



together Juntos

The quarterly newsletter of KIPP Massachusetts



Summer 2013

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CALEB DOLAN

Dear Friends,

This year, our KIPPsters in Lynn and Boston have made tremendous strides in academics and character. Their performance on the nationally normed MAP test shows the kind of growth that leads to college and career success.

In Reading

- Last year 64% of KIPP National fifth graders met their growth targets.
- Last year 60% of KIPP:MA's students met their growth targets.
- This year 82% of KAL's fifth grade and 89.8% of KAB's fifth grade students met their growth targets.

These results would have ranked #1 and #4 in the entire network last year. More importantly, if we continue to help our kids grow at this rate year after year they will collectively advance from the bottom quartile to the top quartile of reading achievement. This literally means the average KIPP MA fifth grader who starts on track for no college or non-competitive schools would be ready for UMass by the time they leave.

In Mathematics

- Last year 70% of KIPP's fifth grade students across the nation met their growth targets in math
- Last year 46% of KIPP:MA's fifth grade students hit their growth targets in math
- This year 79% of KAB students and 90% of KAL fifth graders hit their growth targets.



As our kids climb higher on the mountain to and through college, the growth continues. Our rising juniors at KIPP Academy Lynn Collegiate High School are beginning the next step in college preparedness by attending summer programs ranging from working at community farms in Lynn, to attending leadership conferences at Cornell and Brown University, to interning at Digitas in Cambridge (see page 5). Most importantly, 75% of our founding class of 2012 are persisting in college.

As we close the 2012 school year, we are reminded that we must keep our commitment to serve the kids who need us most. Boston is uniquely positioned to become the greatest city-wide proof point of what is possible in public education. In the next decade, Boston could be the first of the nation's 100 largest cities to close the achievement gap, not just in test scores but in life outcomes. If we work as a great partner alongside other high-performing school networks as advocates for change and leaders in the neighborhoods we serve – and if we stay focused for a decade – we will be part of the celebration in 2025 when Boston is a fundamentally different city for children. Proficiency rates will be raised across K-12, the achievement gap will close, and the children who are educated in Boston's public schools will have the opportunity not only to attend college, but will have many choices as to where to go to college. Opportunities that have been out of reach for most will become boundless. As a smaller city, Lynn could achieve this kind of transformative change even faster. Our KIPP Lynn parents have turned out in tremendous numbers to support lifting the charter cap and creating more opportunity for all in Lynn. Our waitlist of over five hundred students is proof of the need.

We have dedicated this issue to highlighting the many ways our families (page 2) students, community organizations, and friends have joined together in advocating and providing opportunities not only for our own KIPPsters, but for all public school students.

I'm often asked by visitors to our schools what they can do to help us move the needle on public education in addition to offering financial support. There are many ways you can help set our KIPPsters up for success: facilitate an internship opportunity at your company, introduce a connection to your alma mater, write a letter to your representative in support of lifting the charter cap so that more kids can have access to a great public school education, or simply bring your friends and colleagues to one of our schools to see our kids and teachers in action.

Many thanks, Much love,



90 High Rock Street
Lynn, MA 01902
781.598.1609



90 High Rock Street
Lynn, MA 01902
781.598.1609



384 Warren Street
Boston, MA 02119
617.500.6774



Congratulations to the Class of 2013

Alumni Spotlight: Tiffani Palmer, Class of 2014

At KIPP, we define “alumni” as any students who graduate from a KIPP middle or high school. Though KIPP Academy Lynn Collegiate did not exist when Tiffani graduated from KIPP Academy Lynn in the 8th grade, she has seen great success at Pingree School in South Hamilton, MA.



Q: You're headed into your senior year, do you know where you'd like to attend college?

A: My first choice is Rutgers University, I'd like to study pre-med. Ultimately I'd like to go on to be a pediatrician. I'd like to do as much as I can to get a head-start on my future.

Q: How have you stayed involved with KIPP since graduating in the 8th grade?

A: At KIPP I did dance with Ms. Melton-Brown and that's something I've continued to do at Pingree. Next year I'll take over the leadership role for our community dance team there. I hope to also help out with the dance program at KIPP Academy Lynn next year.

Q: Dance is obviously a big part of your life. What else are you involved in at school?

A: I'm captain of the Varsity basketball team and next year I'll be captain of the track team.

Q: Do you have any advice for younger KIPPsters?

A: Try to advocate for yourself as much as possible. Put yourself in leadership positions and remember it's ok to step outside your comfort zone and try new things.

KIPP Supporters Advocate to Lift the Charter Cap

Dozens of parents from all three KIPP:MA schools gathered at the Massachusetts State House April 11th to participate in Education Hill Day. KIPP joined other charter schools, parents, and students from around the state to advocate for the raise or removal of the charter cap. Currently, only 18% of seats in lower-performing districts are reserved for charter school students. The charter cap was last raised in 2010 which allowed KIPP to found our Boston school.

Across the state, over 45,000 students are on waiting lists for seats in charter schools. “Our KIPP parents, like all parents want their children to attend academically challenging, joyful, and safe schools that prepare kids for success in life. These families are not only advocating for their own children, they are advocating for all children to have access to great schools,” said Caleb Dolan, KIPP:MA Executive Director.

Karen Lin, mother of 7th grader Sophia Lin, was among the parents who turned out to advocate for the advancement of the charter movement. “Sophia was in China for 5 years and when I brought her to Boston she could barely speak English. When she came to KIPP in the 5th grade, her teachers really helped her,” said Lin. Lin brought with her a portfolio of her daughter's successes ranging from report cards to MCAS scores. Her daughter has gone from barely proficient in English to achieving an “Advanced” score on her 6th grade English MCAS. “The teachers are really helpful to all the students and we appreciate it. We wish [Hill Day] would get more support because every kid should have the opportunity to go to a school like KIPP.”



KIPP parents gathered in Boston for Education Hill Day



**Poetry Slam Team Captains
Devonian Brown-Simpson (above)
and Ricky DeOleo (below)**



KIPP Academy Lynn Collegiate Students Honor Boston Marathon Victims with Poetry Slam

The KIPP:MA Team and Family was deeply saddened by the events of the April 15th Boston Marathon bombings. Several teachers and staff members were running or volunteering for the race. KIPP Academy Lynn Collegiate High School held a poetry slam May 2nd where proceeds from admissions benefited The One Fund. Anaidys Uribe, one of the Poetry Slam Team Captains, composed a poem in reaction to the tragedy in Boston.

Boston Marathon: Paper Humans

Tragedy has hit us
And man those hit hard
They don't come with a
warning
Or small note like:
"Dear Anaidys, See yah
soon! Sincerely, your friend,
Tragedy"
No.
And they don't just leave
you with a mere scratch or
a scraped knee
They come with fists
clenched
Ready to take you by
surprise
With a powerful blow
Your body hits the floor
Doubled over in pain you
gasp for air
And pray that the worst is
over

But how great is it to look
to your left
and see that there's
someone there
with their arms reaching
out towards you
And then to your right to
find someone there too
See they care for you
And wanna help you
through
Cus when tragedies hit they
don't just affect the people
involved
We all hurt and mourn
together
Hand in hand we'll make it
all better
The skies will clear
And we'll get through this
bad weather
The rain will cease
And a rainbow will adorn
the sky
'Cause we're paper humans
Fragile and frail
But hand-in-hand we'll
remain
Not a tear we can't bear

A Special Gift to KIPP Academy Lynn

Appolinar Sierra, local Lynn artist and father of KAL KIPPster Matthew Sierra, presented a beautiful and heart-felt gift to the teachers and staff of KIPP Academy Lynn: a painting of the High Rock Tower. In addition to being a Lynn landmark, the High Rock Tower is a prominent feature of the KIPP Academy Lynn logo. Sierra is one over 300 community members who participate in KIPP Academy Lynn's adult education programs and wanted to say thank you to the KIPP Team & Family.

"A rock is a long lasting, strong element that lasts from generation to generation. Rocks are strong and persevere in spite of adverse conditions. My greatest desire is for KIPP to be everlasting as a rock for generation to come...Each rock in this tower represents a KIPP teacher, student, mother and/or father. Each illuminated window signifies different areas of knowledge and the necessity to pursue a universal knowledge and education," said Sierra when he shared the explanation of his work.



When the painting was debuted, Sierra invited the KIPP Team & Family to his home to meet his family and enjoy food he had prepared. The painting now hangs above the offices of the KIPP Lynn School Leaders where in can be enjoyed by all KIPPsters, staff and visitors.

KIPP Academy Boston Gets a New Home

During their first year, the 72 founding 5th graders at KIPP Academy Boston (KAB) had 1 hallway, 4 classrooms, a shared gym, and 11 very dedicated teachers. After a successful first year, KIPP Academy Boston is serving as a proof point for what is possible with a charter school education. Though their space was limited, KAB KIPPsters managed to grow their



Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) reading scores more than any of the other 70 KIPP middle schools around the country. The MAP Test is a nationally administered exam which assesses student growth in math, reading and language skills. This year, 90% of KIPP Boston students met or exceeded reading growth goals. This fall, KAB students will have a space of their own to continue jumping academic hurdles.

KAB, which will grow from 72 students to 144 with the addition of a 6th grade, will begin the 2013/14 school year at a new location in Lower Roxbury. Located on Warren Street near Martin Luther King Boulevard, the location will be closer to home for current KAB students. KIPP is committed to serving the students with the greatest need, and moving closer to Mattapan and bordering neighborhoods is an important step. The building will contain 14 classrooms with full technological capabilities as well as several breakout rooms for Special Education and pull-out support.

KIPP Boston will not grow to its full capacity of 1008 K-8 students until 2020, so two of the three floors will be leased to other student-focused nonprofits. "Although we have a long-standing presence in the Lynn community, our newness to the Boston communities makes partnerships with like-minded nonprofit organizations in Boston especially helpful and important," said KIPP:MA COO, John Kalafatas.

The building in Lower Roxbury will offer a temporary solution, housing KAB students for several years. KIPP:MA plans to break ground for a permanent location in Mattapan Square, to serve grades K-8.

Mitchell Chester Visits KIPP



An important factor in advocating to serve more kids and families is welcoming state and local officials who promote the education of the children of Massachusetts. Dr. Mitchell Chester, who spoke at the KIPP High Rock campus Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in the fall (pictured above), took the time to once again visit KIPP Lynn in May. Dr. Chester holds the post of Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education for the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Several representatives from the KIPP Academy Lynn Collegiate student council (Jose Valera, Anaidys Uribe, and Alex Huffman) welcomed Dr. Chester and participated in a focus group along with teachers from both the KIPP Lynn Middle and High Schools. Dr. Chester rounded out his day with a tour of the high school led by sophomores Mayelin Burgos and Kevin Morfa.

KIPP Lynn Twins Lunch Together and Thank Mentor

Since September, Dr. Ralph Epstein, has had the opportunity to mentor twin 5th grade KIPPsters Tedsen and Fedsen Joseph. Dr. Epstein, who is himself a twin, is a long time KIPP advocate and supporter. He has been mentoring students for years. The oldest, Leandro Diaz (pictured left), heads to Marian Court College this fall after graduating from Malden Catholic High School. Because he has enjoyed working with the Joseph twins, Dr. Epstein wanted the opportunity to connect with all of the twins at KIPP Academy Lynn.



In May, 12 sets of twins from grades 5-8 gathered together to share their experiences and the bonds of being a twin. Several staff and teacher twins also attended—6th grade Special Education Teacher Nick Traicoff, Office Manager Mariela Alvarez, Music Teachers Gerald and Dave Langford, as well as Assistant Principal Emily Stead. "I don't think there will ever be an event identical to it!" joked Stead. "As a school, we appreciate all the support Dr. Epstein has provided for us, and look forward to seeing the development of his new mentees."



Do Now: Advocacy at KIPP

1. How many people volunteer at KIPP:MA?
A) 10 B) 50 C) 100 D) 500
2. Which University was KIPP's first Ivy League College Partner?
A) Harvard University B) Brown University C) Columbia University D) University of Pennsylvania
3. How many colleges have partnered with KIPP?
A) 4 B) 8 C) 24 D) 55
4. When is the preliminary mayoral election in Boston?
A) September 1 B) September 12 C) September 18 D) September 24

1) C 2) D 3) C 4) D

KALC Students Will Spend Summer Preparing for Their Futures



Rising juniors from KIPP Academy Lynn Collegiate (KALC) High School will travel as far away as Alaska this summer to broaden their experiences and remain competitive *to and through college*. KALC students must have at least two summer experiences with a focus on either academics/college readiness or career building by the time they complete their senior year in order to graduate. The opportunity to struggle and succeed outside of the classroom helps to hone the character strengths KIPP integrates with academics every day.

Three KALC students will travel to the Ivy League campuses of Brown and Cornell to engage in leadership exploration programs. Mayelin Burgos, will be attending the week-long CURIE Academy program at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, which is designed to help attendees explore opportunities in engineering. Though this will be her first time traveling apart from her parents, Burgos is eagerly anticipating her journey. "I'm nervous but I'm excited," she said. "I'm looking forward to using this experience to see if I'd like to pursue a career in science or math." Though Mayelin's apprehension may be cause for

concern to some students, KIPP encourages this step outside of the comfort zone, choosing instead to call it building her "grit" and "social intelligence"—two of the seven character strengths the school aims to instill in its students.

Another group of KALC students received full-tuition scholarships to the month-long National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) in Alaska and Wyoming, during which they will team-build through backpacking, mountaineering and survival training. Several members of the class of 2015 are exploring career-minded pursuits by interning with advertising agency, Digitas. Many students have secured opportunities serving the Lynn community through local programs such as Girls, Inc., which focuses on empowering young women, and The Food Project, an organic farm which distributes food to farmers markets and hunger relief organizations.

No Age Limit to Lending a Helping Hand

Proving that you're never too young to help others, 5th grader Torrance "Tori" Fredell spearheaded a volunteer project to raise funds for, and build, picnic tables for KIPP's High Rock campus. Tori attends The Pine Hill Elementary School in Sherborn, MA and was assigned a project to learn about nonprofit organizations. After researching KIPP, Tori came to the KIPP Academy Lynn Middle School and spent the day shadowing and learning from 5th grade KIPPster, Kaylee Ros.

"One of the biggest things that I noticed was that the KIPP school was very diverse compared to my school. It was great to be with kids from different cultural backgrounds. One other difference was the accessibility to Boston. However, like my school, the teachers were strict with high expectations, yet warm and caring people. I was surprised at how similar a day at KIPP was compared to a day at my school, given how different things may look from an outside perspective," said Fredell.

What began as a classroom assignment came to mean something more to Tori and she realized she wanted to give something back to KIPP. She independently fundraised for three picnic table kits which she built with her father. A group of KALC High School students lent a hand to her project by spending a community service day weatherproofing the tables to ensure KIPPsters will be able to enjoy Tori's gifts for years to come.



Above: Tori Fredell and Kaylee Ros
Below: KIPPsters enjoy the new picnic tables



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In this issue...

- Find out the many ways advocates help our KIPPsters
- Learn about ways you can advocate to improve public education
- Test your KIPP knowledge



KIPP Massachusetts
90 High Rock St.
Lynn, MA 01902



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