ALUM ROCK UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

STAFF REVIEW AND PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

KIPP PRIZE Preparatory Academy Charter Renewal Petition

Board Meeting | October 22, 2026

Prepared by:

Sandra Garcia

Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services

I. Purpose of the Report

KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy submitted a petition to the Alum Rock Union Elementary School District seeking renewal of its charter for the 2027-2032 term. District staff reviewed the renewal petition, supporting documentation, California School Dashboard and Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) information included with the petition, fiscal and operational information, and supplemental responses provided by KIPP Public Schools Northern California in response to District questions.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Education with staff's preliminary findings regarding KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy's performance under the applicable charter renewal criteria and to identify areas for continued improvement, clarification, or verification before Board action. This report does not predetermine the length of the renewal term; for a school in the Middle Performance Category, the Board may grant a renewal for a period of five years.

II. Updated Renewal Requirements

California Education Code section 47607 requires a chartering authority, as an additional criterion in renewal, to consider the charter school's placement in the state performance categories based on California School Dashboard performance. For the 2026 renewal cycle, the California Department of Education (CDE) performance category file is based on the 2024 and 2025 Dashboards.

Performance Category	Renewal Framework
High	Eligible for a 5-, 6-, or 7-year renewal term.
Middle	May be renewed for a 5-year term.
Low	May be renewed for a 2-year term only if applicable statutory conditions are met.

For the High Performance Category, the statutory framework considers two consecutive years immediately preceding renewal. A charter school may qualify based on receiving the two highest performance levels schoolwide on all applicable state indicators, or through the alternative academic-performance comparison in Education Code section 47607(c)(2)(A). A charter school eligible for technical assistance under the applicable statute does not qualify for renewal under the High Performance Category provision.

Effective January 1, 2026, the middle-tier renewal criteria were updated. The prior verified-data requirement for middle-performing charter schools was removed; the authorizer now considers schoolwide and student-group performance on state and local Dashboard indicators, giving greater weight to academic performance. This statutory change does not alter KIPP Prize's Middle Performance Category designation.

Current state sources: California Department of Education, Performance Categories; Charter School Renewals; August 4, 2026 Performance Category Data File release; Education Code section 47607.

III. Staff Team Review

A team of District staff conducted a comprehensive review of the petition. The team was comprised of the following individuals:

- Sandra Garcia, Assistant Superintendent
- Teresa Decelles, Assistant Superintendent
- Cari Vaeth, Interim Superintendent
- Dr. Tara Bickford-Williams, Director of Academic Services
- Dr. Kiela Jimenez, Director of Student Support Services
- Tony Colonna, Director of Special Services

- Yeny Rosales, Principal on Special Assignment
- Stephanie Monroe, Principal on Special Assignment
- Jesus Araujo, Coordinator
- Terri Ryland, Consultant

IV. Renewal Qualification and Available Terms

KIPP Prize's petition states that the CDE identified the school in the Middle Performance Category for this renewal cycle under Criterion 1. District staff's review of the petition and supporting performance information is consistent with the school's qualification for renewal in the Middle Performance Category.

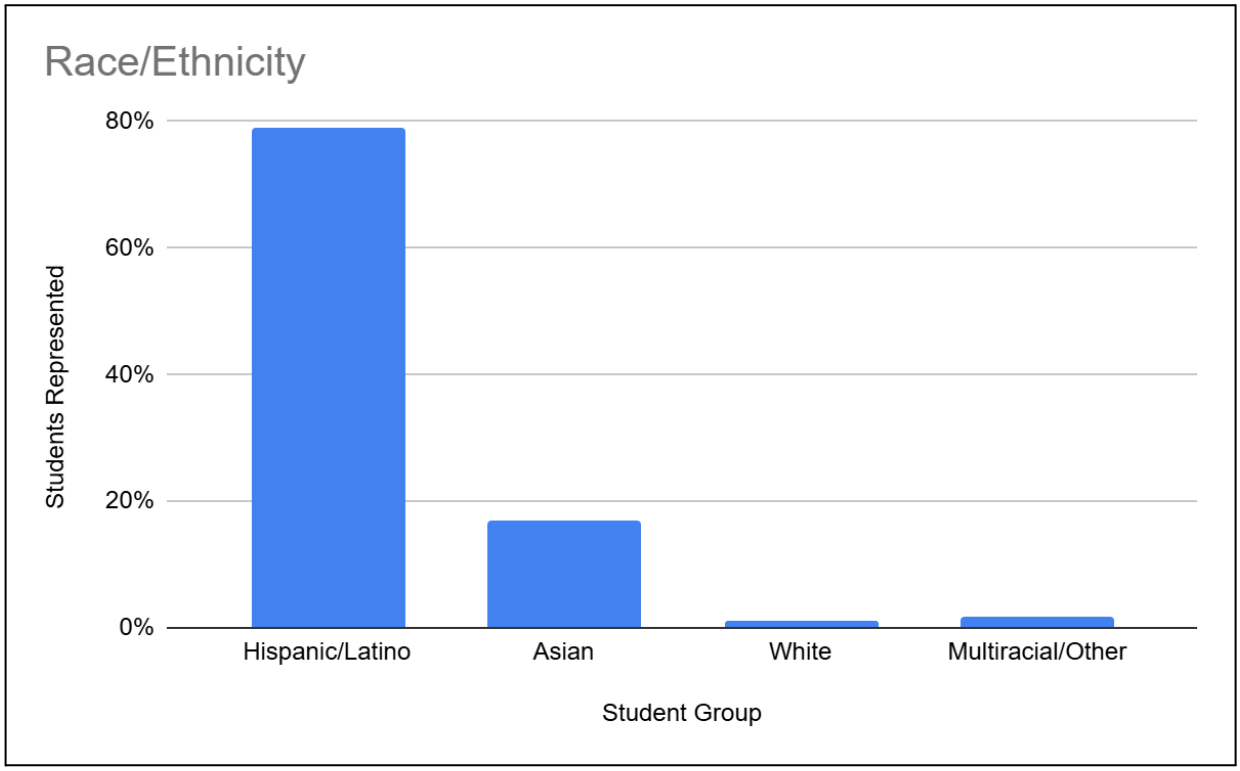
Board Renewal Option	Charter Term
Five-Year Renewal	July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2032

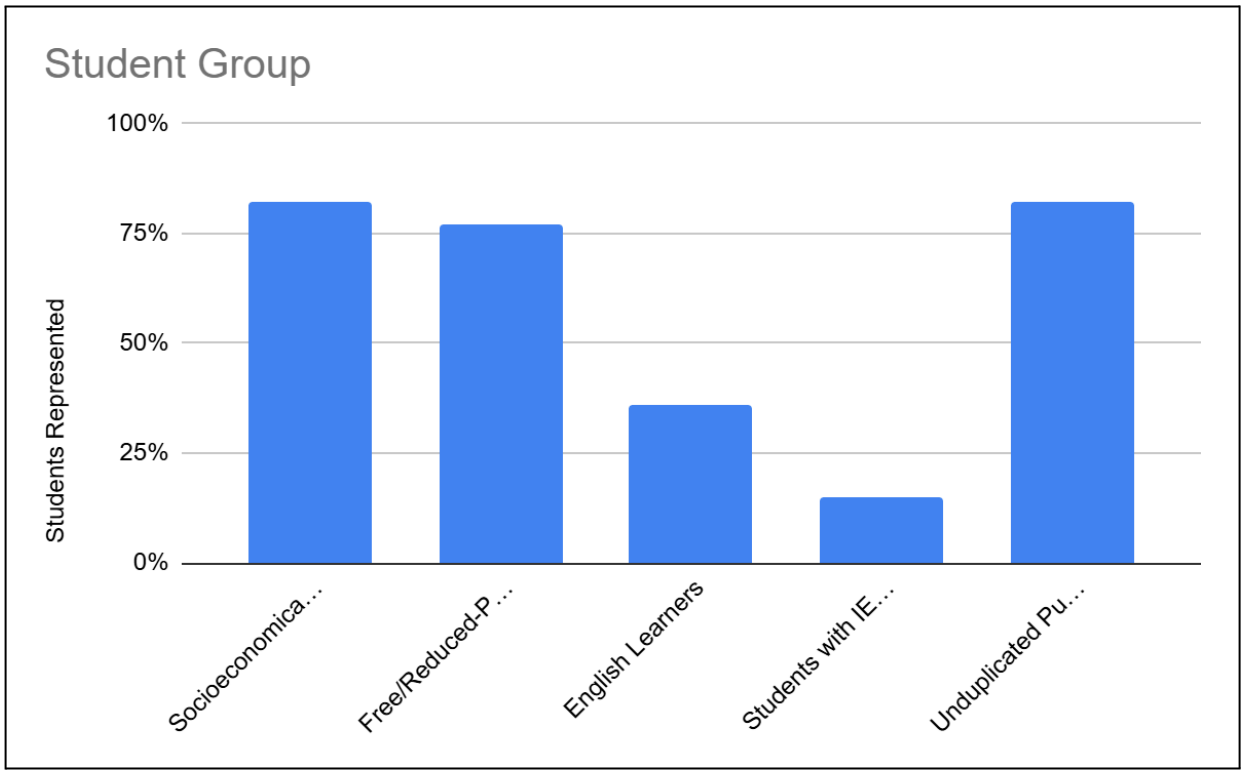
Staff finds that KIPP Prize qualifies for renewal. The determination of whether the charter is renewed rests with the Board of Education.

V. School Profile

KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy is a public charter middle school serving grades 5-8 in East San Jose. Its 2026-27 LCAP reports 413 students: 108 in grade 5, 106 in grade 6, 102 in grade 7, and 97 in grade 8. KIPP Prize's mission is to prepare students to access competitive opportunities in Silicon Valley and beyond through rigorous, literacy-based, college-preparatory curriculum combined with personalized learning, character development, and diverse cultural and enrichment experiences. The school operates with five core values, Persistence, Relationships, Integrity, Zest, and Excellence, which together form the acronym PRIZE

Student Group	Students Represented
Hispanic/Latino	79%
Asian	17%
White	1.2%
Multiracial/Other	1.6%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	82%
Free/Reduced-Price Meals	77%
English Learners	36%
Students with IEPs	15%
Unduplicated Pupils	82%

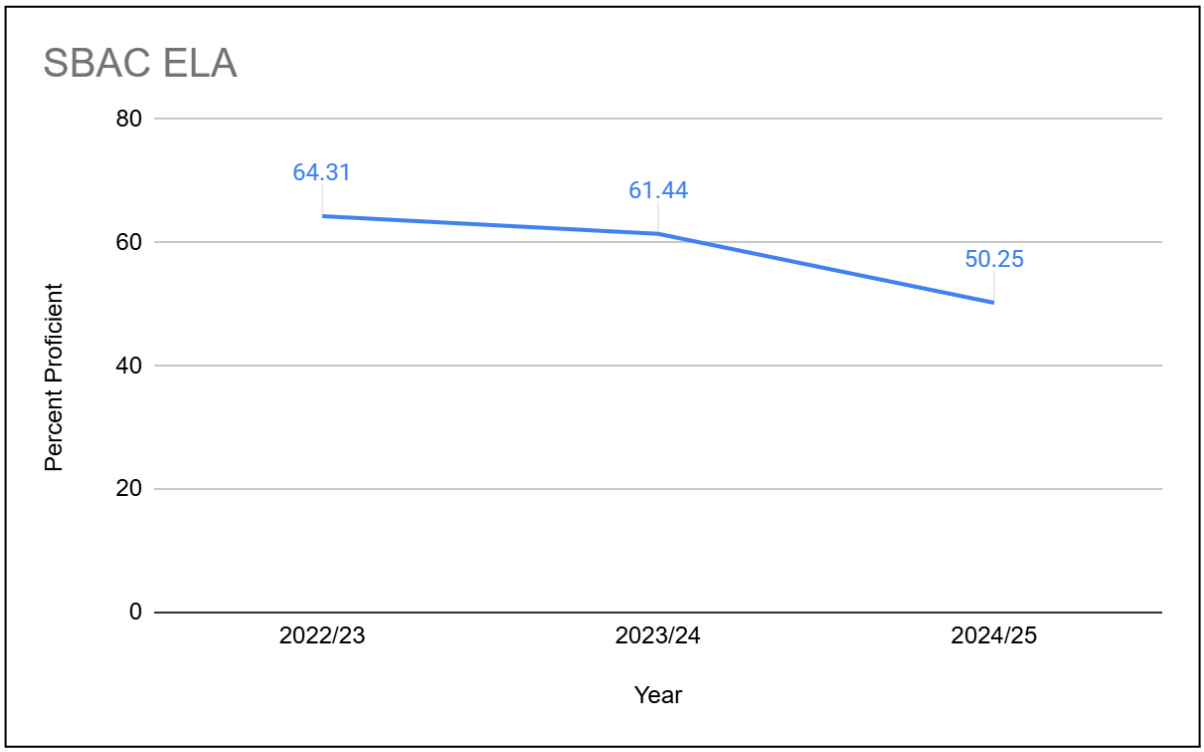


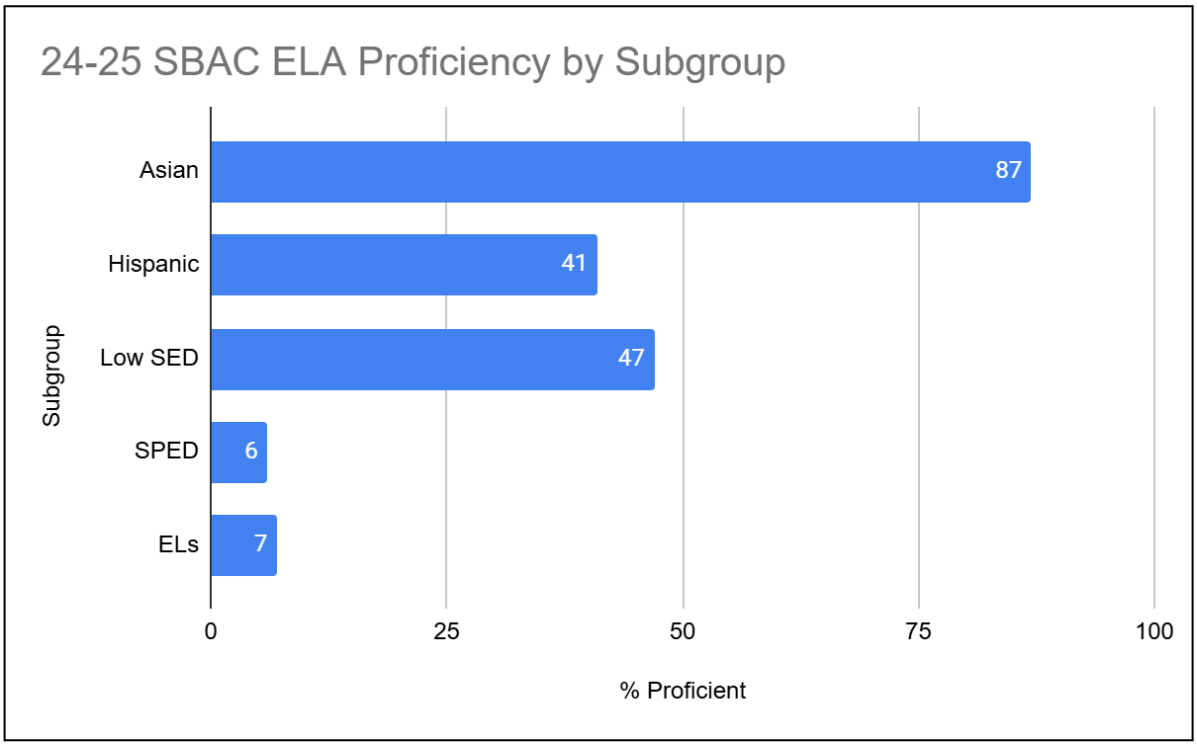


Source: KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy 2026-27 LCAP, Charter Renewal Petition

VI. Preliminary Finding 1: English Language Arts Performance

KIPP Prize had a decline in performance in English Language Arts. All-student SBAC proficiency ranged from a high of 64.31 % in 2022-23 to 50.25% in 2024-25. The 2025 Dashboard reports all students at 1.9 points above standard with a Yellow (Medium) performance level. ELA results for Hispanic students and English learners have an Orange (Low) performance level on the 2025 Dashboard, at 24.2 points below standard and 20.4 points below standard respectively. Students with disabilities earned a Red (Very low) rating in ELA at 117.0 points below standard.





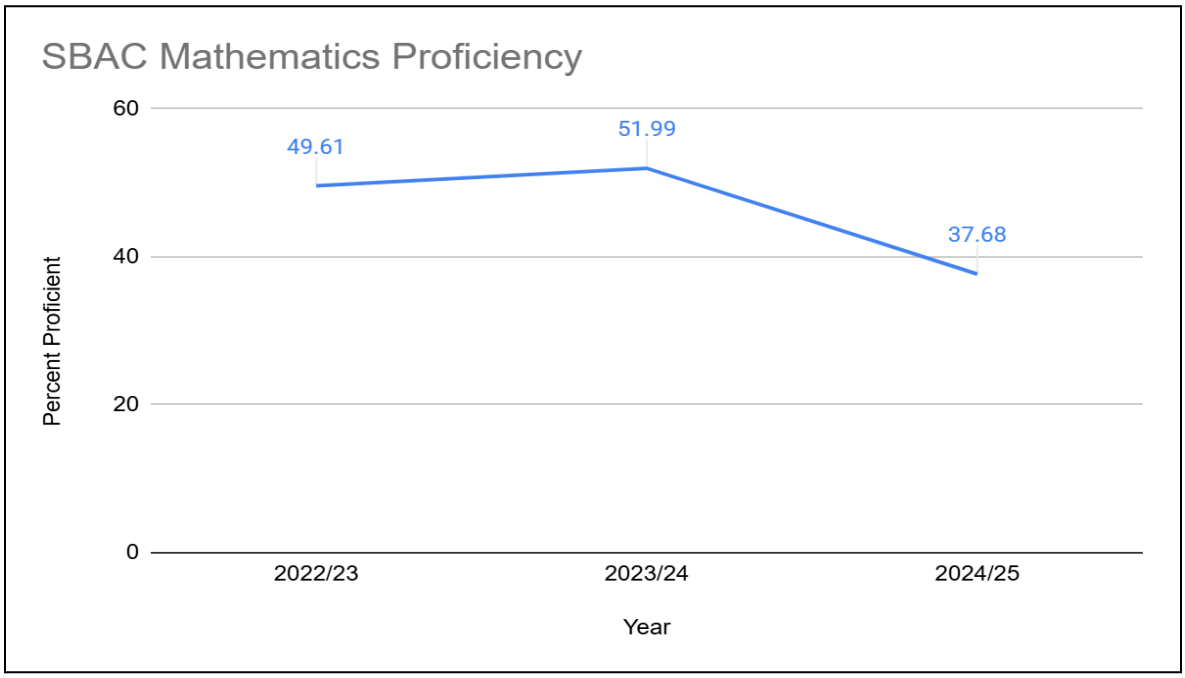
Source: KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy 2026-27 LCAP; 2024-25 reported proficiency.

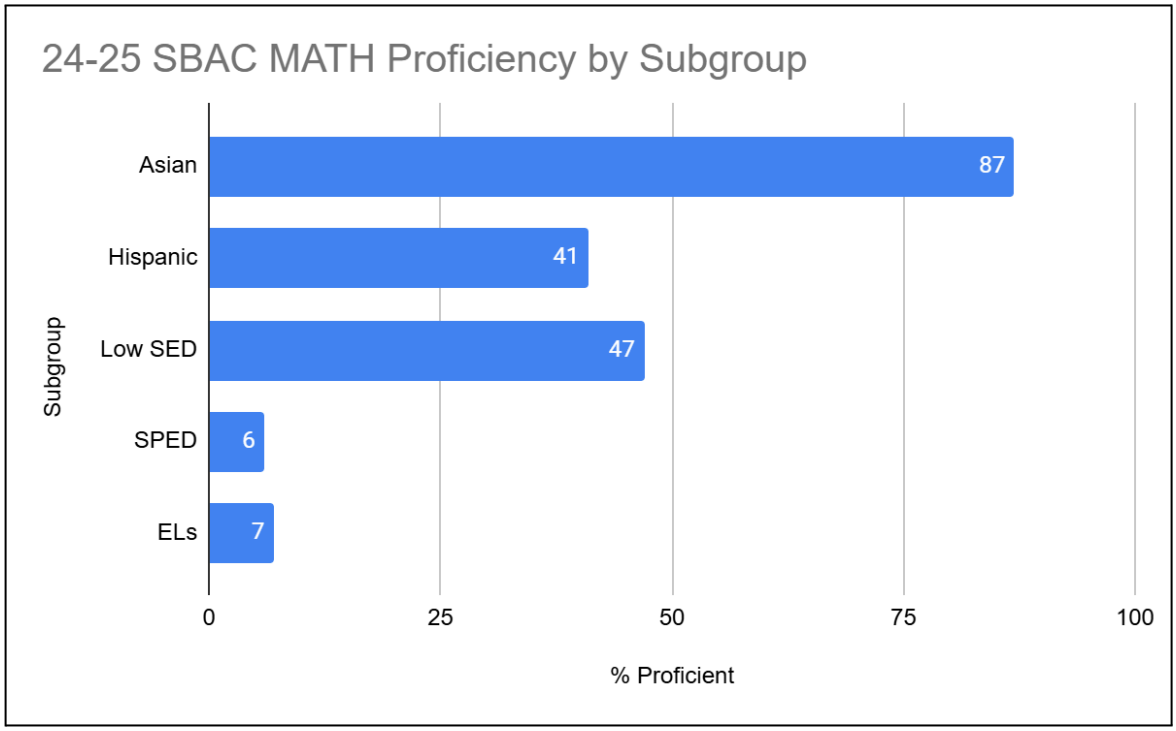
Staff Analysis

The ELA data demonstrate that overall 50% of students are proficient in ELA; however there has been a decline in this area over the last three school years.. Disaggregated results remain important to the renewal review. Students with disabilities were reported at 6% proficient and 117 points below standard and English Learners were reported at 6.40% proficient and 15.2 points below standard in 2025. In addition, Long term English Learners were reported at 2.5% proficient and 85.6 points below standard in 2025. KIPP's LCAP recognizes that this is a continued area of deep concern particularly for Hispanic students, students with disabilities and English Learners. The school is actively addressing this equity gap through IST and general education co-teaching, small group core instruction, and quarterly progress monitoring conferences with families.

VII. Preliminary Finding 2: Mathematics Performance

KIPP Prize had a decline in overall performance in Math over three years dropping 14.31% in 2024-25. All-student SBAC proficiency increased to 51.99% in 2023-24 then dropped to 37.68% in 2024-25. The 2025 Dashboard reports all students at 41.9 points below standard with a low (Orange) performance level and a decline of 46.3 points. Math results for Hispanic students and English learners also had an Orange (Medium) performance level on the 2025 Dashboard, at 75.6 points below standard and 59.2 points below standard respectively. Students with disabilities earned a Red (Very low) performance level in Math at 164.8.0 points below standard and declined 22.2 points. Long term English Learners earned a Red (Very low) performance level in Math at 123.9 points below standard and declined 37.4 points.





Source: KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy 2026-27 LCAP; 2024-25 reported proficiency.

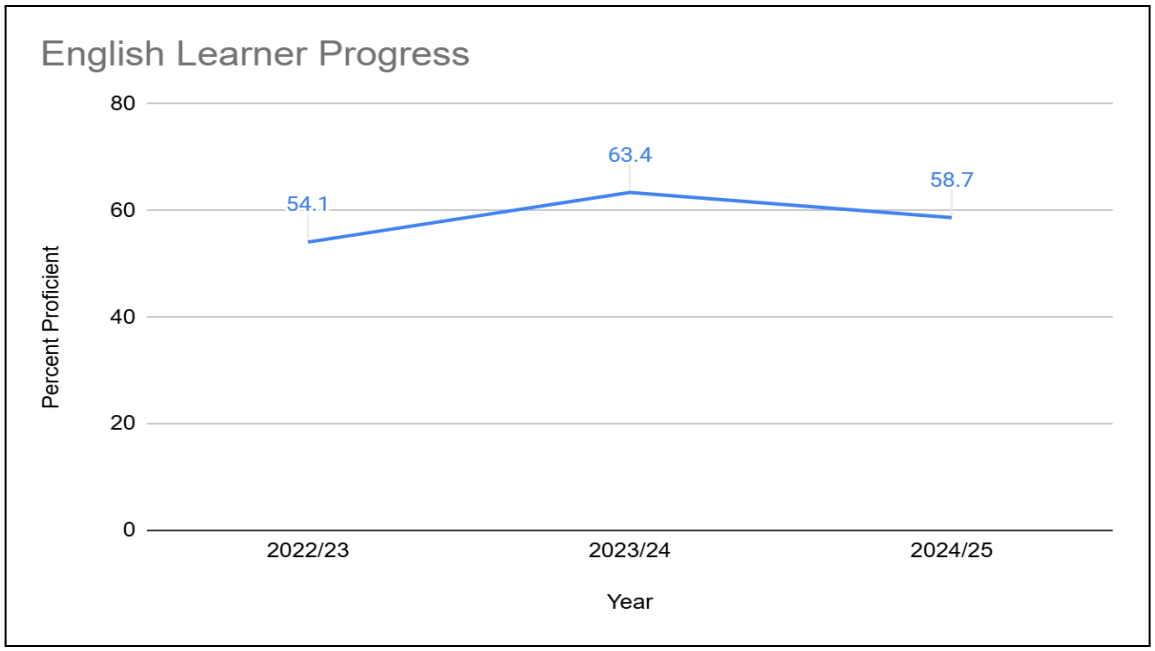
Staff Analysis

Overall mathematics performance had a significant drop in proficiency at KIPP Prize. Furthermore, specific student-group outcomes show areas requiring focused attention. Students with disabilities, Long-term English Learners, English Learners, Hispanic students and Socioecomically Disadvantaged all showed a significant decline in proficiency. The KIPP Prize LCAP attributes these results to the compounding impact of staffing challenges during the 2025 school year, particularly in math classrooms, alongside the challenge

of implementing the Eureka Squared curriculum under those conditions. It is essential that Math be an area of targeted focus specifically for the subgroups falling furthest behind.

VIII. Preliminary Finding 3: English Learner Performance

Approximately 36% of KIPP Prize students are reported as English Learners (ELs). The California Dashboard reports that 58.7% of active English Learners and 58.2% of Long-Term English Learners made progress toward English proficiency in 2025, compared with 63.4% in the prior year and 54.1% in 2022-23.



Source: KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy 2026-27 LCAP, 2024-25 reported proficiency.(CA Dashboard)

Staff Analysis

Overall, 58.7% of English Learners and 58.2% of Long-Term English Learners made progress toward English proficiency in 2025 However, KIPP Prize experienced a slight decline of 4.7% on their ELPI performance level in 2025 while Long Term English Learners maintained the number of students proficient on their ELPI performance level in 2025. English Learner performance in the 2025-2026 school year dropped in both ELA and Math from standard. While there has been some decline in overall proficiency in this area, the school points to this area as an area of strength that reflects the value of designated English language development time and multilingual learner-focused professional development embedded in the school's instructional calendar. Staff recommends continuing to review language progress alongside academic content outcomes, especially because of the decline in ELPI performance level, ELA and Math performance.

IX. Preliminary Finding 4: Students with Disabilities

Approximately 16% of KIPP Prize students receive special education services through an IEP. The petition states that KIPP Prize operates as its own LEA for special education, participates in the El Dorado County Charter SELPA, assumes responsibility for special education and related services, and selects, contracts with, and oversees NPS and NPA providers.

Reported Service	Service Count
Specialized Academic Instruction (SAI)	62
Speech and Language	22
Occupational Therapy	6
Counseling / Mental Health Services (Includes Individual Counseling, Counseling and Guidance, and Parent Counseling)	16
Behavior Intervention Services	8
Specialized deaf and hard of hearing services	1
Audiological services	1
Health and nursing - other services	1
Intensive Individual Services	4

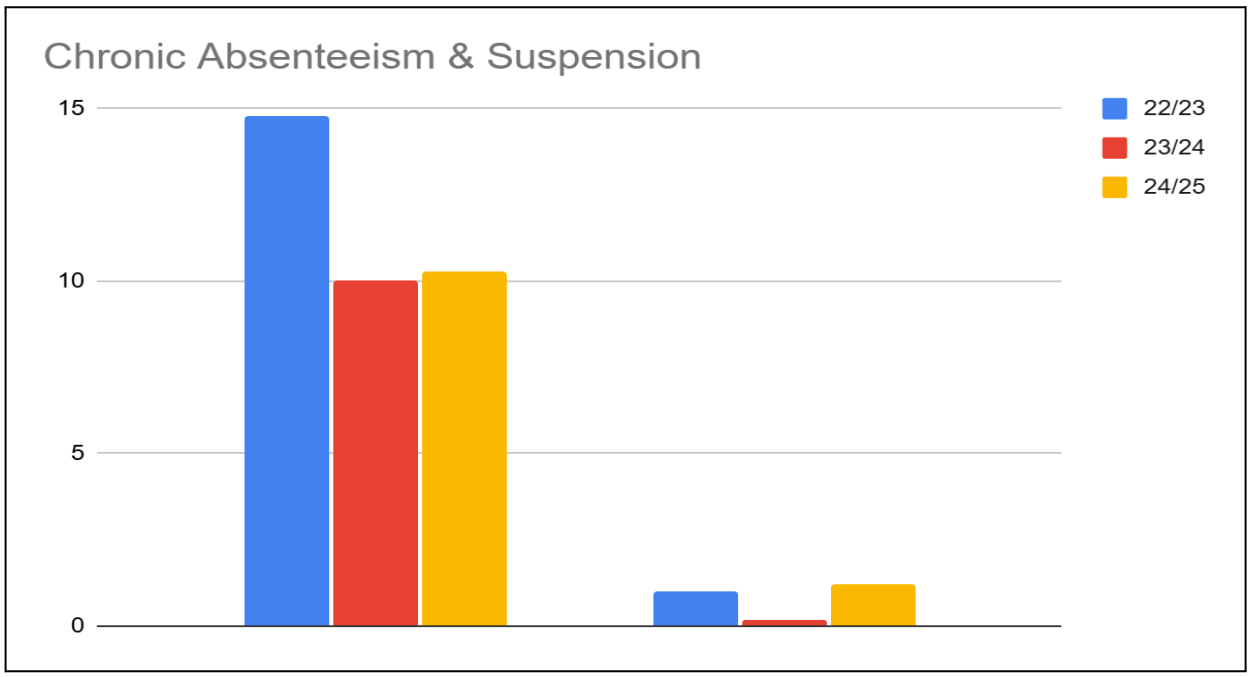
These service counts were supplied by KIPP in response to District questions and are not presented as unique-student counts; one student may receive more than one related service.

Staff Analysis

The petition establishes KIPP's LEA responsibility for special education. Staff recommends continued review of service delivery, NPA/NPS documentation, academic outcomes, and implementation of IEP supports. Student achievement data for students with disabilities remains a priority area in all subject areas.

X. Preliminary Finding 5: Attendance, Suspension, and School Climate

The 2025 Dashboard shows the school maintaining an overall chronic absenteeism rate of 10.3% for all students, earning an Orange (Low) performance rating. Average daily attendance is tracking at 95.7% for 2025-26, with consistent rates across grade levels. In addition, the school had a slight increase to their suspension rate to 1.2%, earning a Yellow (Medium) performance rating. Students with disabilities increased their suspension rate by 6.3% in 2025 which is an increase of 6.3% from the prior year. English Learners increased their suspension rate by 2.2% and Long term English Learners increased their suspension rate by 1.1%, all have an Orange (Low) performance level on the California Dashboard.



Source: KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy 2026-27 LCAP and CA Dashboard.

Staff Analysis

KIPP Prize has maintained their chronic absenteeism rates from the previous school year and is showing improvement this school year which will be reflected on the new dashboard. KIPP Prize staff attribute the improvement to the school's tiered attendance outreach, weekly attendance team meetings, and teacher-led homeroom caseloads for personalized family communication. Chronic absenteeism reflects a pattern that warrants continued focus, particularly for Hispanic students, students with disabilities, English Learners, and Long Term English Learners.

Based on the 2025 Dashboard and information from the KIPP Prize LCAP, suspension rates have increased for Hispanic students, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students, English Learners, Long-Term English Learners and Students with Disabilities. While the overall rate remains low in absolute terms, the increase for students with disabilities warrants close monitoring and continued investment in restorative practices and proactive behavioral supports.

XI. Preliminary Finding 6: Fiscal and Organizational Capacity

The petition describes centralized KIPP NorCal services that support accounting, payroll, benefits, financial management, human resources, compliance, technology, special education, facilities, academic support, fundraising, and governance. District staff's final review should continue to reconcile multi-year projections, enrollment assumptions, special education expenditures, management/service fees, facilities obligations, and audited financial information as available. While the charter meets required financial obligations and components in the charter renewal petition, it is recommended that the KIPP financial team include the items listed below in the Staff Recommendations section.

XII. Staff Recommendations for Continued Improvement

District staff recognizes KIPP Prize's overall academic performance and progress across several state and local indicators. The following recommendations are intended to support continued improvement and authorizer oversight during the next charter term. They do not change KIPP Prize's qualification for renewal or limit the Board's authority to select a five year renewal term.

Access to Core Curriculum for English Learners: Information for the school to provide access to grade-level core curriculum for English Learners is lacking: Access to grade-level core curriculum affirmed and California ELD Standards referenced, but the new Proficiency Level Descriptors (PLDs) are not referenced. The charter petition references curriculum and materials that will be utilized in the instruction of English Learners: Designated/Integrated ELD program, Ellevation data platform and 'specialized curricular materials' described, but does not name the ELD curriculum or instructional materials.

Students with Disabilities: Continue strengthening academic supports in all subject areas and take a deeper dive into chronic absenteeism and suspension rates for students with disabilities; monitor achievement and growth, access to core instruction, service delivery, IEP implementation, and collaboration between general and special education staff. Approval should be accompanied by verification that KIPP Prize has adopted detailed procedures, assigned qualified personnel, provided appropriate staff training, and established systems to monitor 504 Plan implementation and ADA accessibility requirements.

Long-Term English Learners: Continue targeted academic language and content support in mathematics and additional support in English Language Arts.

Pupil Suspension/Expulsion: Staff requests clarification regarding stakeholder participation in discipline-policy development/review; the circumstances under which discipline policies may be modified without a material revision; educational alternatives following expulsion; general education expulsion appeal procedures and final decision-making authority; notification and transfer of records to the student's district of residence; and District/COE involvement following expulsion.

Continued Disaggregated Data Review: Review academic achievement, growth, attendance, chronic absenteeism, suspension, retention, reclassification, and other relevant indicators by student group so schoolwide averages do not obscure disparities.

Qualification for Certificated Employees: Only refers to teaching credentials and not any other type of services credentials issued from CTC: KIPP Prize shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (“CTC”) certificate, permit, or other document required for the teacher’s certificated assignment.

Civil Liability: District requests verification of insurance conformity and clarification of the duty to defend ARUSD.

Financial Audit: Recommend the petitioner add language on the resolution of audit exceptions and deficiencies, public availability of the audit, and auditor qualifications/selection.

Financial Plan/Reporting: Recommend the petitioner add a staffing FTE schedule, an ADA projection alongside enrollment, and a note reconciling budgeted general purpose revenue to the LCFF calculator. In addition, staff recommends the petitioner document the multi-year plan to restore breakeven and explain the non-uniform movements in salary, professional development and recruitment lines.

Annual Operating Budget: Work with District to respond to questions in the annual operating budget such as object-code detail, a restricted/unrestricted split, explicit legal and insurance cost lines, and a path to breakeven.

Governance Structure: The petition states that ARUSD may appoint a representative to the governing board but does not explicitly confirm whether an ARUSD-appointed representative currently serves. Clarification is needed regarding current district board representation and management-service terms. Correct the appendix references and verify implementation of the stated transparency procedures through district oversight.

XIII. Summary of Preliminary Findings

Area Reviewed	Preliminary Staff Finding
Renewal Performance	KIPP Prize is identified as Middle Performance and qualifies for renewal; The charter qualifies for a 5 year renewal term.
ELA	KIPP Prize declined in English Language Arts performance. The ELA data demonstrate that overall 50% of students are proficient in ELA; however there has been a decline in this area over the last three school years.
Mathematics	Overall, mathematics performance had a significant drop in proficiency at KIPP Prize. Furthermore, specific student-group outcomes show areas requiring focused attention. Students with disabilities, Long-term English Learners, English Learners, Hispanic students and Socioecomically Disadvantaged all showed a significant decline in proficiency.
English Learners	Overall, English Learners as well as Long-Term English Learners made progress toward English proficiency in 2025 However, KIPP Prize experienced a slight decline on their ELPI performance level in 2025 while Long Term English Learners maintained the number of students proficient on their ELPI performance level in 2025. Furthermore, English Learner performance in the 2025-2026 school year dropped in both ELA and Math from standard.
Students with Disabilities	LEA responsibilities and services are described; academic outcomes remain an improvement priority.
Attendance/Climate	KIPP Prize has maintained their chronic absenteeism rates from the previous school year and is showing improvement this school year. Overall, suspension rates have increased slightly. Continued focus is warranted particularly for Hispanic students, students with disabilities, English Learners, and Long Term English Learners who show the most impact. .
Fiscal/Operations	Centralized organizational support is described; final and ongoing oversight should include additional reports, additional language in the charter and/or explanations requested in the findings.
Governance Structure	Ensure that a District representative participates on the Charter board.

XIV. Staff Preliminary Recommendation

Based on the review completed to date, District staff finds that KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy meets the performance requirements applicable to a charter school identified by the California Department of Education in the Middle Performance Category and therefore qualifies for charter renewal.

Under the applicable renewal framework, the Board of Education may renew KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy's charter for a term of five years.

Staff recommends approval of the charter renewal after considering the petition, staff's review and preliminary findings, information presented during the public review process, and any additional information received before Board action.

Appendix A. Board Renewal Options

	Motion Term
5 years	July 1, 2027 - June 30, 2032

Sources

- KIPP Prize Preparatory Academy Charter Renewal Petition 2027-2032 and embedded 2026-27 LCAP.
- California Department of Education, Performance Categories - Charter Schools
- California Department of Education, Release of Charter School Performance Category Data File, January 7, 2026.
- California Department of Education, Charter School Renewals.
- California Education Code section 47607 and related renewal provisions.
- Staff Renewal Matrix