

KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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KIPP TECH VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL APPROVED BY SUNY TRUSTEES

New Albany Middle School Will Serve 360 Students, Grades 5-8

ALBANY, NY – January 27, 2004 - The KIPP Tech Valley Charter School was approved today by a vote of the State University of New York Board of Trustees.

Scheduled to open in July of 2005, the new Albany public middle school will focus on academic achievement, good student conduct, and preparing students for college. This charter school will offer full-day classes until 5 p.m., a longer school year, homework every night, challenging math and English classes, and a student dress code. The school will start small by initially serving 90 fifth-grade students and expand by adding one grade each year until it serves 360 students in grades 5-8.

“We are excited to provide parents with a choice at the middle school level and to help improve public school education in Albany,” said John Reilly, lead applicant for the KIPP Tech Valley Charter School. Mr. Reilly is president and co-founder of Dynamic Applications, a software development company based in the Capital Region.

The grass roots effort to bring the first KIPP School to Albany has been spearheaded by a diverse group of community leaders with backgrounds in education, business, law, and technology.

“We are thrilled by the Board of Trustees’ decision,” explains Dave Levin, KIPP Co-Founder and Superintendent of KIPP Academy in the South Bronx, who is working with the local group. “Now that we have been approved to open, we will fully focus our efforts on finding that special educator who can build a school culture of excellence.”

The school has strong community support. An independent poll conducted in November 2003 of public-school parents throughout the city of Albany found that an overwhelming 74 percent of respondents had a favorable opinion of the proposed KIPP Tech Valley Charter School and that 60 percent were likely to consider enrolling their children there.

KIPP Tech Valley was one of three charter school proposals approved by the SUNY Trustees today, and the only one from the Capital Region. It will be first charter school in Albany to serve exclusively middle school students. There are now 61 charter schools operating or approved to open across New York State. Parents interested in receiving enrollment materials

or more information on the school should contact the Albany-based New York Charter Schools Association at (518) 694-3110.

About KIPP

KIPP began in 1994 when Dave Levin and Mike Feinberg launched a program for fifth graders in a public school in inner-city Houston, Texas. In 1995, Levin established KIPP Academy in the South Bronx and Feinberg's KIPP Academy Houston became one of Houston's first charter schools. Both original KIPP schools have a sustained record of high student achievement. Since 1998, KIPP Academy has been the highest performing public middle school in the Bronx in terms of reading scores, mathematics, and attendance. The KIPP family of schools has grown to 31 public schools that now serve students in 13 states and the District of Columbia.

Established in 2000, the non-profit KIPP organization recruits, trains, and supports outstanding teachers who open college-prep public schools in high need communities across the country. KIPP helps arrange for facilities and operating contracts while training school leaders through the year-long program that includes coursework at the University of California's HAAS School of Business, "residencies" at other KIPP schools, and support from expert KIPP staff.

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A list of features of the KIPP Tech Valley Charter School is attached.

Characteristics of KIPP Tech Valley Charter School

- School design based on the highly-effective KIPP middle schools located in various urban areas throughout the country, including the KIPP Academy in the South Bronx, the highest performing public school in the Bronx for six years running. For more information, see www.KIPP.org.
- Small school setting; incremental student population growth (90 5th-grade students in first year; expanding to 360 students in grades 5-8).
- Students wear school uniforms to eliminate unnecessary distractions.
- Classes begin with a mandatory summer session in July.
- Extended school day running from 7:25 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Each school day includes 1 ½ hours of instruction for both English Language Arts and mathematics.
- Extended school week that includes at least two Saturdays per month.
- Extended school year that is in session for over 220 days and includes three to four weeks during the summer.
- In addition to weekly tests and quizzes in each class, annual standardized assessments will be administered in English language arts and mathematics, all New York State assessments will be given, and the Stanford 10 Student Achievement Test will be administered to all students annually to measure academic growth.