



KNOXVILLE
PREPARATORY
SCHOOL

Talking Points



Knox Prep School Highlight

Knoxville Preparatory School (Knox Prep) will be an all-boys public charter school located in Knoxville, Tennessee that is free to attend for all boys in Knox County. Knox Prep plans to open in the fall of 2024 with an inaugural sixth-grade class and will add an additional class each academic year until we reach 12th grade for a total enrollment of 500 students. Knox Prep will offer a quality STEM-centered curriculum in addition to leadership development to ensure students' future success in a fast-paced world.

Knox Prep will create a school culture of joy where boys will be educated in an active learning environment in which all students engage in the learning process to "learn by doing" and then reflect on the experience. Active learning stands in contrast to "traditional" modes of instruction in which students are passive recipients of knowledge from a teacher. Visitors to Knox Prep can expect to see students in the classroom engaged in activities centered around writing, talking, problem solving, or reflecting. Students will have the opportunity to engage intellectually, creatively, emotionally, and socially by learning to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results.

Knox Prep will feature:

- **Small class sizes with individualized instruction** tailored to the needs of boys.
- **Rigorous academic programs & STEM curriculum.** Tutors will work to move all students to proficient/advanced levels addressing individual academic needs of students. Literacy across the curriculum is a priority to improve reading levels across the school.
- **Extended days (7:45 a.m. - 4 p.m.) and summer programs.** Afterschool activities will include tutoring, homework help, chess, art, guitar, choir, book club, green car club, and athletics (soccer, basketball, track, and football) aimed to keep boys ACTIVE.
- **Emphasis on the importance of college and the resources to get there.** College visits begin in 6th grade in addition to college readiness programs, job shadowing, and internships.
- **Character development and leadership opportunities.** Leadership and life skills development are woven throughout the curriculum to teach students resilience, persistence, and grit. Social-emotional development strategies to promote self-discipline, and resilience.
- **One-to-one mentoring program** that provides every student with a mentor to guide them throughout their seven-year educational journey.
- **Intentional design to eliminate barriers.** School-operated wrap-around services (food assistance, uniform assistance, laptops, and home internet access, etc.) will help support low-income students.



Talking Points

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What is the mission, vision, & purpose for Knox Prep?

Mission: To engage young men in a rigorous yet supportive environment that nurtures resilience, promotes academic excellence, inspires leadership, and prepares critical thinkers.

Vision: To inspire and empower young men to achieve academically and participate in a collaborative learning community that will establish a trajectory for lifelong learning and success.

Purpose: To change the lives of young men who potentially face multiple challenges through the attainment of academic success.

What is Chattanooga Preparatory School and how is it affiliated with Knoxville Preparatory School?

Chattanooga Preparatory School is an all-boys public charter school located in Chattanooga, Tennessee that was started in 2018 and currently has 380 students in grades 6-10. Chattanooga Prep's student body is about 60 percent Black and 33 percent Latino/Hispanic. Knox Prep will be a brother school to Chatt Prep, both under the non-profit and 501C-3 Prep Schools.

Chattanooga Prep earned a 5 — the highest score — last year on the state's Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS), which aims to measure how much academic growth each student shows from year to year. Chatt Prep's proficiency rates are the highest in Hamilton County of schools with a similar demographic.

Why an all-boys school?

- **Young men in urban areas are disproportionately impacted by poverty and educational inequity.** Knox Prep will "rise up" and support young men who are underserved and valuable to our community to become Knoxville leaders and enrich our community.
- **Nationwide, boys are consistently underperforming girls academically and socially.** This is a reality not only for boys in K-12, but in post-secondary options as well. There is a great need for higher college persistence rates for young men as whole, but especially young men of color.
- **Boys thrive under personalized instruction specifically designed to meet their needs and teaching styles that reflect boys' specific learning styles.**

Where will Knox Prep be located?

Knox Prep does not have a location yet, but wants the school to be centrally located and is looking at the Western Heights area. Follow the website and social media for announcements on location.



Talking Points

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Why does Knoxville need Knox Prep?

Knoxville is a city with a rich history and a bright future—a community with boundless capacity for innovation, transformation, and economic prosperity. Unfortunately, these opportunities are not accessible for all members of our community, especially in urban neighborhoods where young men are disproportionately impacted by poverty and educational inequity.

Knoxville Preparatory School has unique positioning to offer Knox County families school choice with the county's first all-boys public school aimed to “build the men of tomorrow.” Families who look for options outside of their zoned public school often look to private schools to have choice in education for their child. Private schools primarily only give families with financial means school choice for their children. Knox Prep will offer families school choice for their sons who don't consider private schools with high tuition rates an option.

Knox Prep will meet the unique educational and social/emotional needs of young men who have faced a multitude of challenges in a rigorous yet supportive environment that nurtures resilience, promotes academic excellence, inspires leadership, and prepares critical thinkers.

Knox Prep will be the first charter high school and only the second charter school in Knox County. The availability of Knox Prep will give students at Emerald Youth Academy (existing charter school) an option to continue their education into high school in a charter school environment with similar resources and curriculum they have experienced at Emerald Youth Academy.

How do boys gain admission to Knox Prep?

Students seek admission to charter schools through a lottery system. If there is enough room for every interested student, the school does not need to hold a lottery. When charter schools have more students who want to attend than they have seats available, they use a lottery system to determine their enrollment. Students will be assigned a lottery number based on the order preferences outline below, giving preference in the following order:

1. Students currently enrolled shall be given first enrollment preference and are excluded from the lottery.
2. Siblings of enrolled students.
3. Students of staff and faculty, not to exceed 10% of total enrollment.
4. Students residing in the LEA service area where the public charter school is located (Knox County Schools), who were previously enrolled in a public or private school in the service area during the previous year.
5. Students residing outside the LEA service area in which the public charter school is located and who were attending another public or private school during the previous year.



Talking Points ...continued

What is a charter school and what isn't it?

- A charter school is a public school, not a private school, that operates as a school of choice. Knox Prep will be a public charter school that is free to attend for all boys in Knox County. Charter schools rely on families choosing to enroll their children in the school.
- Knox Prep's success is Knox County School's success. Charter schools are a "tool in the toolbox" for the public school system, offering families additional options for educating their students. Knox Prep hopes to be a partner and an asset to Knox County Schools.
- Charter schools commit to obtaining specific educational objectives in return for a charter to operate a school. They must have a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency and are not religiously affiliated. The local school board in Knox County will vote to either approve or deny the charter application.
- Charter schools receive public funds but must also raise private funds. District-authorized charter schools receive an amount equal to the per-pupil state and local funds received by the school district and all appropriate allocations under federal law or regulation. Donor support helps fund expenses such as building and transportation costs, as well as any other special program or equipment required.
- Charter schools have flexibility to cater their offerings to best suit the needs of their specific student population. This includes autonomy to choose the best suited curriculum, discipline policy, length of school day and school year, extracurriculars, summer programming, and enrichment offerings that are typically decided by the district or state. They use innovation to produce positive student outcomes for specific student groups (in this case, boys).
- Tennessee has 118 charter schools, enrolling about 44,000 students, but only one in Knox County.

When will the charter application for Knox Prep be submitted and what is the process for review?

The charter application for Knoxville Preparatory School is due by February 2023. The [Knox County Schools Board of Education](#) will review the application in April 2023 and will ultimately vote to approve or deny the charter. Should they deny the charter application, Knox Prep can appeal to the TN Public Charter Commission, who would then become the authorizer of the school instead of the Knox County Board of Education should they approve the appeal. The TN Public Charter Commission was established to hear new start, revocation, and renewal charter school appeals from across the state and to serve as an authorizer to any charter schools that it authorizes upon appeal.

To learn more about Knox Prep, visit the website at KnoxvillePrep.org. Community members can fill out a "Knox Prep Intent to Enroll" form on the website if they have a son who will be in the 6th grade in fall 2024. Completing this form does not guarantee a spot in the inaugural class, nor is it a binding agreement for that child to attend the school when it is approve.