



Albany Preparatory Charter School

Key Design Features of Albany Prep

Unique Educational Design

- Albany Prep will offer middle-school students an education designed to prepare them for accelerated high-school study. Specifically, student studies will be geared toward completion of the International Baccalaureate (IB) *Diploma Program*, the “gold-standard” of high-school education world wide. Students that do well on the IB diploma exams often are granted a year’s worth of college credit. Albany Prep also will serve as an excellent foundation for children pursuing Advanced Placement (AP) high school studies.
- An Albany Prep education stresses mastery of the content of core academic areas (language arts, math, science, history, and the arts) within a three-part framework of **communication** (reading, writing, speaking, analyzing), **intercultural awareness** (including the presentation and discussion of issues in a global context and in relation to students’ own unique cultures), and **holistic learning** (emphasizing the links of learning across subject areas and with the surrounding community).
- Albany Prep will incorporate successful, research-based curricular components, including *Junior Great Books* to emphasize literature, the *Full Option Science System* to provide students with hands-on scientific studies, *Connected Math* to develop students’ critical-thinking skills, and the award-winning *A History of US* series to provide a comprehensive review of American History.

More Classroom Time

- School day features four 90-minute blocks for core academic subjects such as Language Arts, Math, History, and Science. These longer class sessions (twice the length of typical public school classes) will allow deeper study units and more time for classroom discussion. Arts, Music, Physical Education, and Spanish also will be taught in this “block schedule” style.
- Language Arts and Math will receive particular emphasis, with at least 7½ hours of instruction provided to students in each of these critical subjects every week (about 4 hours more per week than in the district’s middle school schedule).
- The school also will offer separate classroom periods for supervised Homework Club, tutoring and extra reading-time, and school-wide projects.

Full-Day Classes & Extended School Year

- School day runs from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
- School year runs 200 days, plus 5 days for teacher workshops.
- After 4 years at Albany Prep (Grades 5-8), students will have received the equivalent of 2½ years more schooling than had they attended a district-run school.

Strong Leadership

- Albany Prep has selected a strong leader uniquely qualified to serve as School Director. Todd McKee has served as the secondary school principal at the International Community School of Addis Ababa, in Ethiopia, Africa. The school – an accredited International Baccalaureate school – serves students from dozens of different countries, including children of diplomats involved in the African Union and various United Nations agencies. Mr. McKee, an Oregon native with Bachelor degrees in biology and chemistry and a Master of Educational Administration from

Stanford University, previously taught in urban schools in Seattle and East Palo Alto in California as well as in international schools in Africa and Japan. While teaching in Seattle, Mr. McKee earned the "Teacher of the Year" award for McClurre Middle School in 1996. Mr. McKee also joined the *Teach For America* program as a corps member in 1994 and spent an additional four summers working at *Teach For America's* summer training institute preparing prospective teachers to begin assignments in underserved urban and rural schools. Mr. McKee also has served as the organization's National Director of Recruitment. Recently, Mr. McKee has emphasized the strategy of International Baccalaureate-style education by having an article published in The Iowa Council of Social Studies Teachers titled "Educators + Parents + Partnership = Global Citizenship."

- Members of Albany Prep's initial Board of Trustees bring to the school broad experience in education service and management, nonprofit service and management, law, regulatory policy, legislative relations, public and media relations, employee relations and contract negotiations, and other skills that will prove helpful in the proper and effective governance oversight of the charter school. All members of the initial Board of Trustees live or work in Albany. All members also are committed to seeing the public education system offer parents and students a choice of middle-school educational options, dramatically improved student performance, and heightened accountability for this performance to parents and the public.

Free & Open to All

- The Albany Preparatory Charter School is a public middle school, it does not charge tuition or fees, and it will be open to all 5th-8th-grade children in the City of Albany (the school will open by enrolling 5th-graders in September 2005).
- The Albany District's two middle schools both have been declared "In need of Improvement – Year 2" because of persistent low academic achievement, and students there are supposed to be entitled to transfer to a non-failing school. Because there are no other options at the middle-school level, however, students in Albany are "trapped" in these under-performing schools. Albany Prep offers a high-quality option for the city's middle-school students who currently have no choices available to them.

Wanted by Parents

- More than 3,700 residents of the neighborhood surrounding Albany Prep's location have signed petitions supporting the establishment of the school.
- Parents of more than 230 grade-eligible students have expressed an interest in enrolling their children at Albany Prep, more than 2½-times the enrollment capacity at the school.

State-of-the-Art, Historically Renovated School Building

- The school eventually will be housed in the former Public School 3 building (30 Watervliet Ave.), a historical gem that was originally constructed in 1887 and designed by the architect Walter Dickson. The Historic Albany Foundation praised the choice of P.S.3 as the location for the new school: "...the planned restoration and reuse of Public School 3 as a new public school is a heartwarming development... With each such renovation, we are restoring Albany's historic legacy – building by building." The facility will be renovated and a new addition will be constructed to house new classrooms, administrative offices, and common-use rooms such as a cafeteria, gymnasium, special education resource rooms, and more.
- The school will feature computers in every classroom for student use.
- The school building will offer wireless Internet connections throughout, allowing teachers to use the Internet for in-class instruction.
- All students will have use of comprehensive science labs.