

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY
KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER
SCHOOL*

REPORT DATE: FEBRUARY 4, 2025

VISIT DATE: OCTOBER 28 – 29, 2024



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

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CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

1 Dudley Heights, Albany, NY | Grades: K-4 | City School District of Albany
 321 Northern Boulevard, Albany, NY | Grades: 5-8 | City School District of Albany



MISSION

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

KIPP CAPITAL REGION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

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CURRENT CHARTER INFORMATION

Year Opened: 2005

Serves: Kindergarten – 8th

Chartered Enrollment: 901

Charter Expires on: July 31, 2025

FUTURE CHARTER INFORMATION

Serves: Kindergarten – 8th

Chartered Enrollment: 852

Charter Expiration July 31, 2030

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Student-centered instruction;	+	High expectations;	+
Developing excellent teachers and leaders;	+	More time in the classroom; and,	+
Data-informed practices;	+	Community and family connected.	+

1. Source: The Institute's board records at the time of report finalization.

"+" : This indicator is generally present.

"-" : This indicator is generally not present.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FULL-TERM RENEWAL

The Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) recommends the SUNY Trustees’ Charter School Committee approve the Application for Charter Renewal of KIPP Tech Valley Charter School (“KIPP Tech Valley”) 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 852 students. The Institute makes this recommendation as KIPP Tech Valley meets the requirements for renewal set forth in the Policies for 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”).²

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KIPP Tech Valley is one of three charter schools operated by KIPP Capital Region Public Charter Schools (“KIPP Capital Region”). In addition to KIPP Tech Valley, KIPP Capital Region also operates KIPP Albany Community Charter School (“KIPP Albany Community”) and KIPP Troy Prep Charter School (“KIPP Troy Prep”). KIPP Capital Region schools receive support from a regional team (the “region” or “regional team”) of staff employed by the education corporation who provide instructional, operational, and back office supports for all three schools, as well as support from the KIPP Public Schools Network, a national foundation that provides instructional resources and support for all KIPP schools.

As KIPP Tech Valley comes to renewal this year, the school has implemented systems leading to a strengthened culture with more consistent staffing at both the primary and middle programs and more rigorous instruction and student engagement. The middle school campus experienced challenges in leader turnover early in the charter term, which led to inconsistent culture expectations and systems. The current middle school leadership team, now in its second year, has emphasized implementing school culture systems and professional development that have resulted in classes where teachers and students are prepared for engaging, focused teaching and learning. Notably, in 2023-24, the school’s proficiency rates among students enrolled for at least two years grew in both English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics.

This year, teachers are capitalizing on the stronger classroom culture to maintain student engagement and deliver more rigorous instruction. The region is adjusting its curricular programs in mathematics and ELA to give teachers a stronger foundation from which to deliver high quality instruction. Recent changes to the organizational structure provided clarity in roles and responsibilities and robust, consistent coaching for building principals and teachers. These changes intensified instructional supports. The results of these supports were evident during the Institute’s observations during the renewal visit, which found that nearly all lessons had clear, measurable objectives and strong student engagement. Despite the school posting academic performance below its absolute targets for proficiency, the school’s performance growth trend and its thoughtful implementation of new supports to ensure high quality instruction provide a solid foundation for continued growth through a subsequent charter term.

2. SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 14) are available on the [Institute’s website](#).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FINDINGS & INFORMATION

Is the charter an academic success?

KIPP Tech Valley consistently improved its academic performance against its ELA and mathematics Accountability Plan goals in each year following the cancellation of state exams due to COVID-19. In the final year of the Accountability Period, KIPP Tech Valley posted high mean growth scores in both subjects and increased the performance gap between the school and district.

The primary school continues to maintain classrooms with warm atmosphere, as it has during previous Institute visits over the charter term. The middle school experienced challenges in developing a strong and focused school culture earlier in the charter term due to leadership transitions. However, the current middle school leadership team has implemented consistent high expectations and supports, strategically focusing on school culture. As a result, the Institute observed classrooms with strong culture focused on academic achievement at both the primary and middle school during both the renewal visit and the prior year's evaluation visit. This has led to increased students engagement with academic material and more time focused on task. The school has improved its quality of instruction with a focus on more purposeful lessons and ensuring that objectives align with grade level standards. KIPP Tech Valley demonstrates success with student performance in the following ways:

- From 2021-22 to 2023-24, the school increased the percentage of students enrolled for at least two years scoring at or above proficiency in ELA by nine percentage points and by 20 percentage points in mathematics.
- In alignment with the school's increase in absolute proficiency, KIPP Tech Valley posted mean growth percentiles above the SUNY target of 50 in both subjects during the final year of the term. This indicates the school is moving all students closer to proficiency at faster rates on average than similar students statewide.
- Although the school did not meet the targets for its comparative effect size measure, KIPP Tech Valley increased its performance against this measure in each year of the term with data suitable for analysis.

Is the charter an effective, viable organization?

KIPP Tech Valley, with support from the regional team, is developing into an effective, viable organization. During the charter term, the three KIPP Capital Region schools merged and formed the regional team. With this, schools across the education corporation faced growing pains in conforming to one umbrella of an organization facing the after-effects of COVID-19. To that end, at the time of the renewal visit, KIPP Capital Region demonstrated improvement in its structure to meet the needs of schools. The organization now employs both a chief academic officer and a chief schools officer, which more effectively delineates specific supports between curricular programs and principal supervision. In continuing to build out the regional team supports, the organization should ensure an entire suite of instructional leaders at both regional and school levels have clearly delineated roles and expectations in order to deliver the most effective supports that yield increased student outcomes.

The board is also growing its skills in oversight of the three schools. Board members demonstrated increased urgency for driving improvement across all schools in the education corporation in comparison to previous Institute visits. The board considers its makeup carefully and plans to expand to 15 members in the next charter term. The board is also making better use of its committee and reporting structures to be well-informed about specific issues and challenges.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Is the charter fiscally sound³?

KIPP Capital Region is fiscally sound based on the Institute’s review of the renewal documentation. The education corporation established a sound budget projecting method that considers and creates reasonable and achievable projections and fiscal goals. The education corporation’s finance team meets quarterly with the board to discuss results and monitor variances. KIPP Capital Region maintained strong enrollment numbers throughout the current charter term and maintained adequate revenues to cover its expenses. KIPP Capital Region had no material weaknesses or internal control issues in the 2023-24 annual financial audit and preserves a separate dissolution account with the appropriate amounts as required by the charter agreement.

KIPP Capital Region demonstrated strong financial performance during the current charter term, with net assets (\$24.7 million), and cash (3.3 months on hand) reserves growing each year. It has consistently achieved high scores across all fiscal metrics tracked by the Institute throughout the term. The education corporation maintained consistent teacher to student ratios throughout the current charter term and adjusted when necessary. The network prioritized spending on the new high school facility which it plans to move into during the proposed charter term.

If the SUNY Trustees renew the charter, are the education corporation’s plans for the charter reasonable, feasible, and achievable?

KIPP Capital Region’s plans for KIPP Tech Valley are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The school intends to continue building upon improvements made to the structure and effectiveness of regional team supports. With new reporting structures across the organization, these improvements will give principals increased autonomy over choices that will impact their communities. The school will focus on raising rigor of instruction as well as building more opportunities to align the elementary and middle school program cultures. The education corporation is also nearing completion of a new high school facility adjacent to the KIPP Tech Valley elementary and middle school facilities. While high school grades will continue to be served under KIPP Troy Prep’s charter, the new facility will centralize the high school site so that students from all three KIPP Capital Region schools have improved access and transportation.

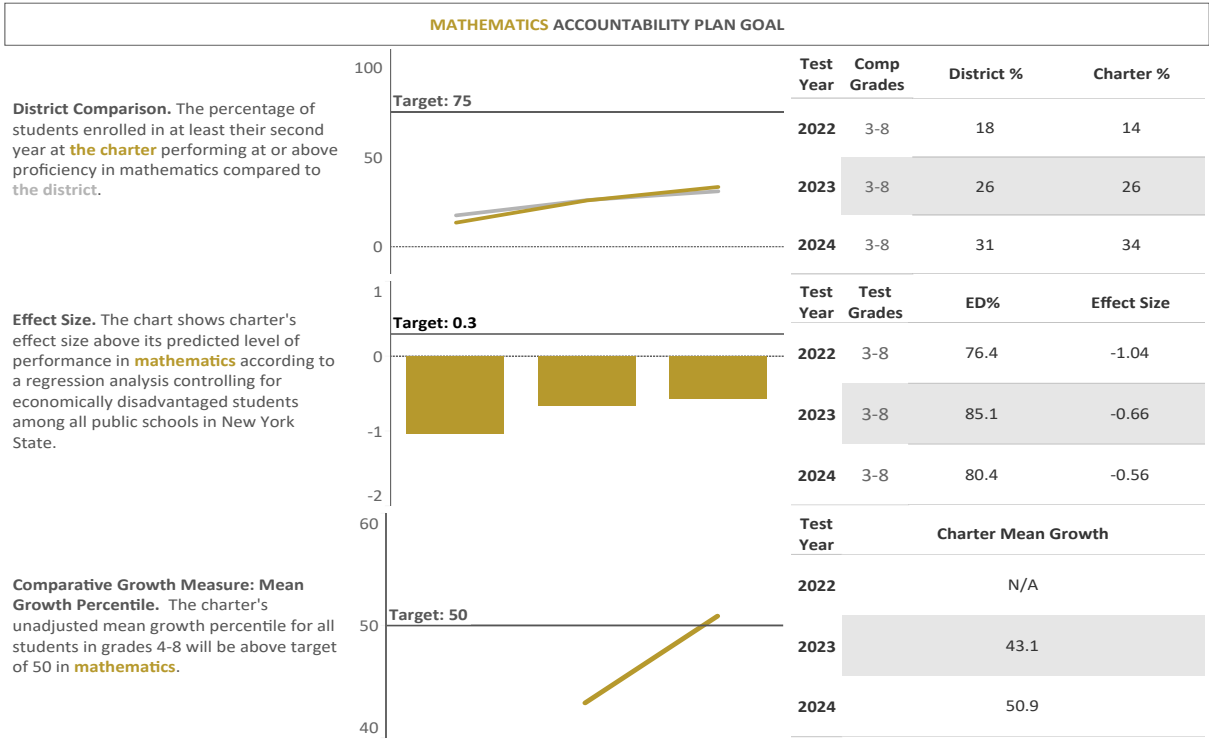
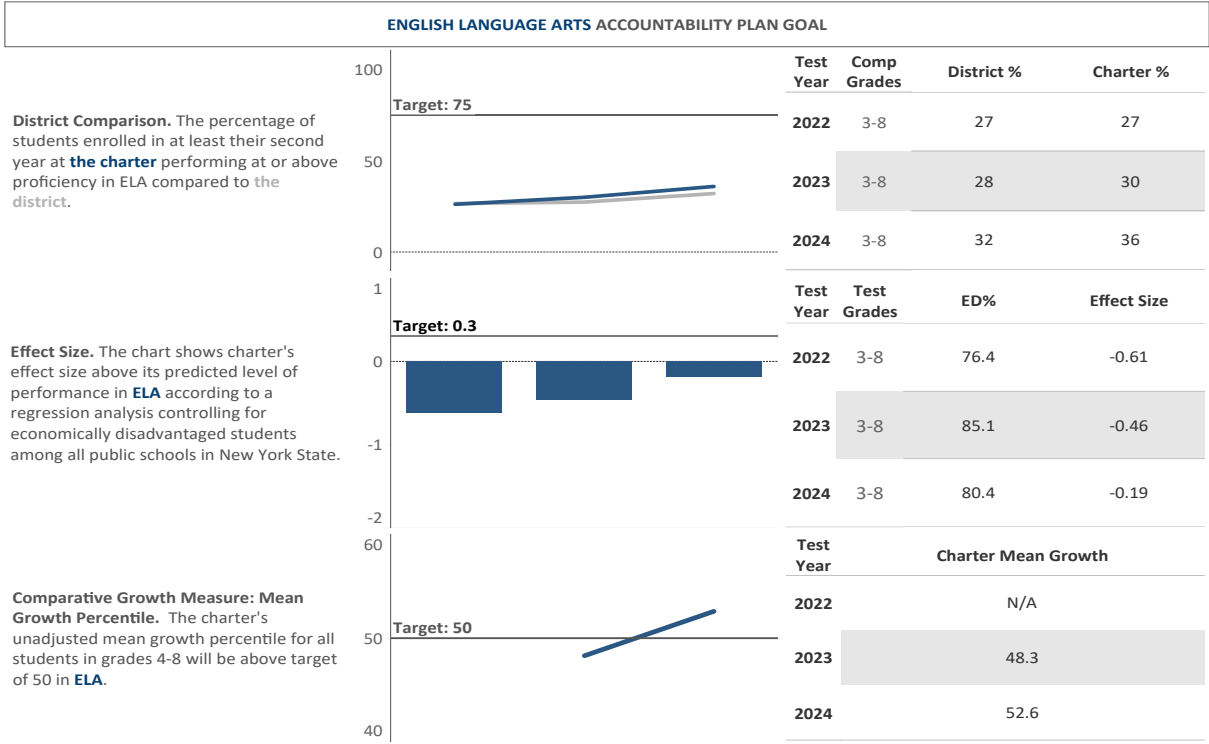
KIPP Capital Region proposes a reasonable and achievable budget plan for the next charter term. The Institute has confidence that KIPP Capital Region will continue to be a financial success in the next charter term.

3. 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 blue – gray – orange. 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.



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

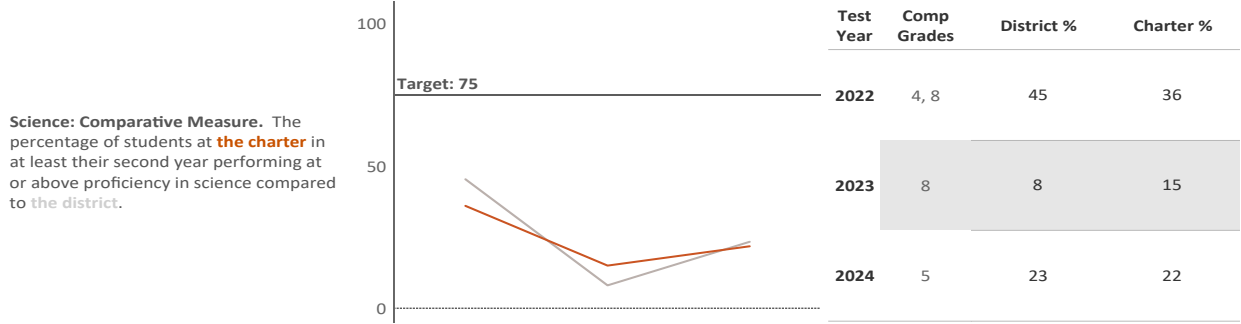




ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



TESTED PERCENTAGES

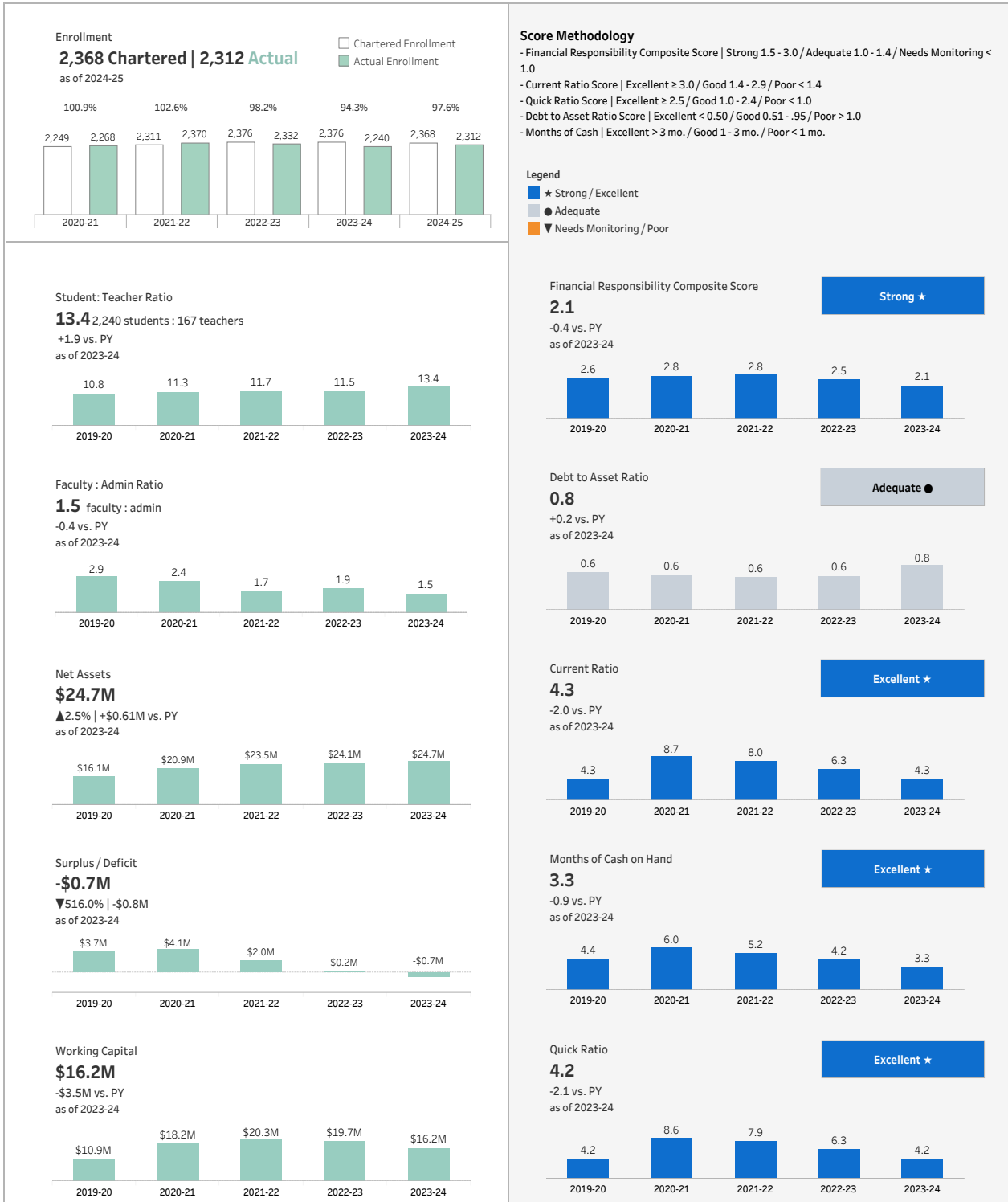
	2022		2023		2024	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
School Tested Number	574	575	570	559	524	526
School Tested %	90.5%	91.1%	97.9%	96.5%	97.4%	97.6%
District Tested %	81.6%	77.1%	85.7%	87.5%	85.7%	89.0%

SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE*

	2022	2023	2024
Students with Disabilities Tested on State Exam	27	29	36
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	0.0	3.4	5.6
District Percent Proficient	2.0	3.1	7.5
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	20	27	25
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	15.0	11.1	36.0

* The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and English language learners ("ELLs") above is not tied to separate goals in the charter school's formal Accountability Plan. The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is a standardized state exam. "Making Progress" is defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering; Emerging; Transitioning; Expanding; and, Commanding. In order to comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations on reporting education outcome data, the Institute does not report assessment results for groups containing five or fewer students and indicates this with an "s".

KIPP CAPITAL REGION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS



FISCAL DASHBOARD

KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL



COMPLIANCE REPORTING



HAS THE SCHOOL SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIED WITH APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND PROVISIONS OF ITS CHARTER?

The education corporation substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and provisions of its charter. During the current charter term, the education corporation demonstrates a clear record of compliance with the terms of its charter including the timely submission of required reporting to the Institute.

Annual Reports

The 2023-24 annual report, comprised of the August 1st submission, Accountability Plan Progress Report, and financial audit, needs to be posted on the website. The Institute will ensure compliance prior to the start of the next charter term.

Board Minutes

The board meeting minutes for the past several years are available on the website, but the most recent minutes from the 2024-25 school year need to be posted. The Institute will ensure compliance prior to the start of the next charter term.

English Language Learners

While KIPP Tech Valley’s written English language learner (“ELL”) program is legally compliant, the school’s current implementation does not consistently leverage identified best practice strategies to support ELLs’ access to lesson content during instruction. The Institute will work with the school to ensure proper implementation of the ELL program before the start of the next charter term.

Teacher Certification

The New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998 (the “Act”) allows charters to hire up to 15 uncertified lead teachers contingent upon those teachers meeting certain requirements including: two years of Teach for America experience; three years of teaching experience; status as a higher education professor; exceptional experience in a subject; or, teaching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics or career and technical education courses.

KIPP Tech Valley regularly analyzes its salary scale and benefits to remain competitive in the hiring market. Throughout the year, KIPP Tech Valley and the network monitor teacher certification statuses.

KIPP Tech Valley offers a tuition assistance reimbursement program and reimburses eligible employees for approved tuition, exam fees, and initial licensing/credentialing expenses up to \$4,000 per fiscal school year. KIPP Tech Valley also partners with Grand Canyon University which provides discounted teacher coursework and Relay Graduate School of Education which offers professional development opportunities that assist leaders and teacher in maintaining certifications.

At the time of the renewal review, the school employed 40 lead teachers. Of the 40 lead teachers, 26 were uncertified, which is 11 teachers over the allowable limit under the Act. Of the 26 uncertified teachers, all met the appropriate qualifications under the Act.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION & ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

To report on parent satisfaction with the charter’s program, the Institute used satisfaction survey data, information gathered from a focus group of parents representing a cross section of students, and data regarding persistence in enrollment.

Parent Survey Data

The Institute compiled data from the school’s annual family survey. The school conducts at least an annual survey to gauge family satisfaction. In 2023-24, 7% of families responded to the survey. Of those respondents, 75% indicated satisfaction with the school. The Institute recognizes the low response rate may not be representative of the whole community.

Parent Focus Group

The Institute asks all charters facing renewal to convene a representative set of parents for a focus group discussion. A representative set includes parents of students in attendance at the school for multiple years, parents of students new to the school, parents of students receiving general education services, parents of students with special needs, and parents of ELLs. The 11 parents in attendance at the focus group indicated satisfaction with the school’s primary program and confidence in the middle school program’s principal to continue developing a positive school culture and increasing academic achievement. Parents expressed general satisfaction with the school’s communication about their students’ academic progress and schoolwide events. Some focus group participants described their efforts to work with the school to ensure it appropriately supported students’ special learning needs. Although dissatisfied with the need to advocate for their children in the first place, the parents reported they were satisfied with the outcome of the conversations and remain content with the school’s support for their students’ needs. Parents participating in the focus group unanimously expressed their desire for more extra-curricular activities like sports and clubs.

Public 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 full text of any written comments received from the district appears below, which also includes a summary of any public comments.

The City School District of Albany held its required hearing on the KIPP Tech Valley renewal application on October 24, 2024. No one spoke in support of or in opposition to the application.





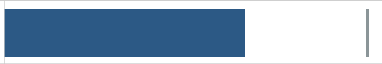
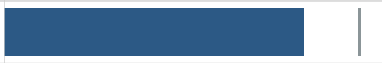
Enrollment and Retention

KIPP Tech Valley makes good faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. The school exceeds its enrollment target for economically disadvantaged students and does not meet the enrollment targets for ELLs or students with disabilities. Although the school did not meet its retention targets for the subgroups, the retention rates are commensurate with the school’s overall persistence in enrollment.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION & ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

Persistence in Enrollment An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2023–24, 75% of KIPP Tech Valley students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in the student demographics section of the report.

The Institute derived the statistical information on persistence in enrollment from its database. No comparative data from the NYCDOE or the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”) is available to the Institute to provide either district or statewide context.

KIPP Tech Valley Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2023-24			Target	Charter
enrollment	economically disadvantaged		73.8	82.1
	English language learners		10.6	2.8
	students with disabilities		9.9	6.0
retention	economically disadvantaged		92.4	72.1
	English language learners		95.5	63.6
	students with disabilities		93.6	79.1

KIPP Tech Valley

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APPENDICES

PAGES Ax 1-13

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CHARTER
OVERVIEW

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BS^B
BENCHMARK
SUMMARY

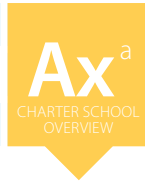
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SD^C
STUDENT
DEMOGRAPHICS

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FB^D
FISCAL
BENCHMARKS

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CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ¹	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	845	851	101%	K – 8
2021-22	845	932	110%	K – 8
2022-23	901	909	101%	K – 8
2023-24	901	825	92%	K – 8
2024-25	901	848	94%	K – 8

CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2005-06	First Year Visit	March 23, 2006
2006-07	Evaluation Visit	March 1, 2007
2007-08	Evaluation Visit	April 29 – 30, 2008
2009-10	Initial Renewal	December 1 – 3, 2009
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	October 21, 2011
2013-14	Evaluation Visit	September 23 – 24, 2013
2014-15	Subsequent Renewal Visit	December 9, 2014
2019-20	Subsequent Renewal Visit	December 10 – 11, 2019
2022-23	Evaluation Visit	March 21, 2023
2023-24	Evaluation Visit	March 14 – 15, 2024
2024-25	Subsequent Renewal Visit	October 28 – 29, 2024

CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL REVIEW

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
October 28 – 29, 2024	Jeff Wasbes	External Consultant
	Keegan Prue	Managing Director of Strategy and Communications
	Andrew Kile	Director of School Evaluation
	Vickie Masseus	External Consultant

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

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

After posting low absolute achievement in the first year with credible data suitable for analysis following the cancellation of state exams, KIPP Tech Valley demonstrated consistent growth and came close to meeting its key academic Accountability Plan goals in the final year of its charter term. The school posted increases across all absolute, comparative, and growth measures included under its English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics goal areas.

In ELA, KIPP Tech Valley posted consistent growth from 2021-22 through 2023-24. The school’s students enrolled in at least their second year posted proficiency rates that met or exceeded the district in all three years. After posting a mean growth percentile under the target in 2022-23, KIPP Tech Valley increased its absolute proficiency rate by six percentage points the following year and posted a mean growth percentile three points above the target. The school must continue to increase the learning of all students and demonstrate improved performance against its effect size measure.

KIPP Tech Valley posted a similar record of performance in mathematics over the charter term. From 2021-22 to 2023-24, the school’s students enrolled in at least their second year increased their proficiency rate by 20 percentage points. KIPP Tech Valley outperformed the district in the most recent year after performing at or just below the district in the two prior years. The school posted a mean growth percentile one point above the target in 2023-24 which aligns to the school’s meaningful increase in proficiency rate. In contrast, the school did not meet its effect size measure over the term but improved its performance on the metric year over year.

ASSESSMENT

KIPP Tech Valley has a comprehensive assessment system designed to enhance instructional effectiveness and improve student outcomes. The school uses a variety of valid and reliable assessments to measure student progress and guide instruction. These include i-Ready and DIBELS, which are administered three times a year, as well as interim exams, curriculum-based unit assessments, and annual interim assessments. Teachers also incorporate quick-check, formative assessments to gather real-time data on student learning during lessons and adjust teaching strategies accordingly, although lesson observations found sporadic evidence that teachers use these quick-check assessments to effectively adjust instruction when student misconceptions arise.

Teachers and leaders use i-Ready to track student growth and progress toward specific learning goals. They use DIBELS to identify targeted areas for improvement in reading and to pinpoint students who may require tiered interventions. Teachers also use unit assessments to measure student progress against grade-level standards and inform adjustments to upcoming lessons and activities. Teachers analyze these data weekly and use the results to form small groups for daily intervention, offering individualized or small-group instruction to address specific student needs.

Additionally, the school uses assessment data to evaluate and support teachers’ instructional practices, identifying areas for growth to better meet the needs of their students. Regular communication with parents ensures that they stay informed about student progress and the steps being taken to support student learning.

CURRICULUM

KIPP Tech Valley has a curriculum aligned to New York State standards, using robust programs such as Illustrative Math, Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts (“CKLA”), Fishtank, and the KIPP Foundation Wheatley for ELA. The school provides teachers with a clear structure for instructional planning and supports their ongoing development through professional development sessions that focus on lesson internalization, collaborative planning, and one-on-one coaching. During weekly schoolwide professional development sessions and department meetings, leaders oversee teachers in conducting unit and lesson internalization to ensure high-quality, standards-aligned lesson plans.

The school’s instructional leaders encourage teachers to adapt lessons based on student needs and abilities. For example, two grade levels at the middle program adjusted the delivery of Illustrative Math to utilize an gradual release (I do, we do, you do) structure to better leverage students’ strengths and ensure all students can engage with the curriculum. While teachers have autonomy to modify lesson delivery, continued effort from school leaders and regional coaches support them in planning lessons that meet the needs of all learners—especially students with disabilities, English language learners (“ELLs”), and those at risk of academic failure.

Despite the structured support, the school has identified a need to improve intentional differentiation in lesson planning and delivery. While school leaders recognize the importance of meeting diverse student needs, they are still developing strategies for consistent differentiation in planning documents, student materials, and classroom practices. Leaders are committed to helping teachers refine their practice in this area, ensuring all students can access and benefit from the curriculum.

PEDAGOGY

Having made significant improvements in instructional quality over the current charter term, lessons at KIPP Tech Valley now consistently include rigorous, standards-aligned objectives and nearly all classrooms demonstrate a focused and positive culture. With that foundation in place, school leaders have the opportunity to increase supports for teachers to incorporate stronger systems to check for student understanding, differentiate instruction for different learner needs, and provide more opportunities for rigorous higher order thinking tasks.

Having made several shifts to increase the quality of curricula and instructional materials over the current charter term, lessons at KIPP Tech Valley present clear, standards-aligned objectives aligned to engaging activities across all grades. Instructional leaders have improved lesson planning supports so teachers deliver consistently structured lessons and use common rubrics to assess implementation and provide feedback. Classrooms consistently demonstrate an environment conducive to learning, which is a notable improvement particularly at the middle school. Leaders have focused heavily on supporting teachers to develop consistent classroom routines. The school has also shifted to incorporate more incentives such as Dojo points to create a culture that recognizes positive student behavior.

With these improvements in place, KIPP Tech Valley must continue to work to improve systems to check for understanding within lessons and provide more opportunities for rigorous learning activities that push student thinking. While about half of lessons observed incorporated practices to check for understanding such as

having students show hand signals or circulating to look at student work, few classrooms used effective systems to collect information based on those checks for understanding and address student misconceptions in the moment. Similarly, just under half of lessons observed included some limited opportunities for higher order thinking such as having students discuss or debate answers in small groups. School leaders identified a priority of increasing student voice in classrooms, which should be a focus area over the next charter term to help increase rigor.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

KIPP Tech Valley's school-based and regional leaders are developing systems and structures to deliver consistent and effective instructional leadership. Since the Institute's evaluation visit in Spring 2024, the regional talent team improved recruitment systems to alleviate staffing challenges that significantly hindered instructional leaders' capacity over much of the charter term. At the same time, the region made a strategic shift to add a chief schools officer and three principal managers to provide consistent expectations, guidance, and support for instructional leaders at the schools. This year, instructional leaders at the schools are able to deliver more consistent training and support to improve teaching quality as a result of these shifts in organizational structure.

Each school has a principal, assistant principal, and instructional coaches who primarily comprise the instructional leadership team and both manage and coach teachers. Regional and school-based leaders leverage common rubrics from the KIPP national team and rubrics developed by the regional team to provide clear expectations and guide professional development, observations, and coaching. For instance, instructional leaders focused heavily on supporting teachers to enact effective classroom routines at the beginning of the year. Instructional leaders trained teachers on the rubrics for classroom routines, delivered professional development on how to plan and implement effective routines including practice-based sessions, and then used the rubrics to provide focused feedback during the first weeks of school. This practice has contributed to the strong classroom culture evident in most classes across the KIPP Tech Valley.

Teachers receive consistent support and coaching. Each teacher has a dedicated coach and manager from the instructional leadership team, and teachers have one-on-one meetings and coaching on a regular basis with that individual. Teachers submit lesson plans each week and receive feedback on those plans, which teachers report is helpful and aligned with current school priorities. Teachers also engage in regular professional development, with weekly grade team meetings led by school-based instructional leaders, and weekly trainings led by school instructional leaders and regional instructional team staff.

With a robust and fully staffed leadership team in place, the school and regional staff can work to maximize the leverage and impact of each instructional leader. The school has the opportunity to refine systems over the next charter term to ensure that all regional and school-based instructional leaders have clear roles and goals to continue to improve leader and teacher practice.

AT-RISK PROGRAM

KIPP Tech Valley has appropriate procedures to identify students with disabilities, ELLs, and students struggling academically, but has systems to meet only some educational needs of at-risk students. In the elementary program, general education teachers, special education teachers, and interventionists implement effective techniques to support all lead teachers in the classroom and a cohesive intervention schedule to meet the needs of at-risk students. Leaders use i-Ready and state assessment data to sort students into small group interventions for ELA and mathematics during which teachers provide targeted instruction based on students' goals. Teachers monitor progress every two weeks, and the school's child study team reviews multiple data sources to determine whether and why students are stagnating and moves at-risk students through a multi-tiered system of supports to address documented gaps. The child study team communicates with parents throughout the process and compiles data to make a referral to the district's committee on special education ("CSE") when needed, under the guidance of the director of student supports and school psychologist.

Despite the strong practices evident at the elementary school program, the middle school program does not implement a defined response to intervention ("RTI") system to support students struggling academically. Middle school leaders were able to describe changes in place to establish an effective, tiered continuum of services to ensure students who do not make adequate growth or otherwise struggle in the general classroom setting receive appropriate supports but teachers were not able to articulate the same at the time of the visit. Without full implementation of the school's plans, interventionists, special education teachers, and general education teachers continue to operate in isolation without a clear RTI system or opportunities to collaborate on student needs and strategies for supporting all learners in the classroom. Classroom lead teachers facilitate leveled i-Ready practice for all students during 30 minutes of each core content period, and specialized teachers pull small groups of students who are one to two grade levels behind during this block; however, the school's process for monitoring and referring students who make insufficient growth within the existing structures is ineffective.

While KIPP Tech Valley's written ELL program is legally compliant, the school's current implementation only addresses baseline learner needs. Despite school-wide performance in ELA increasing for all students in the last three years, performance for the ELL subgroup declined during the same time. Though the regional director of special education has specialized English language acquisition qualifications, no staff members at the elementary or middle school programs have specialized titles or training to support ELLs apart from the school-based professional development sessions. Due to current staffing, a special education teacher provides language acquisition support in small group instruction in a pull out setting. The quality of supports observed in classrooms does not match best practice. Lead teachers in classrooms miss opportunities to implement identified best practice strategies to support ELLs' access to lesson content during instruction.

Across the Kindergarten – 8th grade program, at-risk program staff members cite a lack of special education, intervention, and ELL centered professional development and training at the regional level. This, combined with the school's inadequate collaboration time between lead classroom teachers, special education teachers, and ELL service providers, creates a porous system that may allow struggling students to fall through the cracks without sufficient support to meet academic goals. Teachers and leaders require additional time, resources, and guidance to prioritize programming for at-risk students. The school has the opportunity to increase formal collaboration opportunities between leaders, at-risk programming staff, and general education teachers to improve the quality and consistency of support systems throughout the school.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

KIPP Tech Valley has an administrative structure with staff members, operational systems, policies, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program. The school has undergone significant organizational changes, particularly with the restructuring of the regional team to separate academics from principal management. This reorganization has placed principals of the primary and middle programs under the supervision of a managing director, who reports to the chief schools officer, with both of the latter two positions being new to the organization. This shift aims to streamline leadership and create clearer accountability lines. School leaders can achieve decision-making efficiency as the regional leaders clarify and document who to go to for what between the chief academic officer and the chief schools officer.

The school-based leadership model has also shifted away from the co-leader model of previous years. Directors of operations (“DOOs”) now report directly to the principals. This change is designed to align with other KIPP schools and enhance school accountability by empowering principals, as all staff members now report to a principal. Additional support is still needed for principals to understand the role of the DOO and how best to support them beyond the coaching they receive from the managing director of school health. Overall, as KIPP Tech Valley makes modifications toward structures and procedures that promote a positive, nurturing culture for students and staff members alike, the school would benefit from using the larger KIPP national network as an initial resource when navigating new issues that arise or searching for best practices.

KIPP Tech Valley has significantly improved its school culture and student engagement in learning activities, particularly at the middle school level. This positive shift is evidenced by a notably improved classroom culture in comparison to prior Institute evaluation visits over the current charter term. The school has multiple adults in classrooms and support staff members available for rapid behavioral interventions. Leaders credit the shift in culture with improved teacher recruitment, retention, and attendance, enabling instructional leaders to concentrate on coaching rather than managing class coverage due to absences or vacancies. Unlike previous years, the school began the year nearly fully staffed with only one leadership and one staff member vacancy, which leaders cite as a testament to the effectiveness of recent changes.

The annual TNTP Insight Survey has become an essential barometer for assessing staff member satisfaction, with leaders reporting that data show that recent shifts have positively influenced how staff members perceive support in their roles. For continuous temperature checks, leaders facilitate intermittent staff member surveys and feedback sessions, and teachers reported seeing changes because of these evidence-gathering opportunities.

DOOs work regularly with the managing director of school health to lead initiatives related to student enrollment, recruitment, attendance, and retention efforts. Weekly meetings among DOOs are designed for collaboration on strategies to boost attendance and enhance recruitment efforts. The school is actively working to recruit and retain multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and those eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. Although KIPP Tech Valley maintains adequate enrollment, it still faces challenges in meeting targets for ELLs and students with disabilities. While the school serves more ELLs at the middle school level than targeted, the primary program is not meeting its enrollment goals for ELLs.

To address the enrollment challenges for ELLs, KIPP Capital Region altered its enrollment preferences to provide admission priorities for this group. KIPP Tech Valley has also established partnerships with local daycare centers offering specialized services, which facilitate communication with families about opportunities at the school, especially for students with disabilities and those in need of English learner supports as they transition to Kindergarten.

BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

KIPP Tech Valley's board works to meet the school's Accountability Plan goals. During this charter term, the board approved the creation of new leadership positions at both the school and regional levels to enhance support for school-based leaders, which has contributed to the school's development. The board conducts regular meetings with school leaders to analyze data dashboards and engages actively through board committees, effectively monitoring the school's operations and academic program while assessing the impact of school leaders.

The KIPP Tech Valley board consists of members with diverse professional skills relevant to oversight of the school, including experience in finance, law, Kindergarten – 12th grade education, diversity, equity, inclusion, community engagement, non-profits, management, and governance. The board plans to recruit new members in the future, particularly those with expertise in Kindergarten – 12th grade academics, special education, and finance. The board aims to expand to 15 members, adding two more members to each committee in preparation for opening their new high school facility and moving it from Troy to Albany, and addressing the expanded needs of the region.

The board requests and receives information necessary for effective governance of the school's programs and finances. The school's executive director, chief officers, managing directors, principals, and regional leaders provide updates at each board meeting. KIPP Tech Valley's board establishes priorities and long-range plans based on systematic data reviews, with tailored 2024-25 goals for the region aimed at academic growth, attendance, student behavior, parent participation, and community engagement.

With the new managing director in place and principals reporting directly to that role, the board emphasizes support for principals and provides coaching in their positions. This focus on principal roles has resulted in stronger accountability systems, as evidenced by regular data delivery to the academic committee and the full board, serving as continuous assessments of leadership impact and cultural change at the schools. The board previously directed leaders to review the discipline policy and its implementation to address high suspension rates, leading to measurable changes in school culture that also positively affected teacher satisfaction, hiring, and retention. Currently, the board collaborates with school leaders to analyze data on how well the school serves ELLs and students with disabilities, aiming to enhance recruitment, programming, retention, and academic outcomes for these student groups.

The board effectively hires and retains key personnel and provides them with internal and external resources for effective functioning. It is establishing a practice of contacting the KIPP Foundation for resources and encouraging school leaders to participate in national convenings for collaboration and training opportunities. KIPP Tech Valley's board conducts an annual evaluation of the executive director and identifies specific areas for development, informed by KIPP's Leadership Competency Model and driven by clearly defined goals. For the 2023-24 school year, the executive director focused on measurable goals in mathematics and ELA growth,

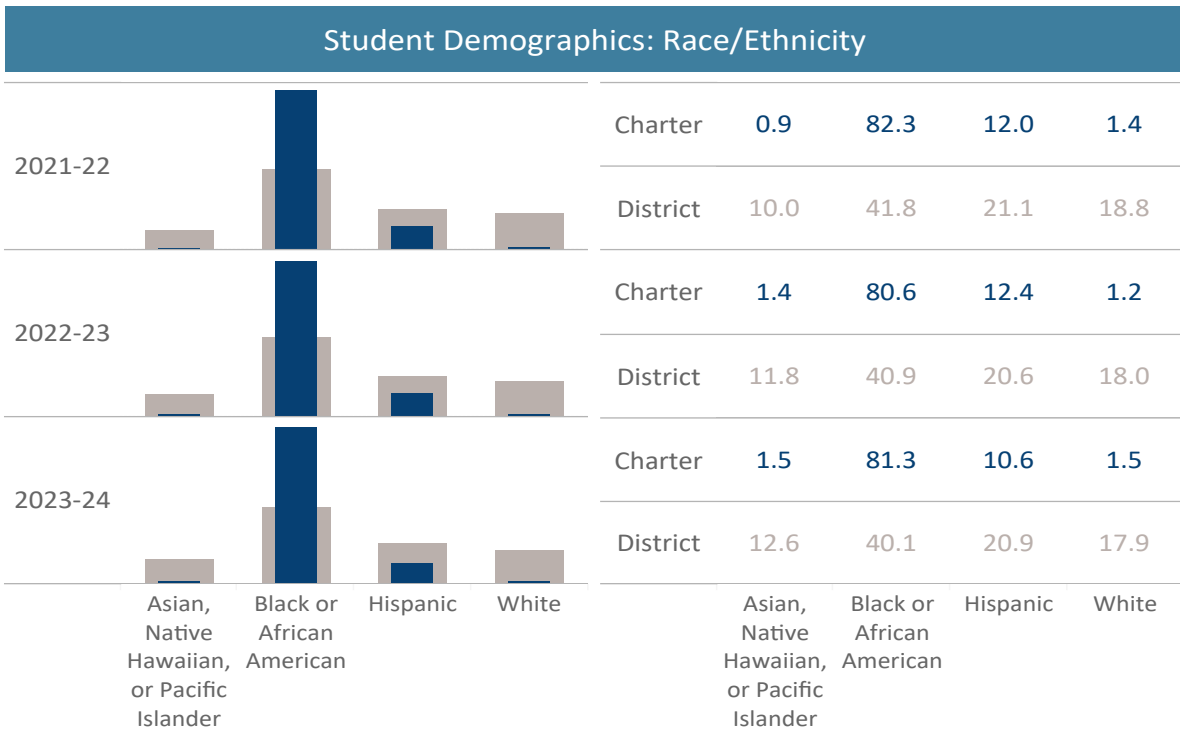
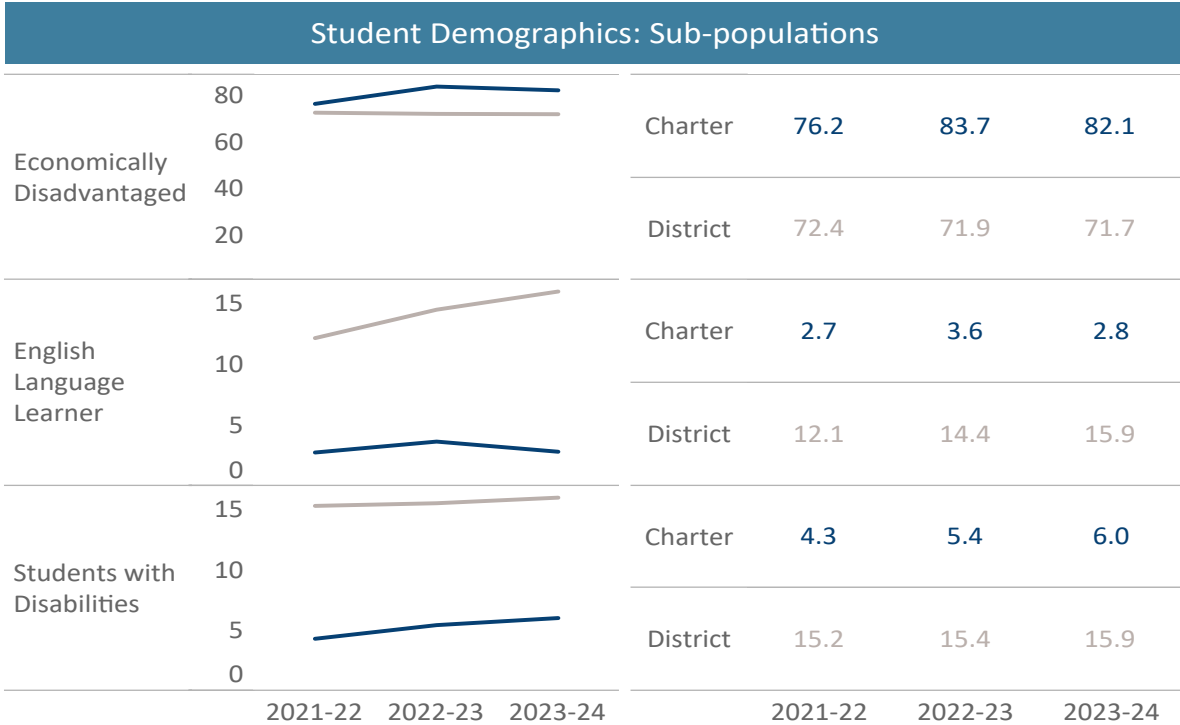
timely construction of the high school building, restructuring leadership teams, and shepherding the staff through personnel and infrastructure changes. The board intends to implement a mid-year evaluation of the chief executive officer to keep an emphasis on the urgency of improving academic results. The leadership structure includes the chief executive officer working alongside a chief of schools and academics, providing targeted support to school leaders through the chief officers to facilitate academic and cultural growth at the schools.

The board has increased its focus on family engagement. Although the schools have developed effective communication and parent feedback opportunities, the board identified a need to further develop its engagement with the school's community, with a regional director playing a critical role in shaping the initiative.



KIPP Tech Valley Charter School

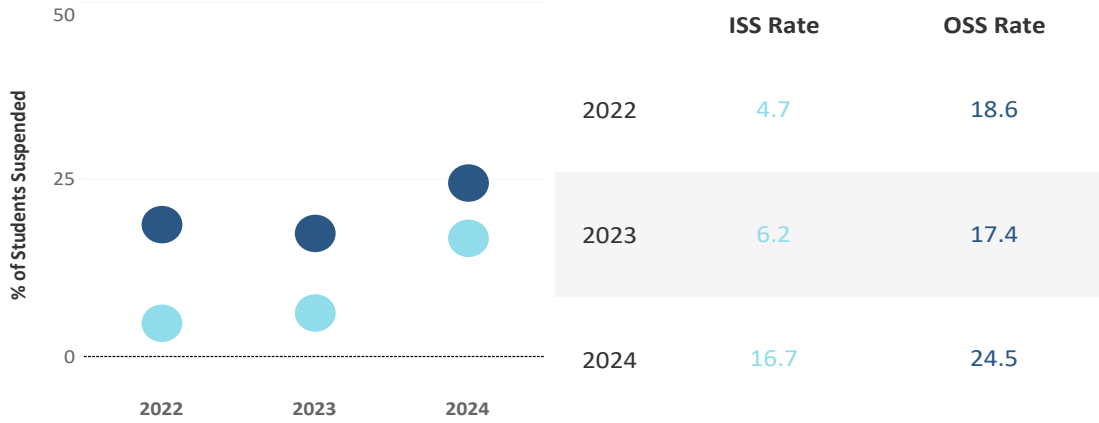
Albany City School District



* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED.



KIPP Tech Valley Charter School



Data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by NYCDOE: the total number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

Persistence in Enrollment: The percentage of students eligible to return from previous year who did return



Expulsions: The number of students expelled from the charter each year

	2022	2023	2024
	0	0	0

* Data reported in these charts reflect information reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.

FISCAL BENCHMARKS SUMMARY



DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION OPERATE PURSUANT TO A FISCAL PLAN WITH REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT IT MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE?

The education corporation operates pursuant to a long-range financial plan in which it creates realistic budgets that it monitors and adjusts when appropriate. The following elements are generally present:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation has clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures.	+
Board members, charter management, and staff members contribute to the budget process, as appropriate.	+
The education corporation frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan for the charter to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions.	+
The education corporation routinely analyzes budget variances for the charter; the board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions.	+
Actual expenses are equal to, or less than, actual revenue with no material exceptions.	+

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES?

The education corporation maintains appropriate internal controls and procedures. The following elements are generally present:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation has a history of sound fiscal policies, procedures, and practices, and appropriate internal controls.	+
The most recent audit report was free of any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.	+

"+" : This indicator is generally present.

"-" : This indicator is generally not present.

"P" : The education corporation is progressing toward this indicator being present.

"N/A" : This indicator is not applicable.

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
<p>The education corporation reviews and updates its Financial Policies and Procedures Manual (“FPPM”), which covers the charter, on a regular basis. The most recent review of the FPPM is found in the next column. The Institute recommends, as a best practice, that the education corporation review and update its FPPM on an annual basis to ensure current operating systems are reflected.</p>	<p>JUNE 2023</p>

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

The education corporation 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. The following reports will have generally been filed in a timely, accurate, and complete manner:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
Annual financial statement audit reports, including federal Single Audit report, if applicable.	+
Annual budgets.	+
Un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment.	+
Bi-monthly enrollment reports to the sending districts and, if applicable, to NYSED including proper documentation regarding the level of special education services provided to students.	N/A
Grant expenditure reports.	N/A

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE STABLE OPERATIONS?

The education corporation maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. Critical financial needs of the charter are not dependent on variable income (grants, donations and fundraising). The following elements are generally present:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills and those that are due shortly.	+
The education corporation maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses in the event of income loss (generally 30 days).	+
The education corporation prepares and monitors cash flow projections.	+
If the education corporation includes philanthropy in its budget, it monitors progress toward its development goals on a periodic basis.	N/A
If necessary, the education corporation pursues district state aid intercepts with NYSED to ensure adequate per pupil funding.	N/A
The education corporation accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the charter’s operating budget for the upcoming year.	+
The education corporation is in compliance with all loan covenants.	+



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