

KIPP Albany Community Public Charter Schools

Reopening Plan

[Current as of 7/31/2020]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The vision and mission of KIPP Albany Community Public Charter Schools is grounded in the deep belief that all students will learn, and that our staff will be tireless in our efforts to work with our students and families to achieve this goal.

Our Vision

Every child grows up free to create the future they want for themselves and their community.

Our 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 create a more just world.

COVID-19 has presented a new, and proven to be enduring, challenge for education in Albany and across the country. At KIPP Albany, we fully believe that in-person learning provides all students with the greatest access to excellent and dynamic instruction, differentiated supports, social emotional learning, and a safe, supportive learning environment where all students will learn. However, the reality of COVID-19 and the associated safety requirements does not actually allow for robust, in-person learning; our careful study of the regulations from various state and federal agencies as well as the rigorous study and completion of additional professional development from national school safety experts reveal a learning environment that would be – necessarily – focused on health and safety and ambiguous in its delivery of actual excellent instruction.

In considering our reopening plan, we grounded our decision making in *safety, relationships, routines*, and providing instruction that has a *positive measurable impact on student outcomes*. Considering all of those factors, it is our intention to provide 100% virtual instruction through October 30, 2020 for our students, with the fully virtual model designed to best prioritize and achieve safety, build positive and sustaining relationships, establish consistent routines and expectations, and deliver instruction that is measurable and achievable for our students. We will reevaluate our return to a hybrid learning model throughout the fall and return for hybrid instruction when it is possible for our community.

Our model relies on a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning, robust, grade-aligned learning management systems, curriculum that is adapted for virtual delivery, and a commitment to ensuring all students can access both instruction and the additional supports they need to be successful. A key component of this plan is providing every student with a Chromebook (including a touchscreen version for K-3) and other learning tools as needed, to include prepaid MiFi internet devices, noise-cancelling headphones, desks, white boards, and other essential school items. While instruction will be delivered by our subject area teachers (and in some cases, by a master teacher model), students in all grades will be broken into pods of 10-15 students to ensure close progress monitoring and a significant bond with at least one adult staff member.

Our hybrid learning model is a rotation of in-person and remote learning for all grades, with less than 50% of students and staff in the building at any one time. To facilitate safety and routine, Cohort A would attend school for nine consecutive days (Mon - Fri, Mon - Thurs) while Cohort B learned remotely and then the cohorts would switch. Within those cohorts, students would maintain their 10-15 student pods. Every tenth day would be full remote learning for 100% of students while the buildings are deep cleaned between cohorts. Our hybrid model uses similar tools and teaching methods as the remote model to keep learning consistent for students.

Below is the matrix we will be using to guide and measure, at a macro and student by student level, student progress and success based on what stage they are in - at each stage, there will be individual and targeted interventions tailored to what a student and family needs to be successful.

How we'll think about student success

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Retention	Attendance	Submission	Mastery
<p>↓</p> <p>Goal: Our students stay with us</p> <p>Have we helped families problem solve challenges?</p> <p>Does our program meet our families' needs?</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>Goal: Students are attending at least 95% of classes</p> <p>Why are our students not attending?</p> <p>What attendance interventions have we used?</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>Goal: Students are submitting at least 90% of work</p> <p>Why are our students not submitting work?</p> <p>What 1:1 interventions have we used?</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>Goal: Grade-level academic goals on proficiency are met</p> <p>What targeted interventions/supports do we need to add?</p> <p>How do we change the learning model?</p>

1

Finally, at this time, we do not believe a full return to in-person instruction (100% capacity in all grades) is possible for our school community given our physical footprint, state regulations, and prioritization of safety, relationships, routines, and measurable academic progress.

We look forward to continuing to solicit input for our families and staff as these plans evolve and we adapt to the changing dynamics of this uncertain time.

REOPENING OPERATIONS: SAFETY PROTOCOLS

OVERVIEW: CAPACITY, PPE, MEDICAL CARE, AND SAFE TRANSPORTATION

As previewed in the executive summary, it is our intent to run a fully virtual instructional model through October 30. Upon returning to a hybrid model of instruction, tentatively scheduled for November 2, pending updated NYSED and DOH guidance and evaluation of current health and safety risks and input from our students, families, and staff, our buildings would be under 50% capacity and we would utilize all usable square footage to reduce density.

- KIPP Tech Valley Primary School
 - Usable square Footage: 41,000
 - 50% Capacity: 274 students and adults
 - 150 square feet per student
- KIPP Tech Valley Middle School
 - Square Footage: 43,000
 - 50% Capacity: 196 students and adults
 - 220 square feet per student
- KIPP Albany Community Charter Elementary School
 - Usable square Footage: 42,000
 - 50% Capacity: 265 students and adults
 - 158 square feet per student
- KIPP Albany Community Charter Middle School
 - Usable square Footage: 35,000
 - 50% Capacity: 145 students and adults
 - 233 square feet per student

Per guidance from NYSED, we would be using working to allow 50 square feet of space per person in classrooms and not exceeding 50% of classroom capacity, including staff.

Upon return to hybrid learning, we will be utilizing personal protective equipment including single use masks, cloth masks, KN 95 masks, face shields, and polycarbonate dividers. All PPE will be delivered to schools no later than one week prior to the return to hybrid learning and schools will have a 'reorder' template to utilize so additional materials can be secured as needed.

Each school has a local nurse onsite to support with medical issues and additional personnel trained in health and first aid. All schools will have a separate first aid station and isolation space for students or staff exhibiting symptoms of COVID (any staff or student with symptoms will not use the nurse's office). The isolation spaces will be staffed by staff outfitted with additional PPE and be cleaned and disinfected nightly. Both Albany Medical Center and Albany Memorial Hospital provide hospital level medical care within a short distance of all four school campuses.

Working with our private, contracted bussing – as well as encouraging families with the ability to drive or walk their student to school – we believe we can provide socially distanced transportation (no more than one student per seat, unless in a family unit) to students who need it. At the date of submission, we are unsure about the ability of our local school districts to provide socially distanced transportation for our students who are transported on district buses.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

By ensuring our buildings are under 50% capacity when we return to a hybrid learning model, we believe, by expanding physical footprint within the building (making almost all available spaces learning spaces), we can safely socially distance. At arrival, we will strategically use more entrance points and staggered arrival times to ensure students can enter the building in a socially distanced way. We will similarly stagger dismissal and use multiple dismissal points. Hallway and stair traffic will be one way, and entranceways, hallways, and stairs will have 6 feet markings, and we will greatly reduce the need for transitions or movement between classes. Additionally, we will discontinue use of lockers at the middle school and students will place belongings in their classroom. All common, adult spaces will be marked using floor space so staff can maintain an appropriate amount of distance between them.

PPE & FACE COVERINGS

All staff and students will be required to wear masks/face coverings (in adherence with the [DOH's Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction](#)) daily. All staff and students will be provided 2 cloth masks and disposable masks will be available at school for any student or staff member that needs a replacement for the day. Based on role, certain staff may be assigned additional PPE (i.e. any staff in the isolation space or escorting symptomatic students).

- Staff and students will break from using face masks while eating with their pod in their classroom space and while outside daily, with their pod and socially distanced, when possible based on weather.
- Medically excused – these students and staff will be provided face shields as a substitute with written medical documentation.

If a student arrives at school without required PPE, PPE will be provided by the school for that student. Refusal to wear PPE, when not medically excused, would result in a mandatory early dismissal for that student and a conference with that student's family.

Communication around the necessity of face coverings at school will be messaged to families well in advance of the return to the hybrid learning model.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY

During virtual learning through October 30, all students will be learning synchronously and asynchronously every day. After the transition to hybrid learning, all schools will follow a 9:11 model of 9 days of in-person instruction followed by 11 days of remote learning.

School	Cohort A	Cohort B	Schedule
KIPP Tech Valley Primary	K, 1, and half of Grade 2	Half of Grade 2, 3, 4	<p>Week One:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cohort A: M-F In-person ● Cohort B: M-F Virtual <p>Week Two:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cohort A: M-Th In-person; F Virtual ● Cohort B: M-F Virtual <p>Week Three:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cohort A: M-F Virtual ● Cohort B: M-F In-Person <p>Week Four:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cohort A: M-F Virtual ● Cohort B: M-Th In-Person; F Virtual
KIPP Albany Community Charter Elementary	K, 1, 2	3, 4, 5	
KIPP Tech Valley Middle	5, 7	6, 8	
KIPP Albany Community Charter Middle	6	7,8	

Cohorts would utilize all classroom and teachable space in the building to ensure proper capacity restrictions and social distancing. Pods within each cohort would refrain completely or minimize any transitions between spaces. Bagged breakfast and lunch would be served to each pod in their classroom. Shared spaces (cafeteria, gym) would not be used by multiple pods and instead would become classroom space for an individual pod or isolation space.

The following restrictions would be in place across all campuses, regardless of learning model:

- Only visitors essential for school functioning would be allowed in any school building. Any visitor would be health screened and contact information collected.
- No full staff meetings (staff may meet in small groups if social distancing can be maintained and PPE is worn).
- Field trips and in-person special events that would bring together more than one pod of students will not be permitted during this time. All celebratory events extending beyond one pod will be virtual.

If a student arrives at school without required PPE, PPE will be provided by the school for that student. Refusal to wear PPE, when not medically excused, would result in a mandatory early dismissal for that student and a conference with that student's family.

RESTART OPERATIONS

During the summer months, all school buildings have been completely cleaned and disinfected. Additionally, working with our HVAC vendors and building consultants, we are adding enhanced filters to HVAC systems at all buildings. We are considering the addition of air scrubber or additional disinfecting machines and use of outdoor ventilation options by ensuring all windows are being checked to ensure they can be opened – to allow for increased air flow – and doors will remain open in classrooms to allow for increased airflow and elimination of daily use of door handles.

Each building will discontinue use of traditional water fountains and instead use alternate water filling plans. Students will be provided with a clear, KIPP-approved water bottle to use daily.

Each building will have a building and classroom cleaning checklist that will be a guide for any room being used for instruction, meetings, or general office use. Students will be instructed on best hygiene and safety practices, including regular, routine handwashing and use of provided cleaning supplies.

HYGIENE, CLEANING & DISINFECTION

KIPP Albany will set cleaning protocols and procedures for cleaning frequency and cleaning schedules based on DOH guidance and best practices. This includes setting the minimum amount of times per day items like desk, chairs, technology, floors, handrails, bathroom fixtures, entry and exit points, and surfaces are cleaned. Additionally, all staff will be given professional development around the necessity of ensuring learning environments are safe, clean and disinfected as well as staff and student training on handwashing and respiratory hygiene. Signage will be displayed in key areas around the school to remind staff and students of these practices.

EXTRACURRICULARS

All in-person extracurricular activities that intermingle more than one pod or fail to maintain social distance and ability to wear PPE are prohibited currently during the virtual or hybrid model. Schools can implement virtual extracurricular activities as possible.

BEFORE AND AFTER CARE

Any before or after care options are currently prohibited during the virtual or hybrid model as there would be no ability to maintain pods.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

We believe our choice to be fully virtual at this time of heightened risk best protects our vulnerable students and teachers. After a return to hybrid or in-person learning, we will consider the following:

1. Create a process for staff, families and students to self-identify as high risk for illness due to COVID-19.
2. Provide staff with opportunities such as modified work arrangements or additional PPE to ensure their safety.
3. Students at an increased risk, or with family members at increased risk, will have the option of participating in a 100% remote/distance learning platform.

4. Our Social Work/Counseling staff will continuously evaluate students' needs using their Individualized Education Plans, 504s, and etc. to determine appropriate alternate measures based upon their healthcare needs and update as needed to decrease their risk of COVID-19 exposure.
5. For those students and staff that choose to participate in in-person education, we will assess modifications to social distancing, PPE availability, and other work/learning modifications.

TRANSPORTATION

For our privately contracted buses, it is our intention to run buses at no more than 50% capacity during our hybrid learning model and ask our partner district to do the same. At this point, we do not feel we could safely transport all students for full in-person learning, based on our families' transportation needs.

FOOD SERVICE

KIPP Albany food service is done in-house, under KIPP Albany's own school food authority, across all four school buildings and free breakfast, lunch and snack is provided to all KIPP Albany students as part of the Community Eligibility Provision. Based on that provision, the system is already cashless and families do not need to submit applications to receive free meals. We will continue to ask families to complete income inquiry forms to ensure CEP eligibility is maintained and these forms are available both online and in-person.

As was the case during the school closure in the Spring of 2020, we will continue to communicate updates about food service to families in a variety of ways, including "all-calls," social media postings, in online classrooms, and personal outreach to families, especially those with a known high-level of need.

Staff preparing meals in our kitchen areas will be required to follow the same health screen protocols and guidance as all staff. Staff will potentially be offered flexible or expanded working hours to ensure appropriate social distancing can be maintained while preparing meals and will use frequent hand-washing, masks, and single-use gloves to further maintain health and safety best practices.

Remote Food Service: During the school closures in the Spring of 2020, KIPP Albany continued to provide free meals to families and students at our school buildings, distributing thousands of meals to students and families. We will maintain a similar program during remote periods of instruction in 2020-2021, but are working on enhancing the program to better reach families who cannot come on-site to pick up meals. This includes potential delivery of meals to a family's doorstep. KIPP Albany is working with the state to ensure all program modifications are fully compliant.

In-Person Food Service: Students who are on-site will be provided breakfast, lunch and snack daily. Students will eat in their classrooms, with their pod, and all meals will be pre-packaged and self-contained. Students with food allergies will be provided an alternate location to consume their meals if the existing social distance in their cohort classroom does not meet their health needs.

MENTAL HEALTH, BEHAVIORAL, AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Students and families will have access to our full social work, counseling, and family support staff, who are available for individual and group remote counseling and continued support to address all social emotional needs as well as case management and access to resources. We will continue to work with outside partners to provide additional resources to families and have applied for additional grant support to increase funding for our mental health and trauma resiliency work.

Human resources and school leadership will continue to support staff and facilitate outside resources.

COMMUNICATION

KIPP Albany will continue to communicate frequently with the broad KIPP Albany community to ensure all stakeholders are aware of planning, timing, training and other important updates. KIPP Albany has already started hosting virtual town halls with staff and school communities, and soliciting input from families via direct, 1:1 outreach. All reopening information will also be posted to our website.

MONITORING

SCREENING

All staff, students and families at KIPP Albany will receive guidance on how to be aware of the common symptoms of COVID-19 and will conduct daily health screenings prior to entering the school building – ideally before leaving home. Students and staff with a fever of 100°F or higher and/or symptoms of possible COVID-19 infection will be asked to remain at home and will be provided information on how to contact a local health care provider for assessment and testing.

All staff and students will be required to complete a daily screening questionnaire certifying they are symptom-free and have not tested positive, been in contact with anyone who has tested positive or displayed symptoms, or traveled internationally or to a higher-risk state (as designated by the Governor) in the last 14 days. Additionally, anyone who has taken fever-suppressing medicine, like Tylenol, in the last 24 hours will be asked to stay home until 24 hours has passed.

All students or staff who do not prescreen prior to arriving at school will have their temperature checked by a KIPP Albany staff member (generally the health coordinator), who will be wearing enhanced PPE and using barriers as possible. Anyone with symptoms, including a temperature, will be sent to the isolation space and sent home as soon as a parent or guardian can transport them. For students, the parent or guardian will be given a prepared information packet on how to obtain further medical care or testing and information on serious signs or symptoms associated with COVID that would necessitate seeking immediate medical attention. The packet will also include guidance on when a student could return to school.

School visitors and vendors will be strictly limited to anyone with essential business. All other visitors and vendors will not be allowed to enter the building. Any visitor admitted to the building will follow the same health screening protocol as staff and students and their contact information will be recorded.

HEALTH TESTING PROTOCOLS

Each building will have a designated health coordinator (primary: school nurse; back-up: staff member trained in health and safety). This health coordinator will work closely with the local health department to ensure staff and students are directed to accessible testing sites as needed.

HEALTH TESTING RESPONSIBILITY

KIPP Albany will work closely with the local health department to determine which staff or students should be referred for COVID-19 testing.

EARLY WARNING SIGNS

Each school's health coordinator, in consultation with KIPP Albany's executive team and pandemic coordinator, will work with local health authorities and Albany City and County to monitor infection rates, particularly at the school sites, to determine if larger scale interventions, testing, or shutdowns are required. Additionally, the health coordinator and other school staff will work with local health departments to ensure contact tracing records are maintained and provided as needed.

CONTAINMENT

SCHOOL HEALTH OFFICES

All traditional health/nursing offices in each school will be reserved for students with medical needs outside of COVID-19 symptoms (first aid, medicine dosage, etc). Any staff or student with COVID-19 symptoms will be taken to a separate isolation space and will not enter the nurse's office.

ISOLATION

Each school will have a dedicated isolation space (not the nurse's office) for all staff and students exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms. The space will be set up to accommodate multiple staff or students at once (using the "four corners" method of separating to the largest extent possible distinct areas), will have a sink/water access and be disinfected after every use.

Sample Isolation Space Experience

1. Student states in class they are experiencing a health issue.
2. A trained staff member, in appropriate PPE, meets the student at the classroom door and asks screening questions.
3. If the answer to any COVID-19 screening question is yes, the student will be treated as COVID-positive and taken directly to the isolation space.
4. In the isolation space, staffed by the health coordinator, the student will be logged - for contact tracing - and be socially distanced and in a clean, disinfected environment to wait for parent or guardian pick-up.
5. Upon dismissal (which will be conducted as soon as an approved adult can get to the school), the student and adult picking the student up will be sent home with prepared information packet on how to obtain further medical care or testing and information on serious signs or symptoms associated with COVID that would necessitate seeking immediate medical attention. The packet will also include guidance on when a student could return to school.

COLLECTION

Once a student is brought to the isolation space, their parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. When the adult arrives at the school building, they will not come inside but rather the student will be brought outside the building by the health coordinator. Upon dismissal, the student and adult picking the student up will be sent home with a prepared information packet on how to obtain further medical care or testing and information on serious signs or symptoms associated with COVID that would necessitate seeking immediate medical attention. The packet will also include guidance on when a student could return to school.

INFECTED INDIVIDUALS

Any individual with a suspected case of COVID will not be allowed to return to school until after fourteen days from the appearance of symptoms or with a negative COVID test, whichever is first. Students and parents/guardians will be given a prepared information packet on how to obtain further medical care or testing and information on serious signs or symptoms associated with COVID that would necessitate seeking immediate medical attention. The packet will also include guidance on when a student could return to school and the instructions to self-quarantine until a negative test result is received or 14 days have passed.

EXPOSED INDIVIDUALS

Students or staff that have been exposed to COVID-19 will be required to stay out of school for 14 days. Schools will consult with local health officials to determine who is an "exposed" individual and must stay out of school. Depending on guidance, a negative COVID test may be required before a return to school.

HYGIENE, CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

As mentioned previously, KIPP Albany will rely on NYSDOH, CDC, and best practice guidance to ensure the ongoing cleaning and disinfection of all classrooms, shared spaces, and outdoor facilities.

Additionally, with our proposed hybrid model, all buildings would be thoroughly deep-cleaned before the alternating cohort of students and teachers returned for in-person instruction

Should a student or staff member begin to exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the day and require isolation, we will work with the custodial team to disinfect the room immediately to allow remaining students and staff back into the room quickly.

In the event of a positive test, or until a negative test, the affected student or staff member would be required to self-isolate at home (14 days for a positive test) and will need to be cleared by a doctor in order to return to the building.

CONTACT TRACING

KIPP Albany commits to working with all relevant local and state contact tracing efforts to the fullest extent possible. This includes maintaining student and staff attendance and cohort and pod data, transportation data, and a record of all visitors to the school building. All documentation will be made available to public health officials upon request, in the event of a confirmed case or multiple confirmed cases in the community. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by Federal and State law and regulations.

COMMUNICATION

KIPP Albany will communicate about school and region-wide efforts to contain COVID-19 in a variety of ways, including:

- Virtual family town halls
- Orientation meeting at the start of the year
- School-wide, cohort-wide, pod-wide, or all KIPP Albany staff and family communications via “all-calls,” social media, and posting on online learning platforms
- KIPP Albany Reopening webpage
- Professional development for staff

- Creating and distributing information (ie instructional videos and graphics) to families on personal hygiene, physical distancing, and other safety practices.
- Posting visible signs on our campuses that promote personal hygiene, physical distancing, and other safety protocols.

CLOSURE

CLOSURE TRIGGERS

KIPP Albany staff will work with local health officials and follow best practices to determine when and what would trigger the transition to fully virtual learning for a pod, cohort, or the whole school community.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY

Based on the closure triggers identified and the guidance from local health officials, KIPP Albany would stop in-person instruction for either a pod, cohort, or entire school. For all cases, the affected students/staff will move to KIPP Albany's remote learning structure and schedule.

KIPP Albany would work with local health officials to determine when school will be safe to resume. All schools will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before in-person instruction resumes.

COMMUNICATION

KIPP Albany will communicate any school or region-wide closures, or factors that would cause a closure, in a variety of ways, including:

- Virtual family town halls
- Orientation meeting at the start of the year
- School-wide, cohort-wide, pod-wide, or all KIPP Albany staff and family communications via "all-calls," social media, and posting on online learning platforms