



**KIPP DELTA**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**For Immediate Release**

**BLYTHEVILLE SELECTED AS NEW SITE FOR 2010 KIPP DELTA SCHOOL**

*-- Community chosen among two other finalists through competitive application process --*

BLYTHEVILLE, AR – August 26, 2009 – KIPP announces that Blytheville has been selected as the new site for the first KIPP Delta school to open outside of Helena, AR in 2010. Blytheville was selected through a competitive application process that considered factors such as local support, parental demand, and availability of facilities and funding. Communities not selected for 2010 will be eligible to reapply for starting new KIPP Delta schools in 2011.

“We are grateful for the enthusiasm demonstrated by all the communities that submitted proposals,” said Scott Shirey, Executive Director of KIPP Delta Public Schools. “This process showed that there is demand for KIPP to expand in the Delta, and our Board of Directors and Leadership Team are proud to have chosen Blytheville as the next site.”

If approved by the state, the KIPP Blytheville public charter school will start with a class of fifth graders in 2010 and add a grade each year until it becomes a full middle school, serving approximately 320 students in grades five through eight. The new KIPP school will be led by Maisie Wright, who is currently completing the year-long Fisher Fellowship principal training program. Ms. Wright began her career in education as a Teach For America corps member in the Delta and most recently served as a math and science teacher at KIPP Delta College Prep.

“I am excited to begin working towards opening our school in Blytheville next summer,” said future KIPP Blytheville school leader Maisie Wright. “The overwhelming support for KIPP in the Blytheville community will help our students climb the mountain to college and success.”

Blytheville’s application to KIPP Delta included over 60 personal letters of support from parents, community leaders, and business partners, along with \$50,000 in start-up funding for 2010. The community coalition is also committed to raising at least \$50,000 each successive year.

“I’m delighted that KIPP Delta will be opening its next school in our city,” said Blytheville Community Representative Clif Chitwood. “The new KIPP school in Blytheville will help more of our children not only complete high school, but also attend and graduate from college.”

Key supporters of KIPP Delta Public Schools - Blytheville include Senator Steve Bryles, Mississippi County Economic Development, Mississippi County Economic Opportunity Commission, Great River Economic Development Foundation, Nucor Steel Arkansas, Nucor-Yamato Steel, Aviation Repair Technology, That Bookstore in Blytheville, First National Bank, Southern Bancorp, and the Greater Blytheville Area Chamber of Commerce.



## KIPP: DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By 2019, KIPP Delta aims to grow to twelve charter schools in four communities, which will serve a total of 3,600 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade and potentially double the number of college-ready seniors graduating from high-poverty districts in the region.

KIPP Delta consists of three charters schools, serving 540 students in kindergarten, first grade and grades five through twelve. KIPP Delta College Prep, the first KIPP site in the region, opened in 2002 with its first class of fifth graders and was one of only three Arkansas schools to be named a 2008 Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. KIPP Delta Collegiate opened in 2007 and serves students in grades nine through twelve, and KIPP Delta Elementary Literacy Academy opened this summer with kindergarten and first grade students.

In 2009, 94 percent of KIPP Delta College Prep's seventh graders scored proficient or advanced on the Arkansas Benchmark Exam in math, as compared to 52 percent of students in Blytheville and 70 percent of students across the state.

"We look forward to seeing KIPP Delta grow beyond Helena," said KIPP Foundation CEO Richard Barth. "Just as KIPP has worked in close and productive partnership with our partners in Helena, we will also do so in Blytheville and other communities in the Arkansas Delta."

KIPP Delta Public Schools is planning on opening two more schools in 2011, and will begin a statewide search for talented teachers or leaders who are interested in running a high-performing school in the Delta. Teachers and leaders must have proven results with classes or schools in underserved communities to be considered. Those selected for the year-long Fisher Fellowship will receive training and ongoing professional support and enrichment to grow their knowledge and skills. Interested applicants should visit [www.kippdelta.org](http://www.kippdelta.org) for more information.

### **About KIPP**

Two teachers, Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin, started KIPP in 1994 in Houston, TX after completing their commitment to Teach For America. KIPP has grown to a national network of 82 public schools in 19 states and the District of Columbia, serving over 20,000 students. More than 90 percent of KIPP students are African-American or Hispanic/Latino, and more than 80 percent of KIPP students are eligible for the federal free and reduced-price meals program. KIPP schools have been widely recognized for narrowing the achievement gap in public education, with 85 percent of KIPP alumni having matriculated to college. For more information, visit [www.kipp.org](http://www.kipp.org).

### **Contacts:**

Scott Shirey KIPP Delta Public Schools 870-817-8859  
Steve Mancini KIPP Schools 415-531-5396

[scott.shirey@kippdelta.org](mailto:scott.shirey@kippdelta.org)  
[smancini@kipp.org](mailto:smancini@kipp.org)

###