



New York State Education Department

Renewal Site Visit Report 2016-2017

KIPP NYC Washington Heights Academy Charter School (Elementary and Middle Schools)

Visit Date: 11/29/2016
Date of Report: 05/11/2017

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SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Charter School Summary¹

Name of Charter School	KIPP NYC Washington Heights Academy Charter School
Board Chair	Rafael Mayer
School Leader	Becca Mc Murdie (Grades K-3) Danny Swersky (Grades 4-8)
District of location	NYC CSD 6
Opening Date	August 20, 2012
Charter Terms	Initial Charter Term: 07/1/2012 - 06/30/2017
Current term approved grades / maximum enrollment	K-9; 920 students
Renewal term approved grades / maximum enrollment	K-12; 1086 students
Management Company	KIPP NYC, LLC
Educational Corporation	KIPP NYC Public Charter Schools
Institutional Partner	KIPP Foundation, Inc.
Facilities	KIPP Washington Heights Middle School 21 Jumel Place, New York, NY 10032 KIPP STAR Washington Heights Elementary School 586 W 177th St, New York, NY 10033
Mission Statement	The mission of the constituent schools is to help students develop the academic and character skills necessary to achieve success in high school and college, be self-sufficient in the competitive world beyond, and build a better tomorrow for themselves and us all.
Key Design Elements	High-quality instruction Character development The five pillars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High expectations • More time on task • Focus on results • Power to lead • Choice and Commitment
Revision History	2013: Merger of KIPP S.T.A.R. with KIPP NYC WHA 2015: Merger of KIPP Infinity Charter School and KIPP Always Mentally Prepared Charter School into KIPP NYC Public Charter Schools (education corporation operating

¹ The information in this section was provided by the NYS Education Department Charter School Office.

	KIPP S.T.A.R College Prep Charter School and KIPP NYC Washington Heights Academy Charter School)
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School Characteristics

Current Term Enrollment

School Year	Grades Served	Maximum Enrollment	Actual Enrollment
2016-2017	K-9	1060	912 ²
2015-2016	K-8	847	846
2014-2015	K-3, 5-7	669	704

² Self-reported by the school in the site visit workbook.

METHODOLOGY

A one day renewal site visit was conducted at KIPP NYC Washington Heights Academy Charter School (elementary and middle school campuses) on November 29, 2016. The Charter School Office (CSO) team conducted interviews with the school leadership team and with parents.

The team conducted 14 classroom observations in Grades K-8. The observations were approximately 15-20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with school leaders.

The documents and data reviewed by the team before, during, and after the site visit included the following:

- **Teacher roster**
- **Current organization chart**
- **A master school schedule**
- **Board materials**
- **Board self-evaluation documents**
- **Blank teacher and administrator evaluation forms**
- **Student/family handbook**
- **Staff handbook and personnel policies**
- **A list of curricular documents**
- **A list of major assessments**
- **Enrollment data including subgroups**
- **Professional development plans and schedules**
- **Academic data**

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The Performance Framework, which is part of the oversight plan included in the Charter Agreement for each school that was chartered or renewed in 2012 or beyond, outlines 10 Performance Benchmarks in three key areas of charter school performance:

- Educational Success
- Organizational Soundness
- Faithfulness to Charter and Law

Observational findings from the site visit will be presented in alignment with the [Performance Framework](#) Benchmarks and Indicators according to the rating scale below, although not all indicators will necessarily be assessed on every site visit. A brief summary of the school’s strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. Each benchmark will be rated; however, the report narrative will highlight those indicators not fully met by the school.

Level	Description
Exceeds	The school meets the performance benchmark; potential exemplar in this area.
Meets	The school generally meets the performance benchmark; few concerns are noted.
Approaches	The school does not meet the performance benchmark; a number of concerns are noted.
Falls Far Below	The school falls far below the performance benchmark; significant concerns are noted.

For the site visit conducted on November 29, 2016 at KIPP Washington Heights Charter School (elementary and middle school campuses), see the following Performance Benchmark Scores and discussion.

**New York State Education Department
Charter School Performance Framework Rating**

Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Exceeds
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students’ well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students’ social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school’s academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Exceeds
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Approaches

Summary of Findings

KIPP NYC Washington Heights Academy Charter School (KNYCWA) has demonstrated strong overall academic results and has outperformed the district of location and NYS in ELA and mathematics proficiency rates. The school has a strong academic program in place, anchored by a comprehensive curriculum developed by the KIPP network and modified by individual campuses to meet their students' needs.

Each campus has a robust leadership team with ample instructional leadership to support both novice and veteran teachers. The school is clearly driven by data, with goals posted in hallways and classrooms. School leaders are knowledgeable about school performance data and reported regular scheduled meetings to review assessment results and student.

KNYCWA has established a strong culture which is conducive to learning. Expectations are clearly communicated and routines and procedures appear to be internalized by students. Observed lessons were organized and purposeful and students were generally engaged in learning activities. The school is maintaining its approved enrollment and retaining its students. Over the charter term, KNYCWA has enrolled comparable numbers of economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities to the district. The school enrolls a smaller percentage of English language learners than the district, but the population appears to be growing. KNYCWA is considering a non-material charter revision to weight ELL applications in future lotteries to attain comparability with the district.

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).

Finding: Exceeds

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1: See Appendix A for further information.

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

1.a. ESEA Accountability Designation

KIPP New York City Washington Heights Academy (KNYWHACS) was designated by the Department as a school *In Good Standing* in 2015-2016 (based on data from 2013-2014 and 2014-2015).

1.b. Similar Schools Comparison

Using a list of schools generated by NYSED's "similar schools" algorithm, the school analyzed their performance compared to schools with similar characteristics for the past three years. The school has gone from underperforming the state average in English Language Arts by about 5% in 2013 and 2014, to exceeding the state average by 12% in 2016. Similar schools have underperformed the state on average by -15 points over the same period.

According to their analysis, KNYWHA outperformed the state average in Mathematics over the same three year time period by 14%, 6% and 14% respectively. The school reported that their performance was above that of similar schools, where students generally underperformed students across the state by roughly -17 points.

Trending Towards Proficiency

2.a. (i-ii) Growth

KNYCWHA reports that a greater percentage of students are demonstrating "trending toward proficiency" as defined in the CSO Performance Framework, in both ELA and mathematics. In 2014 and 2015 the percentage of students who were able to maintain a level 3 or 4 score in ELA was about 10% with 20-24% of students demonstrating an increase of one or more levels. In 2016, the overall percentage doubled with 15% able to maintain a level 3 or 4 and 41% increasing their score by one or more levels.

The school reports the same trend can be seen in mathematics scores. In 2014, 65% of the students tested were able to maintain a level 3 or 4 proficiency score or perform at one or more levels higher than the year prior. 2015 testing saw a drop in scores with 42% of students able to maintain proficiency or growing one or more levels. An increase in scores was seen in 2016 with over 23% of the students able to maintain proficiency from the previous year, with 42% of the students tested increasing by at least one level.

2.b. (i-iii) Proficiency 3-8 Assessments

KNYCWHA reports that it has consistently outperformed their district of location (NYC CSD 6) in both ELA and Math since commencing instruction in 2012-13. In 2015-16, their students outperformed students in NYC CSD 6 by +23% points in ELA and +29% points in Math.

When compared to the state average, KNYCWA students have historically performed about 6% lower than students across the state in ELA. However, in 2015 KNYCWA students achieved proficiency scores of level 3 and 4 at a rate of over 12% points higher than students across the state. In mathematics students have historically outperformed students across the state by 6-15% points. In 2015-16, KIPP students outperformed students across the state by 14%.

The school reports that it has continually improved in the performance of economically disadvantaged (ED), students with disabilities (SWD) and English language learners (ELL) since 2014. As stated in the renewal report, “31% of ED students, 20% of SWD, and 18% of ELL students saw an increase in their performance from year to year. In 2016, the percentages of students in those subgroups that saw growth increased to 63%, 38% and 66%. This improvement occurred while the number of students in each subgroup increased significantly.”

In comparison to their peers across CSD 6 and the state, ED students have consistently outperformed their peers both ELA and Math. In 2016, ED students had their strongest scores, outperforming similar students across the state by 22% point in ELA and 24% points in Math.

The trends among SWD and ELL students at KNYCWA were similar to those among ED students. SWD students enrolled at KNYCWA have consistently outperformed similar students at both the district and state level in ELA since 2015, and Math since 2014. ELL students enrolled at KNYCWA have outperformed their peers across the state in both ELA and math across the district and state in 2016.

Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSL) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.

Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Curriculum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSL. b. Teachers use unit and lesson plans that introduce complex materials, stimulate higher order thinking, and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content. c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades. d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.
2. <i>Instruction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding. b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.
3. <i>Assessment and Program Evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments. b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes. c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, and modifies the program accordingly.
4. <i>Supports for Diverse Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school provides supports to meet the academic needs for all students, including but not limited to: students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students. b. The school has systems to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists and classroom teachers regarding the needs of individual students.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

The school stated in the renewal application that they attribute the growth in their performance, “to a more aligned curriculum, better training for teachers, a focused internal procedure to prepare for state tests, and interim assessments that are more closely aligned to state test content and testing conditions.”

KNYCWAH uses the KIPP Wheatley program for ELA instruction. This curriculum was developed by the KIPP Foundation and is used across KIPP NYC elementary and middle schools. The school’s elementary campus has implemented a school-wide guided reading program with cross grade leveled groups and

participation by every teacher to maximize adults. The elementary campus is also focused on how to “unpack complex text” and has modified close reading lessons for grades K and 1. In mathematics, the school uses combinations of Eureka Math, Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) and the KIPP NYC Math Curriculum. Content team meetings are used to launch units by identifying skill deficits and common misunderstandings that inform lesson plan modifications. At the middle school campus, the curriculum includes electives such as coding and dance, and school leaders reported beginning to roll out a social justice curriculum. The middle school campus also has leveled math classes with some students preparing for the math Regents exam. School leaders reported that the network provides ample resources, which they are able to modify them based on their students’ needs.

Observations of classroom instruction at both elementary and middle school campuses found organized and purposeful lessons and effective classroom management. Clear routines, such as transitions between activities, tracking speakers and hand signals, were internalized by students. Most students were consistently engaged in learning activities. Elementary leaders indicated a focus this year on co-teaching and co-planning to maximize the use of multiple adults in the classroom. While they have expanded the use of a re-teach period to the full school year within classes, they are considering using it across grades. Questioning in a number of observed classes challenged students to provide reasoning for their answers or increase specificity.

The school is using data to modify curriculum, plan lessons and to evaluate and refine programs. At the elementary campus STEP, interim assessments and monthly unit assessments are administered and grade level teams and the leadership teams evaluate data and look at student work together. Assessment results are used to form and regularly adjust leveled groups for instruction and interventions, such as Read 180 and System 44. Middle school leaders described quarterly data days to review results and action plan to “make sure the kids are doing the heavy lifting.”

The school uses goals to motivate student performance. For example, in some elementary classes students had goal cards with 2-3 academic and character goals taped to their desk. School leaders are also focused on ambitious regional goals and were knowledgeable about their achievement and growth towards those goals. In addition, recognizing the gap for special education, the elementary campus has established distinct goals for special education as well. At the middle school campus, goals and interim assessment results were posted in halls and classrooms.

This year, to increase support for students with disabilities, elementary school leaders added dedicated special education coordinators by grade spans, who were all previously teachers at the school, and provided small group instruction. The school contracts for SETSS as well, with a full-time person just starting at the time of the renewal site visit. In addition, the school is providing speech pro-actively as an extra support for students identified at risk.

Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate and Family Engagement

The school has systems in place to support students’ social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school’s academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.

Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Behavior Management and Safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy. b. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment. c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination. d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.
2. <i>Family Engagement and Communication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teachers communicate with parents to discuss students’ strengths and needs. b. The school assesses family and student satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions. c. The school has a systematic process for responding to parent or community concerns. d. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among parents, students and school constituents.
3. <i>Social-Emotional Supports</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. School leaders collect and use data to track the socio-emotional needs of students. b. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students’ social and emotional health.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:

Both campuses displayed calm, orderly environments conducive to learning. No concerns about safety were raised by parents or staff. As noted, teachers had instilled in students clear expectations for behavior and established routines that appeared effective and comfortable. Relationships between students and teachers also appeared respectful. The school is driven by a set of core values and at the middle school parents receive a weekly report on their child’s behavioral and academic performance.

Middle school leaders, having found suspensions not helpful, described a decline in suspensions and a push towards restorative justice practices, which is supported by KIPP network trainings. The middle school campus already uses restorative circles to resolve conflicts and is adding a social justice curriculum. In addition, they noted a strong grant funded afterschool program that provides opportunities for, among other things, sports, art, dance, and math enrichment. They are able to compensate teachers for participation and felt the afterschool program contributed to the positive school culture.

Interviewed parents were uniformly positive about the school. They felt communication was frequent and easy, including weekly REACH reports at the middle school level, talking with teachers at drop-off and dismissal, and access to teacher e-mail and phone numbers. Middle school parents also noted access to their child’s grades via an online system. Parents described high expectations for student behavior and academic performance, noting goals posted in the school. They felt the culture was “just right,” with good structures and routines and fair and consistent discipline. They also noted accessible staff, including school leaders and social workers. Monthly “coffee and conversations” have topics of interest to parents, such as fitness, homework help, and adolescent development. Parents also reported that KIPP Family Associations are being formed at each campus this year.

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.

Finding: Meets

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 4:

Financial Condition

KNYCWAH appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

NYSED reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school’s capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school’s capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.

Overall Financial Outlook

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health calculated by the Department’s Office of Audit Services. This score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in strong financial health. KNYCWAH’s composite score for 2015-2016 is 2.40. The table below shows the school’s composite scores from 2012-2013 to 2015-2016.

KNYCWAH’s Composite Scores

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	2.40
2014-2015	2.50
2013-2014	2.80
2012-2013	2.50

Source: NYSED Office of Audit Services

Near-Term Indicators

Near-term indicators of financial health are used to understand the current financial performance and viability of the school. NYSED uses three measures:

The *current ratio* is a financial ratio that measures whether or not a charter school has enough resources to pay its debts over the next 12 months. The ratio is mainly used to give an idea of the school's ability to pay back its short-term liabilities (debt and payables) with its short-term assets (cash, inventory, receivables). The higher the current ratio, the more capable the school is of paying its obligations, with a ratio under 1.0 indicating concern. For 2015-2016, KNYCWHA had a current ratio of 5.0.

Unrestricted cash measures, in days, whether the charter school can meet operating expenses without receiving new income. Charter schools typically strive to maintain at least 90 days of cash on hand. For fiscal year 2015-2016, KNYCWHA operated with 62 days of unrestricted cash.

Enrollment stability measures whether or not a charter school is meeting its enrollment projections, thereby generating sufficient revenue to fund ongoing operations. Actual enrollment that is over 85 percent is considered reasonable. KNYCWHA's enrollment stability for 2015-2016 was at 100 percent.

Long-Term Indicators

A charter school's *debt to asset ratio* measures the extent to which the school relies on borrowed funds to finance its operations. It is calculated as total liabilities divided by total assets. A ratio of 0.9 or less meets a standard of low risk. For 2015-2016, KNYCWHA's debt to asset ratio was 0.1.

Total margin measures the deficit or surplus a charter school yields out of its total revenues; in other words, whether or not the school is living within its available resources. Total margin is calculated as net income divided by total revenue. A total margin that is positive indicates low risk. For 2015-2016, KNYCWHA's total margin was 3 percent.

Benchmark 5: Financial Management

The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.

Finding: Meets

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 5:

NYSED reviewed KNYCWA's 2015-2016 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify any deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance

The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.

Finding: Meets

Element

Indicators

1. *Board Oversight and Governance*

- a. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school.
- b. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school's mission and educational philosophy.
- c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals.
- d. The board regularly updates school policies.
- e. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers.
- f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

During the 2015-2016 school year, the board had a difficult time meeting quorum at a majority of monthly meetings. The trustees planned to focus on recruitment and the selection of new board members after the merger and restructure the board. The board employed a multi-step approach to identify, vet and approve new members. They currently have seven members and have successfully met quorum for the majority of meetings since August 2016.

According to the board, strategic planning happens from the school level to the board level. Through KIPP NYC's strategic planning process, the network has identified three to five priorities each year that would

most impact student learning and outcomes. The superintendent, in consultation with principals and other senior leadership, develops regional priorities and plans.

The board is involved in the strategic planning in two ways. It reviews and comments on the priorities presented with a particular emphasis on those which call for investments or meaningful changes to operations. They also review and authorize new investments in support of the approved strategic priorities as part of the budget process.

In addition to the goals outlined in the Accountability Plan, KIPP NYC developed a set of common internal outcomes to assist the board in managing each of their schools. They monitor individual school performance by regularly reviewing financial statements, student achievement data (tests, attendance, etc.), school culture and climate data (survey results, student attendance and suspension data), and personnel data (staff attrition). They track the data points in order to measure whether schools are making progress towards meeting the stated outcomes. The board also hears monthly presentations from the schools or network that provide in-depth data and analysis about school performance, areas of growth, and the status of approved instructional and operational initiatives.

The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers. Policies are reviewed and updated as needed.

The board works with KIPP NYC staff and with its legal counsel to assure full awareness and execution of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.

Finding: Exceeds

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
<p>1. <i>School Leadership</i></p>	<p>a. The school has an effective school leadership team that obtains staff commitment to a clearly defined mission and set of goals, allowing for continual improvement in student learning.</p> <p>b. Roles and responsibilities for leaders, staff, management, and board members are clearly defined. Members of the school community adhere to defined roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place which ensure effective communication across the school.</p> <p>d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.</p>
<p>2. <i>Professional Climate</i></p>	<p>a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication.</p> <p>b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers.</p> <p>c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students’ needs.</p> <p>d. The school has systems to monitor and maintain organizational and instructional quality—which includes a formal process for teacher evaluation geared toward improving instructional practice.</p> <p>e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.</p>
<p>3. <i>Contractual Relationships</i> <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>	<p>a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider.</p> <p>b. Changes in the school’s charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures.</p> <p>c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.</p>

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:

The school has leadership teams in place at both campuses with clear roles that are supported by network staff from KIPP NYC. Instructional leadership at the elementary campus includes a principal, a K-1 dean, 2-3 dean and director of student support services. The instructional team at the middle school campus is composed of a founding principal, dean of instruction, content coaches, an ESL coordinator and dean of special education. Academic progress teams meets weekly to review data from assessments and teacher observations; they reported examining both student work and teacher moves. The 4th grade, which was

housed at the middle school campus, was moved under the supervision of the middle school principal this year; the shift was described as smooth with some time taken by middle school leaders to understand that grade's needs and align it with the middle school program.

The region created a six week checklist of priority teacher moves that provide focus for teacher supervision and evaluation. School leaders described regular observation and feedback and past use of improvement plans for teachers not meeting expectations. They noted that teachers are provided with a lot of opportunities for practice and feedback. The school also provides ample professional development. The elementary campus utilizes a weekly half day, content team meetings twice per week, and one-on-one coaching by deans. School leaders noted that they are able to differentiate professional development based on content and experience of teachers.

Teacher surveys indicated concern about adequate planning and collaboration time and school leaders described the challenge of balancing data analysis, planning and innovation. They pointed out that content team meetings are also used for planning and that recently they have allowed some PD days to be used as "opportunities to internalize" and for structured planning time. School leaders noted some teacher attrition for a variety of reasons, including moves and not meeting expectations, but described individualized professional development and coaching to support novices and teachers new to the school. They acknowledged that teacher sustainability is a concern and middle school leaders noted that they also teach which keeps them grounded in the experience of teachers. Elementary leaders said that after a number of large changes, they are committed to keeping change to a minimum this year.

The school benefits from participation in the KIPP NYC network. Principals across KIPP campuses meet monthly to set norms and plan together. "Dean Days" were also initiated last year as an opportunity to collaborate with a focus on coaching and feedback. A regional curriculum, instruction and assessment also visits the campuses approximately twice per month to co-observe and set standards for excellence. This team also facilitates teacher inter-visitations among the KIPP campuses.

Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements

The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.

Finding: Meets

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
1. <i>Mission and Key Design Elements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. School stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the school’s mission and key design elements outlined in the charter.b. The school has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter and in any subsequently approved revisions.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

Stakeholders consistently referred to the mission regarding high expectations for both academic performance and character development. The KIPP Commitment to Excellence document disseminates these expectations to parents. As noted in the school’s renewal application, the key design elements of KIPP Washington Heights consist of three central components: KIPP’s “Five Pillars” (high expectations, more time on task, focus on results, power to lead, and choice and commitment), High Quality Instruction, and Character Development. All of these key design elements were in evidence.

The school utilizes an extended day and provides extended blocks of instruction for ELA and mathematics. To expand time on task, the elementary campus has a guided reading program that utilizes all teachers and the middle school campus is using flex days for re-teaching. The school is clearly driven by goals and actively monitors internal assessment results and state test performance for both internal and external accountability purposes. Both elementary and middle school leaders described structure and guidance emanating from the KIPP network, but also indicated flexibility in modifying curriculum to meet their own students’ needs. School leaders also benefit from collaboration with their peers in other KIPP schools and teachers have opportunities for inter-visitations among the schools. Finally, the quality of observed instruction was generally strong and the school has a clear commitment to character education, including weekly reports to parents about behavior and a new social justice curriculum at the middle school campus.

Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.

Finding: Approaches

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Targets are met</i>	a. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet or come close to meeting the enrollment plan outlined in the charter.
2. <i>Targets are not met</i>	<p>a. The school is making regular and significant annual progress toward meeting the targets.</p> <p>b. The school has implemented extensive recruitment strategies and program services to attract and retain students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch. Strategies include, but are not limited to: outreach to parents and families in the surrounding communities, widely publicizing the lottery for such school, efforts to academically support these students, and enrollment policy revisions, such as employing a weighted lottery or enrollment preference, to increase the proportion of enrolled students from the three priority populations.</p> <p>c. The school has implemented a systematic process for evaluating recruitment and outreach strategies and program services for each of the three categories of students, and makes strategic improvements as needed.</p>

Table 3: Student Demographics – KIPP Washington Heights Charter School Compared to District of Location--NYC CSD 6

	2014-15			2015-16			2016-17
	Percent of Enrollment		Variance ³	Percent of Enrollment		Variance	Percent of Enrollment
	School	CSD 6		School	CSD 6		School ⁴
Enrollment of Special Populations							
Economically Disadvantaged	90%	85%	+5	91%	84%	+7	91%
English Language Learners	14%	31%	-17	14%	29%	-15	31%
Students with Disabilities	15%	19%	-4	17%	20%	-3	17%

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:

³ Variance is defined as the percent of subgroup enrollment between the charter school and the district of location.

⁴ Reported by the school; 2016-17 enrollment data has not been publicly released as of the date of this report.

School leaders reported stable enrollment with little student attrition and parents sending their children from the Bronx to attend this school in Washington Heights. The school benefits from the KIPP NYC recruitment efforts, which are described in the renewal application as including “mailers to targeted buildings and neighborhoods; subway and bus advertisements; visits to organizations with similar missions in the area (distribute pamphlets and other educational materials); targeted e-mail and digital advertising; and other efforts.” Historically, the school has enrolled comparable percentages of students with disabilities compared to the district and a smaller percentage of English language learners, though that number has risen considerably this year. The school indicated in its renewal application plans to pursue a change in its admissions policy “to allow a greater weighting for students who are English language learners.” Student retention is strong across all categories of students. While the school does support 8th grade students interested in other high schools, including preparation for the specialized high school exam, school leaders and parents reported strong interest in matriculation to the KIPP high school.

Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.

Finding: Approaches

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Legal Compliance</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. The school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with applicable state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter including, but not limited to: those related to student admissions and enrollment; FOIL and Open Meetings Law; protecting the rights of students and employees; financial management and oversight; governance and reporting; and health and safety requirements.b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed, and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

The school meets the majority of indicators; however, they are not in compliance with statutory teacher certification regulations. The NYS School Report Card states that 32% of the school's teaching staff is uncertified. KNYCWAH is continuing the implementation of its plan to increase the percentage of certified teachers on staff.

APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT AND GRADUATION OUTCOMES

Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes for All Students: School, District & NYS Level Aggregates

All Students	ELA					Math				
	School	District		NYS		School	District		NYS	
		District	Delta = (Sch-Dct)	NYS	Delta = (Sch-NYS)		District	Delta = (Sch-Dct)	NYS	Delta = (Sch-NYS)
2013-14	24%	17%	+7	29%	-7	50%	22%	+28	38%	+14
2014-15	27%	19%	+8	30%	-4	45%	23%	+22	40%	+7
2015-16	50%	27%	+23	38%	+12	53%	24%	+29	39%	+14

Table 2: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes by Subgroup – Economically Disadvantaged Students: School, District & NYS Level Aggregates

Economically Disadvantaged	ELA					Math				
	School	District		NYS		School	District		NYS	
		District	Delta = (Sch-Dct)	NYS	Delta = (Sch-NYS)		District	Delta = (Sch-Dct)	NYS	Delta = (Sch-NYS)
2013-14	23%	23%	0	20%	+5	48%	21%	+27	27%	+21
2014-15	27%	16%	+11	20%	+7	42%	21%	+21	28%	+14
2015-16	49%	24%	+25	27%	+22	52%	22%	+30	28%	+24

Table 3: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes by Subgroup – Students with Disabilities: School, District & NYS Level Aggregates

Students with Disabilities	ELA					Math				
	School	District		NYS		School	District		NYS	
		District	Delta = (Sch-Dct)	NYS	Delta = (Sch-NYS)		District	Delta = (Sch-Dct)	NYS	Delta = (Sch-NYS)
2013-14	0%	5%	-5	5%	-5	25%	%	+7	9%	+16
2014-15	11%	5%	+6	5%	+6	23%	%	+14	11%	+12
2015-16	15%	8%	+7	8%	+7	24%	%	+14	11%	+13

Table 4: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes by Subgroup – English Language Learners: School, District & NYS Level Aggregates

English Language Learners	ELA					Math				
	School	District		NYS		School	District		NYS	
		District	Delta = (Sch-Dct)	NYS	Delta = (Sch-NYS)		District	Delta = (Sch-Dct)	NYS	Delta = (Sch-NYS)
2013-14	0%	2%	-2	2%	-2	14%	6%	+8	11%	+3
2014-15	2%	2%	0	4%	-2	7%	6%	+1	13%	-6
2015-16	6%	3%	+3	4%	+2	13%	6%	+7	12%	+1