



KIPP DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

KIPP NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS AND FUNDERS VISIT KIPP DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN HELENA-WEST HELENA

Newest KIPP board member, Carrie Walton Penner, joins Doris and John Fisher on tour

HELENA-WEST HELENA, AR – March 5, 2010 – Doris Fisher, a co-founder of the Gap, Inc., and her son John Fisher will visit KIPP Delta Public Schools in Helena-West Helena on March 9. Carrie Walton Penner, the newest member of KIPP’s national board, and KIPP CEO Richard Barth will join the Fishers in their visit to KIPP Delta. The school visit, which is part of a nationwide tour of KIPP schools, will take place from 10:30 a.m. to noon.

This is a special year for KIPP Delta Public Schools, because members of their first graduating class are headed to college. Members of KIPP Delta’s class of 2010 have been accepted to schools such as Arkansas State University, Auburn University, Hendrix College, and the U.S. Naval Academy.

“I am so proud of our first graduating class of students who have worked so hard to reach this important milestone in their education,” said KIPP Delta founder and executive director Scott Shirey. “Thanks to the support of the Fishers and the Waltons, our students are climbing the mountain to college.”

2010 marks the 10-year anniversary of the partnership between the Fishers and Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin to replicate KIPP schools nationwide. Since 2000, KIPP has grown from two schools to 82 public schools serving 21,000 students in 19 states and Washington, DC. John Fisher, who is the chair of both KIPP’s national board and the Charter School Growth Fund, remains committed to the partnership.

“KIPP’s growth and development over the past ten years has been truly remarkable,” said John Fisher said. “I’m excited to see what’s next for KIPP Delta and the whole KIPP network.”

The KIPP tour is also designed as an introduction to KIPP new board member, Carrie Walton Penner. The granddaughter of Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton, Penner serves as trustee of the Walton Family Foundation, which has had a long association with KIPP and with the Fisher Fund. In 2009, the Walton Family Foundation announced a \$1.5 million grant to help facilitate KIPP Delta’s expansion plans.

“KIPP’s success here in Arkansas and across the country is a model for what’s possible in public education,” Penner said. “My goal is to ensure that KIPP can continue to thrive for many years to come.”

This summer, KIPP Delta will open a new campus in Blytheville as the first phase of a planned 12-school expansion that is supported by the Fisher Fund and the Walton Family Foundation. Headed by experienced KIPP teacher Maisie Wright, the new KIPP school will begin with fifth-grade and add a grade each year until it reaches full fifth- through eighth-grade capacity in 2014.



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As KIPP schools, KIPP Delta takes a rigorous, “no excuses” approach to education. In addition to a mandatory summer session, students are in class during the week from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., along with every other Saturday. KIPP students complete up to two hours of homework a night, and KIPP teachers are available on cell phone after hours for help and to answer questions from parents.

KIPP is proving what is possible in public education for underserved students. Nationally, more than 90 percent of KIPP students are African American or Hispanic/Latino, and more than 80 percent are eligible for the federal free and reduced-price meals program. Although nationally only one in five low-income students attends college, over 85 percent of alumni from KIPP schools have matriculated to college.

“Many of KIPP Delta’s graduating seniors never considered higher education before they started at KIPP as fifth graders,” said KIPP CEO Richard Barth. “But because of their hard work and perseverance, these KIPP alumni will not only graduate from high school, but also go on to succeed in college and life.”

KIPP forms a unique partnership where teachers have the freedom to innovate, parents are encouraged to be involved, and students have the opportunity to learn. Students, parents, and teachers sign a learning pledge—called the Commitment to Excellence—which outlines the hard work necessary for success. KIPP Delta schools are tuition-free, open enrollment, public schools that accept all students on a space-available basis.

About KIPP Delta Schools

The first KIPP Delta school was founded in 2002, on the premise that high expectations could overcome the obstacles created by race, economics, and environment. KIPP Delta currently operates an elementary, middle, and high school in Helena-West Helena, Arkansas. Over the next ten years, KIPP Delta will grow to twelve schools in four communities. KIPP Delta’s goal is to double the number of college-ready seniors graduating from high-poverty districts in Eastern Arkansas by the year 2019. For more information, visit www.kippdelta.org.

About KIPP

Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin, started KIPP in 1994 in Houston, TX, after completing their commitment to Teach For America. KIPP schools have been widely recognized for narrowing the achievement gap in public education and putting underserved students on the path to college. For more information, visit www.kipp.org.

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