KIPP:
Delta College Preparatory School

2004 Annual Report

“There are no shortcuts.”
Welcome to KIPP Delta College Preparatory School! We believe our school is an extraordinary place. While you may not be able to have the full privilege of spending everyday with us, we hope the pages in this report are a reflection of what occurs here on a daily basis.

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School is not just a school. It is a philosophy, a set of beliefs, and a way of life. We believe that there are no shortcuts to success and hard work should be hard. KIPP Delta College Preparatory School is a choice and a commitment. The right to be called a “KIPPster” is an honor and a privilege, and it is not always easy.

We also feel strongly that the adherence to this philosophy and dedication to hard work will reap benefits in the future. KIPP Delta College Preparatory School outperformed all area schools after being open for just two years. In addition, KIPP students around the country have earned scholarships to top high schools and colleges around the country.

Choosing to be a part of KIPP is a life decision. It requires a firm commitment that will challenge and push individuals to, and sometimes beyond, their limits. KIPP challenges students, staff, and community members to become better each and every day.

This report is only an introduction to the world of KIPP Delta College Preparatory School. It will not answer all of your questions and it will certainly not tell you all of the things that you need to know about KIPP. We are proud of our school, and we hope this booklet will give you a glimpse into a world which motivates, inspires, and teaches us on a daily basis.

We encourage you to visit the school, where you can ask questions, spend time in the classrooms, and partake in the shared vision of KIPP Delta College Preparatory School.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

“...The choices you make in life ultimately determine your destiny.”

Mission Statement

The mission of KIPP Delta College Preparatory School is to inculcate our students with the knowledge, skills, and character traits that will enable them to succeed in the nation’s finest high schools and colleges and to become exemplary citizens of their community, country, and world.
Overview of KIPP

Two idealistic teachers, Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin, launched the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) in 1994 as a program for fifth graders in a public school in inner-city Houston, Texas. While only half of the students passed their fourth grade tests before enrolling in KIPP, that year more than 90 percent passed the Texas fifth grade exams in English and mathematics. In 1995, Feinberg's KIPP Academy Houston became one of Houston's first charter schools, and Levin returned home to New York to establish KIPP Academy in the South Bronx. The original KIPP Academies have a sustained track record of high student achievement. More than 95 percent of the graduates of the original KIPP Academies have been accepted to college preparatory high schools. KIPP alumni have earned over $21 million in scholarships to college-preparatory high schools and have matriculated to four-year colleges and universities.

In 2000, Doris and Donald Fisher, co-founders of Gap Inc., formed a unique partnership with Feinberg and Levin to replicate KIPP's success nationwide. Based on the belief that great schools are led by great leaders, the non-profit KIPP Foundation recruits, trains, and supports outstanding teachers to open college-preparatory public schools in high need communities. KIPP helps secure facilities and operating contracts while training school leaders through a year-long KIPP School Leadership Program that includes coursework at the University of California at Berkeley's Haas School of Business, "residencies" at KIPP Schools, and support from expert KIPP staff. Today, KIPP is a growing number of free open-enrollment college-preparatory public schools in 15 states and the District of Columbia that continue to be guided by the founders' mission and vision. KIPP schools have been featured in numerous national news publications, including Newsweek, People, and U.S. News and World Report.

The Five Pillars

The Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) is built on a few simple, fundamental principles.

High Expectations. KIPP Delta College Preparatory School will have explicitly defined and observable high expectations for academic achievement and conduct that make no excuses based on the background of students. Students, parents, teachers, and staff create and reinforce a culture of achievement and support through a range of formal and informal rewards and consequences for academic performance and behavior.

Choice & Commitment. The students, their parents, and the faculty of KIPP Delta College Preparatory School have made a choice to be at the school. No one is assigned or forced to attend this school. Everyone must make and uphold a commitment to the school and to each other to put in the time and effort required to achieve success.

More Time. KIPP Delta College Preparatory School knows that there are no shortcuts when it comes to helping educationally disadvantaged students succeed academically. A longer school day, a longer school year, and summer school mean more time for students at DCPS to acquire the academic knowledge and skills, as well as broad extracurricular experiences that will prepare them for competitive high schools and colleges.

Power to Lead. The principal of KIPP Delta College Preparatory School is an effective academic and organizational leader who understands that there are no great schools without great school leaders. He has control over his school budget and personnel, allowing him to swiftly move dollars or make staffing changes to be more effective in helping students learn.

Focus on Results. KIPP Delta College Preparatory School will focus unrelentingly on results. Student achievement on tests and other objective measures will substantially outperform district averages, will not make excuses based on demographics, and will enable students to compete at the nation's best high schools and colleges.

"If a teammate needs help, we give."

"We are a team and family."
Program Design

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School does not choose the best students in the community to achieve success; in fact, incoming fifth graders are admitted regardless of their test scores. The only admission requirement for the school is the students' and their parents' willingness to sign and uphold the DCPS Commitment to Excellence Form, which the teachers must sign as well. This commitment is the bedrock of the school and specifies that the students, parents, and teachers will do whatever it takes to support the education of the student.

Adequate study time is a key ingredient in the program design. Students attend school from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and until 4:00 p.m. on Fridays. Students spend an additional month during the summer to get a head start on the school year. The school uses the additional time to provide incoming underperforming students with the structure and resources to advance more than one grade level each year. Once students are performing at grade level, the school uses the additional time to accelerate the curriculum and prepare the students for a top quality secondary education. The teachers focus relentlessly on high quality instruction during class and reinforce lessons by assigning homework each night and reviewing it on a daily basis. Both students and teachers are held accountable for ensuring that strong academic gains are made each year.

Learning at KIPP Delta College Preparatory School begins at the fifth grade level where students focus on the fundamentals of reading, writing, and math. Fifth grade teachers use songs, charts, and call and response to teach the multiplication tables, grammar, geography, and other necessary knowledge and skills. Through constant teaching and diligent hard work, students quickly advance. In only two years, students move from basic math to algebra and from sounding out syllables to reading novels. By the end of eighth grade, students will be able to compete with students all around the country at the highest academic levels.

In addition to focusing on academic skills, KIPP Delta College Preparatory School offers multiple extra-curricular and enrichment activities which complement the rigorous academic environment. Students attend physical education courses multiple times during the week and earn the right to participate on an athletic team through hard classroom work. They also have the opportunity to participate in enrichment programs such as music, technology, and Spanish. Students have more opportunity for character building through the Saturday enrichment program, where they participate in dance, art, music, gardening, debate, design and other such activities. The intensive academics and enrichment activities are all designed to put students on the path to top colleges and universities.

Field Lessons

Learning at KIPP Delta College Preparatory School also expands beyond the walls of the classroom. Students earn the right to participate in several local and out-of-state field lessons every month by working hard and exemplifying the values of the school. Students visit college campuses, historic sites, museums, state and national parks, and other settings that may enrich the students' education.

All of the monthly field lessons help prepare the students for a year-end, weeklong trip, which the students must also earn through hard work and appropriate behavior. The fifth grade end-of-the year field lesson is a five-day cultural and educational trip to Colonial Williamsburg and Washington, D.C., where students are able to transfer what they learned in the classroom to the real world. During our first two years, the school brought over seventy students and chaperones on this trip. In the spring of 2004, nearly forty sixth graders flew west to hike in Bryce National Park, Arches National Park, and witness the Grand Canyon. The trip was a perfect complement to what the students learned all year in Earth Science.

A new trip is developed and implemented with the addition of a new grade level each year. By the year 2010, our inaugural class will have had the opportunity to tour more than twenty college campuses, visit at least fifteen American cities, and travel through states in all regions of the country. Pushing the learning experience beyond the boundaries of the classroom enables students to broaden their appreciation for the wider world waiting for them after graduation. In this manner, learning truly comes alive.

Dear Mr. Starr,

The staff of Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park would like to let you know that the seventh grade class that visited the park on September 28th was an excellent group. Rarely does the staff have the opportunity to work with such well-behaved students. They were excellent listeners, eager to learn about the site, and they followed the directions that were given to them by their teachers and by park staff. Please acknowledge their good behavior during this off-site learning opportunity. We really enjoyed having them and would like to welcome your school back for future programs at the park.

Park Interpreters,
Rabiya Datta
Jasmin Rice
Robyn Gable and Susan Rice

A thank you note received from Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park after a DCPS field lesson.
KIPP Delta College Preparatory School accepts students regardless of past academic records or prior test scores. The majority of students who enter KIPP Delta College Preparatory School are performing well below grade level. We use the extended day and extended school year to increase our students' academic performance. After two years, the Class of 2010's test scores moved from the bottom quarter of the country to the top half and continue to increase. The Class of 2011 test scores made similar jumps in only one year at DCPS. The graphs reveal how our students improve academically each year. The reality is clear; the longer students are at Delta College Preparatory School, the higher their academics climb.

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School will create a high school starting in 2006. In order to create a center of academic excellence in Phillips County, our school will build a state-of-the-art facility to support our mission. Our plan is to construct a campus that includes modern classrooms for science and other core subjects, a permanent library, a room for the study and practice of music, space for the visual arts, a gymnasium, athletic fields, and open green spaces. This site will resemble a small, modern university campus to reinforce the strong, college-preparatory focus of the school. In the process of creating a campus for our students, the school hopes to play a role in the economic revitalization of historic downtown Helena.

It is our hope that here in the Delta, an enduring academic institution will emerge from the vacant lots, empty buildings, and remnants of a once thriving Mississippi River Port. In today's America, knowledge drives the economy and at KIPP Delta College Preparatory School, knowledge is power.

Our Future

While we are pleased that our first two years of data show our students are achieving, the students of KIPP Delta College Preparatory School are planning to attend college. This requires us to think boldly about our school’s future and plan strategically for our growth. Our current facility will serve the middle-level grades from 5th through 8th. There are 11 classrooms including a library and a computer lab. We are proud of our new facility but we recognize that future student growth will demand a larger campus. By 2011, we plan to have a middle school and a high school that serve a total of 480 students.

Planned Gain in Enrollment assuming addition of one grade each year

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School will create a high school starting in 2006. In order to create a center of academic excellence in Phillips County, our school will build a state-of-the-art facility to support our mission. Our plan is to construct a campus that includes modern classrooms for science and other core subjects, a permanent library, a room for the study and practice of music, space for the visual arts, a gymnasium, athletic fields, and open green spaces. This site will resemble a small, modern university campus to reinforce the strong, college-preparatory focus of the school. In the process of creating a campus for our students, the school hopes to play a role in the economic revitalization of historic downtown Helena.

It is our hope that here in the Delta, an enduring academic institution will emerge from the vacant lots, empty buildings, and remnants of a once thriving Mississippi River Port. In today's America, knowledge drives the economy and at KIPP Delta College Preparatory School, knowledge is power.

“Work hard. Be nice!”

“Our Future”

“If there is a problem, we find a solution.”
Our Staff

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School seeks to employ the best possible staff and the expectations for them are high. Teachers must sign the Commitment to Excellence Form, which states that they will do whatever it takes for students to achieve. Teachers are expected to be at school from 7:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. and they teach, and teach, and teach some more. Teachers often work with students through their lunch to increase skills. There is not a teachers’ lounge, only a teacher resource room. Homework is assigned every night and checked everyday. After 5:00 p.m., the school remains active with students receiving extra help, participating in athletics, or completing special tasks. In addition to working extended hours, teachers remain available to students by cell phone twenty-four hours a day. All students receive the teachers’ phone numbers and may contact them throughout the evening and weekend for additional support.

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School teachers work extremely hard, but they also teach in a unique and supportive environment. Veteran teachers work alongside novice teachers to create a balance of energy and expertise. Teachers have the opportunity to attend conferences at KIPP schools around the country and to be part of a network of dedicated, like-minded teachers. Teachers who are accustomed to fighting against the system are able to work within a system to make sure all of their students’ needs are met. Loss time is spent disciplining and more time is spent teaching. There are no bells to interrupt the day and each day we move one step closer to accomplishing our mission.

Thank you to the teachers and staff of KIPP Delta College Preparatory School for making it the special place that it is. Your daily commitment to our students and constant hard work will be the underpinning of this school for years to come.

— Scott Shirey, Founding School Director

Teachers

Mrs. Betty Sanders
Founding Language Arts Teacher
Mrs. Wyvonne Sisk
Language Arts Teacher
Mr. Jemar Tisby
Social Studies and Science Teacher
Ms. Andrea Hamilton
Math and Science Teacher
Ms. Emily Cook
Social Studies and Music Teacher
Mr. Matthew Foster
Science and P.E. Teacher
Ms. Aisha Lloyd
Social Studies and P.E. Teacher
Mr. Timothy Smith
Language Arts Teacher
Mr. John Sparks
Special Education and P.E. Teacher
Mr. Luke VanDeWalle
Math Teacher

Staff

Mrs. Linda Sparks
Office Manager
Ms. Donna Martinez
Finance Officer
Ms. Thelma Reed
Office Support and Bus Driver
Mrs. Lillie Rose
Custodian
Mr. Travis Crawford
Custodian
Mr. Eugene Banks
Bus Driver
Mr. Reggie Rose
Bus Driver
Mr. Tommy Stevenson
Bus Driver
Oliver’s Restaurant
Food Service

Budget

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School
Projected 2004–2005 Budget

$559 Field Trips, Uniforms and Student Reward Systems
$267 Extended Schedule Materials and Supplies
$73 Extended Schedule Instructional Salaries & Benefits

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School is intent upon making sure that every dollar is used to accomplish the school’s mission. It runs lean on administrative costs to make sure more money is directly impacting the students. Our costs above and beyond traditional schools include a teacher stipend for the extended time spent teaching students, annual end-of-year out of state trips for students, summer school, and bi-monthly Saturday School sessions.

Our current facility was constructed with a loan from United States Department of Agriculture and Southern Development Bancorporation. To support our extended day and special programs along with managing our debt service, the school will need to raise approximately $1,000 per pupil from private sources. As our school and Board of Directors look forward to adding our High School campus, we will continue to support student achievement by maximizing our federal and state monies and augmenting where necessary with private funding.

"Accept responsibly. Employ teamwork!"

“No excuses.”
History of Helena

Helena is one of the oldest Mississippi River settlements. The town served as a major center for commerce, with a sphere of influence reaching over large sections of rural Mississippi and Arkansas. Before the turn of the century, Helena had an opera house and a strong tradition of popular music. In the 1930's and 1940's Helena was the busiest Mississippi River port between Memphis and Vicksburg. Cotton, lumber, and railroad industries flourished here as did the Delta Blues.

Modern farming techniques transformed the character of the Delta. Machine farming displaced thousands of agricultural workers. Many moved away and others who stayed found that the area no longer wanted their help. In many cases, young people left their Delta homeplaces for good, migrating to Northern cities. Without the bustling river economy boosted by the agricultural sector, Helena's once thriving downtown area went into decline.

Located in downtown Helena, KIPP Delta College Preparatory School hopes to impact the revitalization of Helena's historic downtown area.

Special Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following individuals, organizations, and foundations, who made the creation and success of KIPP Delta College Preparatory School possible through their leadership, service, and financial contributions.

- Arkansas Department of Education
- Challenge Foundation
- The Cunningham Family
- Delta Cultural Center
- First National Bank
- Doris and Donald Fisher
- Helena City Council
- KIPP Foundation
- Senator Blanche Lincoln
- Mayor Robert Miller
- The Shiley Family
- David Solomon
- Southern Development Bancorporation
- United States Department of Agriculture
- United States Department of Education
- Wendy Carner
- Walton Family Foundation

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School Board

Mr. Darryl Cobb
Mrs. Cathy Cunningham
Mrs. Dorothy Michel

Ms. Alma Rattler
Mr. Theotres Parham
Dr. P. Vasudevan

To those who truly believe...

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School would like to thank all of the students and families who had the courage to enroll in the school, the flexibility to endure change, and the tenacity to keep climbing the mountain to college.
It dares to tell a 10-year-old kid in the Delta that he or she can go to Harvard or Duke and become a lawyer or a doctor. I've spoken with some of those youngsters, and they truly believe.

— John Brummett  
August 19, 2004

I was the one who decided to come,” said Javunna, 13, who plans to become a pediatrician. “My mother didn’t make me. I wanted a good education and to be able to go to college.

— Cynthia Howell  
Arkansas Democrat Gazette  
September 4, 2004

Not only does KIPP teach students the fundamentals for educational success, but it also teaches them lessons for a successful life.

— Senator Blanche Lincoln  
September 3, 2004

KIPP is a public school, just differently organized.

— Arkansas Democrat Gazette  
August 7, 2004

A Helena public school official was quoted as saying the regular schools could educate kids as well as KIPP. That's the very idea—educate enough children the KIPP way to reach a “tipping point” at which hard work, long days and no excuses begin to become the norm.

— John Brummett  
April 8, 2003

Today, a dream has come true,” said Helena Mayor Robert R. Miller... “I thought it was a dream for other places. I was convinced that these type of things don’t come to Helena, Arkansas.

— Cynthia Howell  
Arkansas Democrat Gazette  
September 4, 2004

Betty Sanders, a KIPP Delta College Preparatory School fifth-and sixth language arts teacher whose philosophy is to love children and take them as her own, was one of 14 KIPP teachers to receive the $10,000 Kinder Excellence in Teaching Award...“Teach is what I do,” Sanders said, “I take each child as I would my own. I give them love, care, nourishment, guidance, strength, and encourage them when they're down. When I teach, I leave no child behind.

— Josh Troy  
The Daily World Newspaper  
August 19, 2004

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School's sixth grade students scored well above the state average on the Arkansas Benchmark exams last spring, but the goal is for the marks to continue to rise.

— Josh Troy  
The Daily World Newspaper  
August 18, 2004

KIPP Delta College Preparatory School  
215 Cherry Street  
Helena, Arkansas 72342  
Phone: 870-753-9444  
Fax: 870-753-9450