

FINAL APPLICATION REVIEW 2010-2011

Proposed School Name:	Proposed School Location:
KIPP Academy Boston Charter School (KAB)	Boston (Mattapan and Roxbury)
Network of Schools with KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School	
Grades Served at Full Capacity:	K-8
Number of Students Served at Full Capacity:	588
Proposed Opening Year:	FY2013

Public Statement:

The mission of KIPP Academy Boston Charter School is to create an environment where the students of Boston develop the academic skills, intellectual habits and character traits necessary to maximize their potential in high school, college and the world beyond. KIPP Academy Boston Charter School is modeled after the highly successful and nationally recognized KIPP Schools, and is governed by the same Board of Trustees as the highly successful KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School.

Mission Statement:

The mission of KIPP Academy Boston Charter School is to create a school environment where students develop the academic skills, intellectual habits and character traits necessary to maximize their potential in high school, college and the world beyond. We wish to serve the students and families in Boston’s most economically disadvantaged neighborhoods and wherever the achievement gap currently persists. We will continue the work begun at KIPP Academy Lynn by seeking to serve student demographics that mirror those of neighborhood schools in terms of race, socio-economic status, English Language Learners, and Special Education students. Our promise to students and families is that their children will enter college able to thrive academically due to their literacy, numeracy, and core knowledge in science and social studies. We also promise that our students will develop the zest for learning and grit necessary to persevere as they climb the mountain to and ultimately through college. These students will be able to return to their community as citizens, teachers, leaders, and architects of continued growth in Boston.

Proposed Growth Plan for First Five Years of Operation:

School Year	Grade Level	Total Student Enrollment
First Year	K	72
Second Year	K-1	144
Third Year	K-2, 5	280
Fourth Year	K-3, 5-6	412
Fifth Year	K-4, 5-7	536

Mission, Vision, and Description of the Community(ies) to Be Served

Primary Strengths

- The mission statement defines the purpose and values of the proposed school and clearly states that the school intends to serve the students and families in Boston’s most economically

Primary Weaknesses

- While the interview clarified some of reviewer’s questions about how the proposed school differs from the existing school, the application does not clearly describe modifications relating to the

disadvantaged neighborhoods and wherever the achievement gap currently persists. (Section I.A.)

- The mission statement is meaningful and has unique aspects: promising that the students will develop a “zest for learning and grit necessary to persevere.” In the interview, the applicant group explained many of the ways the school tracks student outcomes and reports that they are developing a way to assess and track “zest and grit.” (Section I.A.)
- The vision statement describes partnerships with students and their families, the importance of college acceptance and graduation, quality teaching, discipline, and positive reinforcement, and ultimately offering the students an opportunity to live a life of choice. It is a compelling image of the school’s future. (Section I.B.)
- The application and applicant group provide a rationale for how the proposed school will enhance and expand the educational options in Boston. It speaks to the value of the school which offers increased time on learning with rigorous academic instruction and character education, and partnerships between school, students, and families to address student behavior outside of the school. (Section I.C.)

differences in grade span of the proposed school KIPP Boston (K-8) from that which is implemented at the existing school, KIPP Lynn (5-12). (Section I.B and I.C.)

Educational Philosophy, Curriculum and Instruction

Primary Strengths

- The application outlines key elements of the educational philosophy: high quality instruction, emphasis on character development, and more time on task. The application includes explicit examples of how the philosophy will be implemented into a comprehensive educational program. When asked about how the educational philosophy differs for a K-8 school versus a 5-12 school, the applicant group explained that the education philosophy is still based on the same idea – “It’s about finding out where kids are

Primary Weaknesses

- This section has a number of confusing elements and inconsistencies, it mentions pre-kindergarten and the science curriculum for kindergarten and first grade is the same. (Section II.B)

and then reaching them through the most effective programming and tools. Nothing is sacred except for what works.” (Section II.A.)

- The application provided a thorough review of research pertinent to their educational philosophy and programming, including research specifically about KIPP Academy Lynn (KAL). The research cited demonstrates that approach may improve the academic performance of the anticipated student population and its diverse needs. (Section II.A.)
- The application explains that the curriculum for the upper school (grades 5-8) is based on the curricular models implemented at KAL and describes the process being used to finalize elements of the elementary school curriculum. The curriculum and instruction is consistent with the mission and the educational philosophy. (Section II.B.)
- The applicant group in the interview described the process and procedures used to evaluate whether the curriculum is effective and successfully implemented and the plan to improve and refine the curriculum. (Section II.B.)
- The applications indicate a commitment to responsive professional development and a strong performance management system for teachers. (Section II.B.)

Assessment System, Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Primary Strengths

- The examples of the performance standards are clear. (Section II.C.)
- The application provides examples of varied internally and externally developed assessments that are consistent with the school’s mission, such as the KIPP Healthy Schools stakeholder surveys, Measured Academic Progress tests, and the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. It discusses how data will be used. (Section II.D.)

Primary Weaknesses

- The promotion and graduation standards are not clear. (Section II.C.)
- While the applicant group provided additional information about the assessment system during the interview, more clarification is needed about how data is managed and collected. (Section II.D.)

School Characteristics

Primary Strengths

- The application provided a full description of the culture of the school and a clear plan for establishing school culture and developing family-school partnerships including: signing a Commitment of Excellence form during enrollment, a home visit, teacher availability outside of the school day, a weekly newsletter that parents will be asked to read and sign, and parent participation in traditional events and celebrations. (Section II.E.)
- The application and the applicant group describe a behavior management system based on clear expectations that offers incentives for students to reinforce positive behavior. The system is aligned with the educational philosophy of academic excellence, character development, and more time on task. (Section II. E.)

Primary Weaknesses

- While the application indicates tutoring for all, it is not clear how that is managed and integrated into the school day. (Section II.E.)

Special Student Populations and Student Services

Primary Strengths

- The application describes appropriate processes and procedures that the proposed school will employ to identify, assess, and serve students who are English language learners (ELLs) and students in need of special education services. (Section II.F.)
- The application shows evidence that the founding group has knowledge regarding program requirements and effective means of implementation and the obligations of charter schools regarding special education and ELLs. (Section II.F.)

Primary Weaknesses

- While the school nutrition program is clear, it does not mention how the school plans on administering the free and reduced lunch program. (Section II.F.)

Enrollment and Recruitment

Primary Strengths

- The rationale for the size of the school and the related growth strategy is sound. (Section III.A.)
- The proposed recruitment and retention plan is thoughtful and creative and describes broad outreach to families that may be less informed about options. Strategies include targeting families at laundromats and supermarkets, enlisting Romero from Jammin'94.5 to promote the school on the air, and outreach to local police precincts to identify students who have fallen through the cracks. (Section III.A.)

Primary Weaknesses

- While the recruitment and retention plan is thorough, there is concern about one of the proposed activities: rewarding students who apply or recruit with gift cards to the GAP. (Section III.A.)

Capacity and School Governance

Primary Strengths

- The founding group and existing board of trustees includes members who possess a wide variety of skills and experience. The success of the KAL demonstrates that they can manage public funds effectively and responsibly and also have the capacity to found and sustain an excellent charter school. (Section III.B.)
- Although the organizational chart is a bit confusing, it illustrates a complex organizational structure that represents a KIPP Massachusetts network of schools. This application provided specific information about the individual staff members within the central office that report to the Executive Director. (Section III.C.)
- The governance model itself is a thoughtful and workable structure built on the Executive Director's appropriate relationship to the board and school administrators. (Section III.C.)
- The application clearly describes the recruitment, selection, development and self-evaluation of board members. (Section III.C.)

Primary Weaknesses

- No primary weaknesses.

Capacity for Network of Schools

Primary Strengths

- The application indicates that seven out of the nine board members have led significant growth of companies and organizations. (Section III.C.)
- The existing board intends to leverage the knowledge of the KIPP Network. KIPP National facilitates network growth and quality assurance practices in addition to sharing best practices from the KIPP Network of Charter Schools. It has provided leadership training and support to 99 charter school (24 elementary schools, 50 middle schools, and 15 high schools) across the county. (Section III.C.)
- The existing board is overseeing KAL's implementation of a major charter amendment to increase enrollment from 320 to 750 students and expand the grades served from 5-8 to 5-12. As a board, they are aware of the multiple challenges inherent in the expansion of the existing school, and concurrently the development of a new school. The proposed school intends to open in FY13 which will allow time for development. (Section III.C.)
- The support of KIPP National enhances the board and school leaders' capacity to address the challenges of expansion. (Section III.C.)

Primary Weaknesses

- The proposed school is not an exact replication of the existing KAL, and therefore may present additional challenges for the applicant group. (Section III.C.)

Management

Primary Strengths

- The organizational chart thoroughly illustrates the reporting structure and the roles and responsibilities of network level and school level administrators. (Section III.D.)
- The application also discusses how they intend to address the potential human resources challenge and outlines the process for the recruitment, advancement, and retention of staff. (Section III.D.)

Primary Weaknesses

- Since the application included network projections for a further expansion of KAL in addition to the proposed school in Boston, the staffing chart in the application is difficult to comprehend due to the fractional allotment of staff at the network level. (Section III.D.)

Facilities, Transportation, and Finances

Primary Strengths

- The application has outlined a viable process for conducting a facility search including sound financing options. (Section III.E.)
- While the budget narrative is limited, the budget itself demonstrates knowledge of the practical matters relevant to the operation of a school. (Section III.F.)

Primary Weaknesses

- While the applicant group has extensive experience managing school finances, there is no description of the fiscal controls and financial management policies that the board of trustees employs or will employ. (Section III.F.)