



METROPOLITAN  
**Nashville**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dec. 5, 2014

Dear Kirkpatrick Elementary School Parents,

We are writing to tell you about an important change being planned for your school next year. The change would primarily affect next year's Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes (students who are currently Pre-Kindergarten age or in Kindergarten this year), and we want to be sure you have all the information and opportunities to have your questions answered.

The state and our local school district measure student achievement at all schools to determine if students are receiving an education that will prepare them for success in life. Based on the data measured by the state and our school district, unfortunately, Kirkpatrick Elementary School is not currently giving students the high-quality education they deserve.

District and school leaders are developing plans to improve all low-performing schools in Nashville, including Kirkpatrick. The school district has looked closely at Kirkpatrick's challenges and needs, and believes the school could benefit the most from a partnership with a charter school in order to provide extra attention and support for the students in the school. Charter schools are independent public schools operated by a separate organization approved by the School Board.

The School Board authorized KIPP Nashville as a public charter school operator to convert a low-performing school starting in the 2015-2016 school year, and we are considering their support in transforming Kirkpatrick into a high-performing neighborhood school. KIPP currently operates two high-performing neighborhood public schools in Nashville and just opened Collegiate High School this summer in East Nashville. KIPP Academy Nashville and KIPP Nashville College Prep are both rated in the top performance category on the annual review of school performance by the school district. KIPP Academy Nashville, located at the Highland Heights building in East Nashville, has also been identified by the state of Tennessee as a "Reward" school, which means it ranked in the top 10% of the state in academic gains made by students. KIPP is committed to serving students in East Nashville with a community school that offers strong college preparatory education, a safe character-building culture for every single child and supports for students and families to and through college.

KIPP's plan is a "phased conversion" for Kirkpatrick, which means they will begin by operating only Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade next year. KIPP will then add an extra grade each year until they operate the entire school. This allows them to provide individual attention to students, get to know the community, and build a positive school culture. During this time of transition, MNPS would continue to manage the other grades and share the school with KIPP. This is called "co-location" and it means that if KIPP transforms Kirkpatrick, students in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> grades next year will not be part of the KIPP school.

We want to know your opinions on the needs at Kirkpatrick. A parents' meeting with KIPP's leaders will be held at Kirkpatrick on Monday, December 15 at 4 p.m. School representatives will also be in your neighborhood in the coming weeks to talk with you personally.

Alan Coverstone  
Executive Officer for Innovation  
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Jesse Register  
Director of Schools  
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Why is Kirkpatrick being considered for this transformation partnership with KIPP?** Kirkpatrick has the highest need of all elementary schools in the district. Fewer than one in five children at Kirkpatrick are at grade level in math, reading and science. Teachers and parents have shared that their children need strong psychological supports and other wrap-around services. There is also a need for much stronger parent engagement so students come to school every day, stay in their school and have consistent educational support at home.

**What does this mean for my child?** Under this partnership, KIPP would operate kindergarten and first grade at Kirkpatrick starting in the 2015-16 school year. Metro Schools would operate grades 2-4, with one more grade going to KIPP each year until 2018-19. The district will also continue to operate the prekindergarten classes at Kirkpatrick. While KIPP operates lower grades, the upper grades at Kirkpatrick would also implement a full turnaround strategy. Metro Schools is committed to serving the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> grades in the school next year and until KIPP eventually serves the entire school. This helps families (for example, keeping siblings together and ensuring every zoned student still has access to the same neighborhood school) and gives the schools an opportunity to collaborate.

**Is this a final decision?** The Director of Schools is ready to recommend Kirkpatrick for a KIPP partnership. It is the highest need school and fits well with the KIPP model. A final decision will be made once there has been additional communication and engagement with parents.

### **Will students be offered any other school choices?**

Yes, and Metro Schools will work to make sure parents are fully informed of the school options available to them. Families can choose from a number of schools in the community, like:

- KIPP at Kirkpatrick in grades K-1;
- Kirkpatrick Elementary in grades 2-4;
- Explore Community School in grades K-1;
- Lockeland Elementary School, with transportation provided by MNPS (available to those who apply through the school selection process);
- Rosebank Elementary School, with transportation provided by MNPS; and more.

District staff will make personal contact with each family to make sure they understand their options and can make an active choice of which school they want to attend.

**What can you tell me about KIPP?** KIPP is a respected local public charter operator and its two neighborhood schools in Nashville have great results. They just opened their third school, a high school, this school year. Families are encouraged to visit the website, [www.kippnashville.org](http://www.kippnashville.org), attend the upcoming parent meeting, and take a tour of KIPP schools. KIPP representatives will be visiting homes in the coming weeks to talk with families and schedule tours.

### **What comes next?**

- Parent meeting at Kirkpatrick, December 15 at 4pm
- Parent survey distributed on December 16
- Tours for Kirkpatrick parents of KIPP's other two schools in December and January
- Home visits from a school representative