling short of its growth target, KIPP Tech Valley has exceeded each of the measures included in its Accountability Plan. In the most recent year, the school outperformed its local district and demographically similar schools state-wide by a wide margin.

KIPP Tech Valley is guided by strong instructional leadership. School leaders, currently consisting of an executive director, chief operating officer, and principal, have established high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance. This was evident at the time of the renewal visit by multiple public displays of student achievement and the celebration of measurable student success throughout the school. Further, the school's culture of high expectations is reinforced and maintained through its system of evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness, with significant emphasis placed on measurable student achievement results, consistent with the school's Accountability Plan goals. This system has been effective in holding teachers accountable for high levels of performance. In addition to monitoring individual teacher performance, school leaders adequately evaluate the overall academic program to determine its effectiveness.

The school's instructional leaders, based on classroom visits and other available data, provide ongoing support to teachers. This support takes many forms, and is often individualized to meet the needs of each teacher who receive regular feedback on their instructional planning, delivery of instruction, classroom management, and the use of student assessment data. One notable practice in improving teacher performance is the process of regularly videotaping teachers during the delivery of lessons. Teachers then watch the video, reflect upon the strategies used, and identify areas in which they can improve. This process is indicative of the reflective culture that has been cultivated by school leaders. Teachers new to the profession receive increased amounts of support from all school leaders.

KIPP Tech Valley has a well-organized system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses it to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning. In particular, the school regularly

³ In interpreting a school's year-to-year changes in the absolute measure, the Institute puts the results in the context of overall state-wide changes. In general, the state-wide proficiency rate on the English language arts exam increased by five percent from 2006-07 to 2007-08 and by nine percent from 2007-08 to 2008-09. From a related perspective, the median school had a proficiency rate of 68.7 percent, 72.8 percent, and 80.9 percent during the three years respectively. These year-to-year changes suggest the importance of the comparative measures included in the goal.

administers useful diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments aligned to its curriculum. It has effective procedures in place to systematically collect and analyze assessment results and effectively uses results to improve student learning and teacher performance. The school has successfully implemented a comprehensive data management system to ensure that assessment results are up-to-date and accurately used. A common understanding exists between and among teachers and school leaders of the meaning and consequences of assessment results, including clear practices related to student promotion and retention. Finally, student and school performance are shared with parents and the overall school community on a regular basis, which reinforces the school's relentless focus on student learning outcomes.

The school has a clearly defined and comprehensive curriculum that is aligned to state learning standards and effectively uses it to prepare students to meet performance standards. Based on a careful analysis of assessment data and the frequency of performance indicators assessed on state examinations, school leaders have generated detailed resource materials, including scope and sequence documents with clearly identified learning objectives, which support teachers in developing their lessons. In addition, the school has implemented an effective process for the ongoing review and revision of the written curriculum, including the effective use of technology to document and archive changes made during this process.

Although teachers have planned and implemented purposeful lessons aligned to state learning standards and the school's curriculum over the course of the charter period, high quality instruction has not been evident in all classrooms throughout the school. At the time of the renewal visit, the quality of instruction varied within and across grade levels. Overall, students were cognitively engaged, yet had little opportunity to employ higher order thinking skills, particularly in the lower grades. The school effectively differentiates instruction to meet the range of learning needs represented in its student population, primarily through the establishment of homogeneous student groupings and within small instructional groups outside of the core classes.

Due in part to the curriculum resources and assessment system noted above, KIPP Tech Valley is demonstrably effective in helping struggling students. Clear procedures are in place through a response-to-intervention system to identify at-risk students, including those with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are generally struggling academically. The school has allocated adequate resources to meet the needs of these students, and ensured that instructional strategies are effectively implemented to meet all students' needs. Ongoing coordination between general education and special education teachers, as well as additional staff that provide services to students as needed, has been adequate. The school has made Individual Education Programs (IEPs) available on-line for teachers as well as a schedule of when each student's services (including outside providers) are provided each week. The special education coordinator also makes a helpful *CliffsNotes* version of each IEP available to teachers. The school has fostered a positive working relationship with the Albany Committee on Special Education chairperson. In addition, teachers are supported in meeting the needs of struggling students, primarily through guidance provided by the special education coordinator and executive director.

KIPP Tech Valley provides a very safe and orderly school environment and has created a culture of scholarship. The school has a consistently applied behavior management system employed by all teachers and staff that is driven by a weekly "paycheck" system for each student. Classroom management techniques and daily routines, including those outside of classrooms, have been effectively implemented with consistency across the school, contributing to a school culture where learning is valued and clearly evident.

The school's professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical and content knowledge. Teachers receive training during a summer institute on the school's curricular and assessment programs, and school culture. The school has developed strategic processes to assist teachers in their professional growth. Prospective teachers are provided with a paid internship opportunity during the spring prior to the beginning of their service in which they are mentored by school leaders and have an opportunity to co-teach with existing teachers. In addition, the school has made a concerted effort to identify teachers with an interest in, and potential for, assuming a leadership position, and providing them with additional opportunities to support their professional growth.

Organizational Effectiveness and Viability

The school has been faithful to its mission over the course of the charter period and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter. Stakeholders, including staff, students, the board of trustees, and parents are well aware of the school's college preparatory mission and academic focus. As noted above, the school has effectively implemented its data-driven design, most notably through its assessment and comprehensive data management systems, which center on student learning outcomes in all areas of school operations. In addition, each member of KIPP Tech Valley's first 8th grade graduating class has been accepted into a variety of high schools, including well-known competitive schools.

Families are satisfied with the school. The overwhelming majority of parents responding to recent surveys administered by the school expressed satisfaction, yet response rates have been low⁴. In each year of the charter period, the percentage of students returning to KIPP Tech Valley has increased from the previous year. In 2009-10, the last year of the charter period, the school had a waitlist for admission to the school for the first time.

KIPP Tech Valley has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program. Day-to-day operations are competently managed by the school's leadership team. At the time of the renewal visit, teachers were uniform in their understanding of the distinction in roles and responsibilities of the members of the leadership team, providing for distinct lines of accountability. Furthermore, the school has hired and retained quality personnel. Teacher turnover has been low, contributing to a stable environment and continuity in the academic program. Early in the charter period, the school had difficulty in meeting its enrollment targets, but has since maintained adequate enrollment levels.

The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program. Board members have adequate skills and expertise and have established policies and practices that enable them to provide rigorous oversight of the school. Five of the seven trustees have served in their capacity since the inception of the school, demonstrating board stability. The board is considering adding an alumni parent position to the board, as previous parent members had difficulty communicating with staff regarding purely parental matters. The school board understands its roles and responsibilities, as well as the core business of the school – academic achievement – in sufficient depth to permit it to provide effective oversight. The board has also

⁴ A response rate of 23 percent was reported on the school's 2008-09 mid-year survey. The Institute's expectation is that two-thirds of all parents in a school will express positive attitudes on a satisfaction survey.

received regular written reports from school leadership on academic and operational performance. The school board has conducted regular evaluations of the school's leaders.

The board has, on one or two occasions, had difficulty in reaching a quorum at meetings and, as a result, is considering limiting the number of meetings held annually to six. Although the board's structure includes five formal committees or task forces, the most active is the audit and finance committee. The Institute noted that ideally this committee would be separated into two distinct committees, however the size of the board makes that difficult. The board has not yet evaluated its own performance but has been educating itself regarding best practices and doing preliminary work in that regard. For example, the board chair has attended a KIPP governance retreat which he reported as helpful in spotting school issues early and in learning about how other KIPP schools handled various situations. There are no known conflicts of interest on the board.

The school board has effectively handled several challenges during the charter period. One challenge was the temporary loss of its chief operating officer, who serves as the lead contact for administrative services. The school board and leadership quickly prepared another employee to handle those duties. Board members found that the school's policies and procedures and extensive documentation made this task easier than they thought it would be. Another challenge has been an extensive amount of negative State Education Department communication often on the most trifling of oversight issues, such as repeated request for fingerprint clearance when such documentation had already been provided by the school. While the school board and leadership took this in stride earlier in the charter term, when it continued, their tolerance waned. Nonetheless, the school remained cordial and the situation seems to have reached a steady-state. The KIPP Tech Valley board of trustees also noticed a high number of suspensions and disciplinary infractions early in the charter period and has recently made changes to its disciplinary approach and policy to better balance the rewards and disincentives in that system. The school board's and staff's proactive approach in this regard is commendable. The Institute notes that the school has had very few complaints, reporting only eight parent phone calls of that nature during the charter term.

With very minor exceptions, the school has been and at the time of the renewal inspection was in general and substantial compliance with the terms of its charter, the Charter Schools Act and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations. The school board and leadership have generally sound policies and procedures in place to maintain the school's compliance status. While some minor policy deficiencies were noted in areas including federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) compliance, complaint procedures, health policies, and student discipline procedures, all of the issues are what the Institute would characterize as 'easily addressable' and there was no evidence that substantive deficiencies were resulting therefrom. In almost each case, the school had a practice in place to prevent any violation. The school appeared to maintain sufficient internal controls including division of responsibilities to ensure many aspects of compliance are met. The school has regularly consulted with outside legal counsel on various matters. Currently, the school is involved in litigation regarding an E-Rate billing error, with a maximum potential liability of approximately \$100,000, though the school's counsel is confident the number will be reduced through the appeal process.

Fiscal Soundness

KIPP Tech Valley has operated pursuant to a long-range financial plan and has created realistic budgets over the course of the charter period that are monitored and adjusted appropriately. Annual budgets are developed by the school's chief operating officer (COO) with appropriate input from the

school's director, business manager, other key staff and members of the school board. Budget variances are routinely analyzed and material variances are appropriately discussed with the school board.

The school has maintained appropriate fiscal policies, procedures and controls related to external and internal compliance for cash disbursements, cash receipts, bank reconciliations, payroll, fixed assets, grants/contributions, and the preparation of financial statements. The chief operating officer works with the school's executive director and management team, along with the school board to ensure that the policies and procedures are documented and followed by school staff. The school's fiscal year ("FY") 2008-09 audit report of internal controls—related to financial reporting and compliance with laws, regulations and grants—disclosed three material weaknesses, or areas in need of strengthening to improve internal controls and operating efficiency. The first finding was the school has a negative working capital ratio, indicating that current liabilities exceed current assets. It is essential for the school to monitor the budget compared to actual expenditures and to take immediate corrective steps as required in the upcoming year. The second finding was related to the lack of a documentation process for credit card transactions; the report states that some charges did not contain supporting invoices or receipts. The third finding was related to district billing. The school has had issues with billing some districts and improvement in the controls and procedures for school district billing could improve cash flow for the school. The lack of other deficiencies in the reports provides some, but not absolute, assurance that the school has maintained adequate internal controls and procedures relating to all other fiscal matters.

The school has complied with financial reporting requirements during the charter period. Budget, quarterly and annual financial statement audit reports were filed in a timely, accurate and complete manner. Each of the school's annual financial statement audit reports followed generally accepted accounting principles as required and received an unqualified opinion, indicating that, in the auditor's opinion, the school's financial statements and notes fairly represent, in all material respects, the school's financial position, changes in net assets, and cash flows. The school board reviews and approves the annual financial statement audit report.

The school has not maintained adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations, resulting in limited cash flow over the course of the charter period. The school completed FY 2008-09 in relatively weak financial condition. It should be noted that the school had less than five thousand dollars in cash reserves at that time, giving it very little liquid assets. Actual per-pupil expenses exceeded actual revenue in FY 2006-07 and 2007-08, which has contributed to the lack of cash reserves. This evidence suggests that the school has had difficulty balancing revenue and expenditures. The school therefore has had a negative working capital ratio, as mentioned above, indicating the school does not have enough short-term assets to possibly cover immediate liabilities/short-term debt. The school has no major investments due to the small amount of cash available. To date, the school has secured loans from the Brighter Choice Foundation to bridge any short-term expense gaps that may occur with policies in place for repayment of borrowed funds.

Plans for the Next Charter Period

The school has provided all of the key structural elements for a renewal charter and they are deemed to be reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The school would maintain its current 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, colleges, and the competitive world beyond.

The school would continue providing instruction in 5th through 8th grade. Maximum enrollment levels would be maintained at 300 students, consistent with the last two years of the current charter period, the only two that reflected the full 5th through 8th grade configuration. The school would continue to provide a longer school day and year than the local district, with 200 instructional days that are 9.5 hour long each, which includes some Saturday instruction.

The school would continue implementing the same key design elements as in its original charter, which include the following: KIPP Pillars of High Expectations, Choice and Commitment, More Time, Power to Lead, and Focus on Results; extended school day and year; extended instructional time in English language arts and mathematics; daily enrichment periods; mandatory three-week summer program; electronic scoring system to track individual student progress toward mastering state learning standards; and a focus on the core values of “choose, improve, respect, and support.”

Members of the KIPP Tech Valley Charter School Board of Trustees expressed their intent to continue their service to the school and have proposed no changes to the school's governance structure for the next charter period. The school would maintain its relationship with The KIPP Foundation to support the school with training for school leaders and the board, as well as membership within a community of other KIPP schools around the country. Board members have the requisite skills sets and understand their roles and responsibilities in order to adequately govern the school during the next charter period.

The school has been fortunate to have a facility that meets its needs. The school would remain at its current location at One Dudley Heights in Albany, New York for the next charter term, continuing to lease the building from the Brighter Choice Foundation.

KIPP Tech Valley has presented a fiscal plan for the next charter period that could be achievable, including adequate budgets that would need to be closely monitored to ensure fiscal stability. The school has assumed a five-percent increase in per-pupil funding in each year of the next charter period. The plan projects a minor operating and cash flow surplus in each year while also building a contingency reserve. This plan is based on the school meeting enrollment goals, which the school has demonstrated the ability to do. Due to the state deficit problems and the uncertainty of per-pupil funding, the school acknowledges that the per-pupil percentage increases they have assumed are not assured. The school recognizes that it must also have in place a more strategic and conservative approach to budgeting and planning for the next charter period to ensure that the school is fiscally viable, given its past history, while meeting all student and faculty needs. The school has acknowledged that it will need to work on developing budgets that show both per-pupil funding increasing a smaller percentage, no more than two percent, over the next charter period and also remaining flat at the 2009-10 per-pupil allocation. Long-range fiscal projections are more susceptible to error than those for a single year. Such projections are subject to revision due to changes in local conditions, objectives, laws and state funding.

To the extent that KIPP Tech Valley Charter School has achieved its key academic goals, continues to implement an educational program that supports achieving those goals, operates an effective and viable organization, and is fiscally sound, its plans to continue to implement the educational program as proposed during the next charter period are reasonable, feasible, and achievable.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	January 28, 2004
Date Initial Charter Approved by Board of Regents	March 23, 2004
School Opening Date	July 15, 2005

Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades	District
2005-06 through present	1 Dudley Heights Albany, NY	All	Albany City School District

Partner Organizations

	Partner Name	Partner Type	Dates of Service
Current Partner	Knowledge is Power Program	Non-profit national network of schools	2004-present

Current 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.

Current Key Design Elements

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• safe and structure environment;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• free transportation anywhere in Albany;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• longer school day and year: 7:30a.m.-5p.m., 200 days a year that allows for more time on core subjects and activities such as studio art classes, Section II athletics, and numerous clubs;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• free summer school;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all students wear uniforms;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• rigorous standards-based curriculum;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all staff available by cell phone for extra help;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• weekly progress reports;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Saturday school enrichment and college visits;
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• daily tutoring and enrichment opportunities; and
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• high school placement program.

School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Revised Charter Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ⁵	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction
2005-06	90	N/A	87	5	5	200
2006-07	180	N/A	162	5-6	5-6	200
2007-08	270	226	208	5-7	5-7	200
2008-09	360	300	296	5-8	5-8	200
2009-10	300	N/A	301	5-8	5-8	200

Student Demographics

	2006-07 ⁶		2007-08 ⁷		2008-09	
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of Albany CSD Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of Albany CSD Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment ⁸	Percent of Albany CSD Enrollment ⁹
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	N/A
Black or African American	89%	63%	87%	63%	85%	N/A
Hispanic	6%	11%	9%	11%	9%	N/A
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	0%	3%	0%	4%	0%	N/A
White	5%	20%	4%	20%	5%	N/A
Multiracial	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	N/A
Special Populations						
Students with Disabilities ¹⁰	9%	17%	8%	15%a	6%	N/A
Limited English Proficient	0%	4%	0%	5%	0%	N/A
Free/Reduced Lunch						
Eligible for Free Lunch	60%	56%	58%	48%	N/A	N/A
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	16%	11%	23%	9%	N/A	N/A

⁵ Source: SUNY Charter School Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

⁶ Source: 2006-07 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

⁷ Source: 2007-08 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

⁸ Source: 2008-09 Demographics and Limited English Proficient Percentages calculated from BEDS reports submitted at the beginning of the school year. This information is unverified by the schools. It also does not include Free/Reduced Lunch status, but rather categorizes students as "economically disadvantaged."

⁹ Aggregated district data not yet available for 2008-09.

¹⁰ New York State Education Department does not report special education data. School data is school-reported from charter renewal applications. District data from NYSED Special Education School District Data Profile.

Current Board of Trustees¹¹

Board Member Name	Term Expires	Position/Committees
John P. Reilly	6/30/2011	President, Finance
B. Jason Brooks	6/30/2011	Vice-President, Finance
Kevin Crumb	6/30/2012	Secretary
Eric H. Burnett	6/30/2012	Treasurer, Finance
Kelly R. Kimbrough	6/30/2012	Trustee
Carl Young	6/30/2012	Trustee
Kelly Ryan	6/30/2011	Trustee

School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2005-06 - 2009-10 (present)	Dan Ceaser, School Director

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2005-06	First-Year Visit	Institute	March 23, 2006
2006-07	Second-Year Visit	Institute	March 1, 2007
2007-08	Third-Year Visit	External (ClassMeasures)	April 29-30, 2008
2008-09	None	N/A	N/A
2009-10	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	December 1-3, 2009

¹¹ Source: Application for Renewal

ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

Background

At the beginning of the charter period the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of English language arts and mathematics, as well as science and social studies. The plan also included an NCLB goal. For each goal in the Accountability Plan specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. Furthermore, the Institute has established a set of required outcome measures that include the following three types: 1) the absolute level of student performance on state examinations; 2) the comparative level of student performance on state examinations; and 3) the growth in student learning according to year-to-year comparisons of grade level cohorts. The following table shows the outcome measures currently required by the Institute in each subject area goal, as well as for the NCLB goal. Schools may have also elected to include additional optional goals and measures in their Accountability Plan.

Summary of Required Goals and Outcome Measures in Elementary/Middle School (K-8) Accountability Plans					
GOAL	Required Outcome Measures				
	Absolute		Comparative		Growth
	75 percent proficient on state exam	Performance Index (PI) meets Annual Measurable Objective (AMO)	Percent proficient greater than that of local school district	School exceeds predicted level of performance compared to similar public schools by small Effect Size	Grade-level cohorts reduce by half the gap between prior year's percent proficient and 75 percent
English Language Arts	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Mathematics	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Science	♦		♦		
Social Studies	♦		♦		
NCLB	School is deemed in "Good Standing" under state's NCLB accountability system				

The most important criterion for renewal is academic success, which is demonstrated in large part by meeting or coming close to meeting the goals in a school's Accountability Plan. The Institute determines the outcome of a goal by evaluating the multiple measures associated with that goal.

The following presentation indicates the outcome of each of the school's goals, as well as an analysis of the respective measures for each goal during the Accountability Period.¹² Italicized text indicates goals or measures as written in the school's Accountability Plan; bold numbers appearing in the tables are the critical values for determining if a measure was achieved in a given year. Aside from required Accountability Plan measures, the following also presents the results of optional measures that the school may have included in its plan.

¹² Because the renewal decision is made in the last year of a Charter Period, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the Charter Period. For initial renewals, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the Charter Period. For subsequent renewals, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous Charter Period through the next to last year of the current Charter Period.

English Language Arts

Accountability Plan Goal: Students at the KIPP Tech Valley Charter School will be proficient readers and writers of the English language.

Outcome: KIPP Tech Valley has met its English language arts goal.

Analysis of Accountability Plan Measures:

Absolute Measure: <i>By the 2008-09 school year, 75% of KIPP: TECH VALLEY Charter School students who have been enrolled at the school for two or more years will score proficient (i.e. at level three) or better on the New York State English Language Arts assessment.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Grade	School Year			
	2005-06¹³ (Tested: 78)	2006-07 (Tested: 55)	2007-08 (Tested: 105)	2008-09 (Tested: 157)
3	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	53.8	61.1
6	-	-	51.0	79.6
7	-	-	90.7	90.6
8	-	-	-	100.0
All	-	-	67.6	86.0

KIPP Tech Valley has improved its performance on the state's English language arts exam during the charter term. In 2007-08, when the school first tested students who had been enrolled in the school for two or more years and this measure first applied, 67 percent of students were proficient and the school did not achieve its 75 percent target. In the most recent year, the school first exceeded its target and 86 percent of students were proficient.

Absolute Measure: <i>Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State ELA exam will meet its Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Index	School Year			
	2005-06¹⁴ (Tested: 78)	2006-07 (Tested: 151)	2007-08 (Tested: 189)	2008-09 (Tested: 272)
PI	141	143	161	179
AMO	122	122	133	144

KIPP Tech Valley has surpassed the English language arts Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) established by the state's NCLB accountability system during each year of its Accountability Period. The school's Performance Index has increased more than 30 points from 2005-06 through 2008-09.

¹³ In 2005-06 New York State implemented English language arts and mathematics exams in grades 3-8. Prior to that, the exams in these subjects were administered only in grades 4 and 8.

¹⁴ In 2005-06 English language arts and mathematics testing began in grades 3-8, and the Performance Index was henceforth calculated based on the aggregate of all tested students.

Comparative Measure: <i>Each year, the percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam in each tested grade will be greater than that of their peers in Albany Public Schools.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Comparison	School Year			
	2005-06 (Grade 5)	2006-07 (Grade 6)	2007-08 (Grades 6-7)	2008-09 (Grades 6-8)
School	51.3	49.1	67.6	86.0
District	46.0	44.9	47.6	54.8

KIPP Tech Valley has consistently outperformed its local school district on the state's English language arts exam and has widened the gap in performance in recent years. In the most recent year, the school outperformed the local school district by over 30 percentage points.

Comparative Measure: <i>Each year, the school will exceed its expected level of performance on the State ELA exam by at least a small Effect Size (performing higher than expected to small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Index	School Year			
	2005-06 (Grade 5) (Tested: 78)	2006-07 (Grades 5-6) (Tested: 151)	2007-08 (Grades 5-7) (Tested: 189)	2008-09 (Grades 5-8) (Tested: 272)
Predicted	50.6	55.7	63.8	76.7
Actual	51.3	46.1	62.2	79.0
Effect Size	0.04	-0.74	-0.35	0.01

In comparison to demographically similar schools statewide, KIPP Tech Valley's performance has fluctuated and the school has yet to exceed its Effect Size target. In 2005-06, the school performed about the same as expected. In 2006-07, the school's performance declined and the school performed lower than expected to a medium degree. In 2007-08, performance improved, somewhat, although the school still performed lower than expected. In the most recent year, KIPP Tech Valley's relative performance improved and the school performed about the same as expected.

Optional Measure:

The school's Accountability Plan also includes the following optional measure:

Grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by the amount equal to 50 minus the baseline, divided by the number of years remaining until the completion of grade 8 the gap between their average NCE in the previous spring on the Terra Nova, a nationally normed reading test, and an NCE of 50 (i.e., grade level) in the current spring.

The Application for Renewal presents no data on its success in achieving this measure. Further, the school did not report on this measure in its Annual Reports for the 2005-06 through 2008-09 school years.

Growth Measure: <i>Grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State ELA exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State ELA exam.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Percent Level 3 & 4	School Year			
	2005-06	2006-07¹⁵ (Grade 6) (N=57)	2007-08 (Grades 6-7) (N=99)	2008-09 (Grades 6-8) (N=146)
Baseline	-	57.9	51.5	65.8
Target	-	63.0	63.2	70.4
Actual	-	50.9	68.7	87.0
Cohorts Made Target	-	(0 of 1)	(1 of 2)	(3 of 3)

Two years of state test data first became available for analysis in 2006-07. In that year, the school's lone cohort failed to achieve its target and overall performance declined. In 2007-08, one of two cohorts achieved its target and overall performance improved. In the most recent year, all three of the school's cohorts achieved their targets and overall performance improved markedly.

Mathematics

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

Outcome: KIPP Tech Valley has met its mathematics goal.

Analysis of Accountability Plan Measures:

Absolute Measure: <i>By the 2008 – 09 school year, 75% of KIPP TECH VALLEY students who have been enrolled at the school for two or more years will score proficient (i.e. at level three) or better on the New York State mathematics assessment.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Grade	School Year			
	2005-06¹⁶ (Tested: 57)	2006-07 (Tested: 55)	2007-08 (Tested: 104)	2008-09 (Tested: 160)
3	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	84.6	90.0
6	-	-	93.8	98.0
7	-	-	100.0	92.5
8	-	-	-	100.0
All	-	-	95.2	95.6

KIPP Tech Valley has improved its performance on the state's mathematics exam during the charter period. In 2007-08, when the school first tested students who had been enrolled in the school for two or more years and the school's measure first applied, 95 percent of students were proficient and the

¹⁵ New York State began administering English language arts and mathematics exams in grades 3-8 in 2005-06, thus year-to-year growth could not be evaluated until 2006-07 when two years' of results were first available.

¹⁶ In 2005-06 New York State implemented English language arts and mathematics exams in grades 3-8. Prior to that, the exams in these subjects were administered only in grades 4 and 8.

school far exceeded its 75 percent target. In the most recent year, the school maintained its high level of performance and 96 percent of students were proficient.

Absolute Measure: <i>Each year, the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State mathematics exam will meet its Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Index	School Year			
	2005-06¹⁷ (Tested: 75)	2006-07 (Tested: 146)	2007-08 (Tested: 188)	2008-09 (Tested: 277)
PI	144	174	191	190
AMO	86	86	102	119

KIPP Tech Valley has surpassed the mathematics Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) established by the state's NCLB accountability system during each year of its Accountability Period. The school's Index has increased over 40 points from 2005-06 through 2008-09.

Comparative Measure: <i>Each year, the percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State mathematics exam in each tested grade will be greater than that of the local school district.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Comparison	School Year			
	2005-06 (Grade 5)	2006-07 (Grade 6)	2007-08 (Grades 6-7)	2008-09 (Grades 6-8)
School	53.3	84.6	95.2	95.6
District	46.3	56.8	55.5	57.4

KIPP Tech Valley has consistently outperformed its local school district on the state mathematics exam and has widened the gap in performance substantially in recent years. In the most recent year, KIPP Tech Valley's proficiency rate exceeded that of the district by nearly 30 percentage points.

Comparative Measure: <i>Each year, the school will exceed its expected level of performance on the State math exam by at least a small Effect Size (performing higher than expected to small degree) according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Index	School Year			
	2005-06 (Grade 5) (Tested: 78)	2006-07 (Grades 5-6) (Tested: 146)	2007-08 (Grades 5-7) (Tested: 188)	2008-09 (Grades 5-8) (Tested: 277)
Predicted	52.9	66.0	74.2	83.1
Actual	53.3	74.1	90.7	91.3
Effect Size	0.02	0.44	1.00	0.65

In comparison to demographically similar schools, with the exception of the 2005-06, school year, when the school performed about the same as expected, KIPP Tech Valley has performed better than expected on the state math examination and exceeded its Effect Size target each year.

¹⁷ In 2005-06 English language arts and mathematics testing began in grades 3-8, and the Performance Index was henceforth calculated based on the aggregate of all tested students.

Optional Measure:

The school's Accountability Plan includes the following measure:

Grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by the amount equal to 50 minus the baseline, divided by the number of years remaining until the completion of grade 8 the gap between their average NCE in the previous spring on the Terra Nova, a nationally normed mathematics test, and an NCE of 50 (i.e., grade level) in the current spring.

The Application for Renewal presents no data on its success in achieving this measure. Further, the school did not report on this measure in its Annual Reports for the 2005-06 through 2008-09 school years.

Data were not presented by the school on its success in achieving this measure within its Application for Renewal. Further, the school did not report on this measure in its Annual Reports for the 2005-06 through 2008-09 school years.

Growth Measure: <i>Grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State mathematics exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State mathematics exam.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Percent Level 3 & 4	School Year			
	2005-06	2006-07¹⁸ (Grade 6) (N=54)	2007-08 (Grades 6-7) (N=98)	2008-09 (Grades 6-8) (N=150)
Baseline	-	59.3	78.6	93.3
Target	-	67.2	78.7	93.4
Actual	-	85.2	95.9	96.0
Cohorts Made Target	-	(1 of 1)	(2 of 2)	(2 of 3)

New York State mathematics assessment growth data first became available for analysis in 2006-07. In that year KIPP Tech Valley's lone cohort achieved its target and overall performance improved substantially. In 2007-08, both of the school's cohorts achieved their targets and overall performance again improved. In the most recent year, two out of three of the school's cohorts achieved their targets and overall performance improved.

Science

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

Outcome: Based on the limited data available, the school met its science goal.

Analysis of Accountability Plan Measures:

¹⁸ New York State began administering English language arts and mathematics exams in grades 3-8 in 2005-06, thus year-to-year growth could not be evaluated until 2006-07 when two years' of results were first available.

Absolute Measure: <i>By the 2008-09 school year, 75% of KIPP: TECH VALLEY Charter School students who have been enrolled at the school for two or more years will score proficient (i.e. at level three) or better on the New York State Science examination.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Grade	School Year			
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09 (Tested: 35)
4	-	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	89.0

KIPP Tech Valley first enrolled students in tested grades in the 2008-09 school year; that year 89 percent of students scored proficient on the state science exam and the school exceeded its 75 percent target.

Comparative Measure: <i>On the New York State Science examination, a greater percentage of KIPP: TECH VALLEY Charter School students will score at proficient and advanced levels than will their peers in Albany Public Schools.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Comparison	School Year			
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09 (Grade 8)
School	-	-	-	89.0
District	-	47.0	55.0	NA

While district comparison data for the 2008-09 school year is yet unavailable, KIPP Tech Valley's 89 percent proficiency rate far exceeds the district's performance in each of the two previous years. Assuming district performance increased at a similar rate, the school will have achieved its target.

Social Studies

Accountability Plan Goal: Students at the KIPP Tech Valley Charter School will meet and exceed state standards for mastery of skills and content knowledge in Social Studies, History and Civics.

Outcome: Based on the limited data available, the school met its social studies goal.

Analysis of Accountability Plan Measures:

Absolute Measure: <i>By the 2008-09 school year, 75% of KIPP: TECH VALLEY Charter School students who have been enrolled at the school for two or more years will score proficient (i.e. at level three) or better on the New York State Social Studies assessment.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Grade	School Year			
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09 (Tested: 37)
5	-	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	100.0

KIPP Tech Valley first administered the state social studies test to students who had been enrolled in the school for two or more years in the 2008-09 school year; that year 100 percent of students scored proficient on the state science exam and the school far exceeded its 75 percent target.

Comparative Measure: <i>On the New York State Social Studies assessment, a greater percentage of KIPP: TECH VALLEY Charter School students who have been enrolled at the school for two or more years will score at proficient and advanced levels than will their peers in Albany Public Schools.</i>				
Results (in percents)				
Comparison	School Year			
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09 (Grade 8)
School	-	-	-	100.0
District	-	23.0	38.0	NA

While district comparison data for the 2008-09 school year is yet unavailable, KIPP Tech Valley's 100 percent proficiency rate far exceeds the district's performance in each of the two previous years. Assuming district performance increased at a similar rate, the school will have achieved its target.

NCLB

In addition to meeting its specific subject area goals, the school is expected under No Child Left Behind to made adequate yearly progress towards enabling all students to score at the proficient level on the state English language arts and mathematics exams. In holding charter schools to the same standards as other public schools, the state issues an annual school accountability report that indicates the school's status each year.

Accountability Plan Goal: Under the state's NCLB accountability system, the school's Accountability Status will be "Good Standing" each year.

Outcome: The school met the goal. KIPP Tech Valley was deemed to be in good standing in each of the four years of the Accountability Period.

Absolute Measure: <i>Under the state's NCLB accountability system, the school's Accountability Status will be "Good Standing" each year.</i>				
Results				
Status	School Year			
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Good Standing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes