

Request of KIPP Lynn Academy Charter School, Evidence Regarding Performance

KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School [Tab D]			
Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location	Lynn
Regional or Non-Regional?	Non-Regional	Districts in Region (if applicable)	N/A
Year Opened	2004	Year(s) Renewed	2009, 2014
Maximum Enrollment	850	Current Enrollment	850
Students on Waitlist	443	Grade Span	5-12
Amendment Request: Increase enrollment from 850 to 1,586 (736); grades served change from 5-12 to K-12 Implementation: 2015-2016		Current Age of School	10 years
		Proven Provider Status Required.	
Mission Statement KIPP Academy Lynn will create an environment where the students of Lynn will develop the academic skills, intellectual habits, and character traits necessary to maintain their potential in high school, college, and in life.			

Request:

KIPP Academy Lynn Charter School (KALCS) seeks to increase its maximum enrollment by 736 seats over a five-year period and to add an elementary school program serving students in grades K-4. The school proposes to add 120 Kindergarten students during the 2015-2016 school year and to continue to grow by one grade annually until full implementation in the 2019-2020 school year. An additional 136 seats will be distributed across the middle and high school grades during the same time period. The school will accept new students through grade 10, which exceeds statutory “backfill” requirements. The school was previously granted amendments to its charter in 2009 and 2010 for increases in enrollment and to expand the grades served from 5-8 to 5-12. The school has completed its high school expansion this year.¹ The school submitted similar requests for a K-4 expansion in 2010 and 2013. A copy of the school’s request is attached.

The board of trustees also holds the charter to KIPP Academy Boston Charter School (KABCS) which is chartered to grow to serve 588 students in grades K-8 and presently serves 288 students in grades K, 5-7 in its third year of operation. The school indicated that the implementation of the elementary school grades at KABCS has strengthened the organization’s ability to implement an effective K-4 program for the students of KALCS.

The board of trustees reports increased capacity at the network and school levels to support effective implementation of the proposed expansion. The school has added additional staff to its network team to support KALCS and KABCS in all areas, identified an internal candidate as the principal of the proposed K-4 who has undergone leadership training through the national KIPP

¹The school will have its first graduating class at the conclusion of the 2014-2015 school year.

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organization, and received targeted support from the national KIPP organization. The school reports that the instructional and operational leadership receive systematic support and guidance from the network team to ensure a strong and consistent focus on teaching and learning.

Overview of School's Performance:

Overall, the submitted amendment request and the Department's records indicate that the school's academic program is a success, that the school is a viable organization, and that it is faithful to the terms of its charter. In 2014, KALCS achieved Level 1 status, a school percentile of 63, and a PPI of 93 in the aggregate and 95 for the school's high needs subgroup. The school was previously identified as Level 2 in 2012 and 2013 for not meeting gap narrowing goals. In 2012, the school's MCAS performance was below targets in the aggregate and for student subgroups with a school percentile of 45, a PPI of 48 in the aggregate, and a PPI of 58 in the high needs subgroup. The school has leveraged expertise within the organization to support improved teaching and learning and instituted revised structures and systems to support teacher effectiveness. During implementation of these new strategies in 2013, the school's PPI rose to 74 in the aggregate and 79 in the high needs subgroup.

Overall, KALCS has made significant gains in the recruitment of English language learners since the implementation of recruitment and retention plans in 2010 and continues to serve populations of students qualifying as low income and students with disabilities in similar levels to its sending district. KALCS has also been successful in recruiting students qualifying as low income, students with disabilities, and English language learners during its first charter term; in 2014-2015, approximately 30 percent of students are English language learners and 21 percent are students with disabilities. KALCS's student population was identified as approximately 93 percent high needs during its first two years of operation.

As noted in its 2014 renewal and evidenced by the fiscal dashboard, KALCS has received unqualified opinions on all of its audits for the most recent charter term. The audits have been free of findings. During the previous charter term, the school was involved in a major real estate purchase which caused some of the school's key financial indicators to rise to a high or moderate risk level. In FY12, FY13, and FY14, KALCS recorded operating losses, due in large part to increased expenses related to the acquisition of the new facility. Support from the school's associated foundation, KIPP Lynn Fund, Inc., as well as drawing down on accumulated surpluses from prior years, has allowed the school to maintain a stable financial condition. Other KALCS financial indicators from recent years are also classified as potentially high risk, particularly the school's liquid assets. The school reported within its request and at the time of renewal that this shortage of liquid assets is due to planned network growth, and the board and leadership both project the shortage to be temporary. The school reports the goal to be sustainable on public funding by completion of the expansion in FY20.

In February 2014, KALCS was renewed with conditions in the areas of compliance and governance that were subsequently met by the school and removed by the Board at its October 2014 meeting. The school reports implementation of a variety of strategies to support compliance with state law, regulations, and Department guidelines. The school's strategies include oversight of compliance issues by the board's governance committee, school level compliance reports to

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support oversight by the committee and distribution of reports to the full board prior to all board meetings, the addition of legal counsel to focus on compliance issues, and a new system of monitoring as well as targeted training to support compliance at the network and school level.

The Department has received written public comment from the Superintendent of Lynn Public Schools, Dr. Catherine Latham, and the President of the Lynn Teachers Union, Brant Duncan, opposing the proposed expansion. Parents of current KALCS students attended the Salem public hearing in December and spoke in support of the school's proposed expansion.