

U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [X] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Deborah Shifrine

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name KIPP SHINE Prep

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 10711 KIPP Way Drive

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Houston State TX Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 77099-2675

County Harris

Telephone (832) 230-0548 Fax _____

Web site/URL http://www.kippouston.org/shine E-mail dshifrine@kipphouston.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mrs. Sehba Ali E-mail sali@kipphouston.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name KIPP Houston Public Schools Tel. (832) 328-1051

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. J. William Boyer
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 10 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 12 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 4 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 26 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	125	128	253
K	63	62	125
1	64	61	125
2	61	59	120
3	49	67	116
4	58	57	115
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	420	434	854

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 4 % Asian
 - 39 % Black or African American
 - 54 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 1 % White
 - 1 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 2%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	7
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	13
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	20
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	844
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.024
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	2

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 43 %
367 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
Spanish, Vietnamese, Akan, Amharic, Arabic, Cantonese Chinese, Hausa, Hini, Ibo/Igbo, Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese, Somali, Swahili, Tiwa, Urdu, Yoruba

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 93 %
Total number students who qualify: 798
8. Students receiving special education services: 6 %
51 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 5 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 3 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 2 Mental Retardation
- 2 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 1 Other Health Impaired
- 6 Specific Learning Disability
- 31 Speech or Language Impairment
- 1 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 9
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	4
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	33
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	0

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 24:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

SHINE nurtures students' creativity, knowledge, character, and thinking skills preparing them to excel academically, physically and socially in the nation's finest colleges and in life.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

KIPP SHINE Prep is part of the open-enrollment charter district, KIPP Houston Public Schools. Families of students living in the 5 zip codes surrounding KIPP SHINE Prep complete an application for a lottery. In the district-wide lottery, student names are drawn at random and every student is given a number in the order his/her name was drawn. KIPP SHINE Prep accepts 126 Pre-Kindergarten 3 students each year and enough students in other grade-level lotteries to fill open seats.

PART III – SUMMARY

The mission of KIPP SHINE Prep (SHINE) is to nurture and strengthen students' creativity, knowledge, character, and thinking skills, preparing them to excel academically, physically and socially in the nation's finest secondary schools, colleges, and in life. With this mission as its guiding light, SHINE opened its doors to 125 pre-kindergarten 4 students and families from across Houston in 2004. As the first primary school in the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) nationwide network of open-enrollment charter schools, SHINE grew each year by adding one additional grade level. Now in its thirteenth year of existence, SHINE's reputation as a college-preparatory school that enables students to achieve at high levels has led to a waiting list of over 1,000 students vying for seats in pre-kindergarten 3 through fourth grade.

SHINE currently serves over 850 students (SHINEsters) and families from the Alief. Southwest Houston and Greater Fondren neighborhoods. These neighborhoods represent some of the most ethnically diverse communities in the city. The newest cohort of pre-kindergarten 3 students in the class of 2031 represents over a dozen languages spoken at home including Arabic, Spanish, Urdu and a number of West African dialects. Nearly 95% of SHINE's students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. In low-income communities similar to those SHINE serves, typically less than 10% of students go to and through college. Nearly 50% of KIPP Houston Eighth graders go on to graduate college. As virtually all SHINE students matriculate to a KIPP Houston middle school, SHINE is providing a foundation of high expectations and college readiness that will translate into achievement levels beyond their time at SHINE.

All children will learn. This founding principle informs the work KIPP is committed to nationally and resonates with the team and family at KIPP SHINE Prep. SHINE's leaders believe that the foundation of a successful school is built on teachers and staff who share this mindset. To ensure SHINE teachers have adequate time to reach all children, students attend an extended school day, receiving nearly five hours more instruction each week than their peers at neighboring public schools. To capitalize on this longer school day, SHINE leaders work to hire a special type of educator. Hiring practices focus not only on seeking individuals who have the skill-set and content knowledge needed to be successful in any given grade level but also on mindset around what people think is possible in public education.

Once teachers are hired at KIPP SHINE Prep, leadership ensures that professional development is not only focused on academics but also on how the school develops students physically, socially and emotionally. Teachers and staff remain committed to developing the whole child, not just producing high academic results. SHINE supports students' physical growth in a Health & Wellness class that aims to help students gain an understanding of the relationship between physical activity and nutrition throughout their lifespan.

The school culture is founded on the SHINE values – seek, honor, imagine, never give up and every day. Through the lens of these values and the firm belief that having a love of learning ultimately leads to a choice-filled life, SHINE supports students' social and emotional growth through values-based lessons, weekly “SHINE on Friday” assemblies and bi-monthly “Unified SHINE on Fridays” which bring the entire school together to celebrate students who exemplify school values and KIPP's character strengths. These assemblies also provide a unique opportunity for students to participate in celebrations that represent the diverse cultural backgrounds of themselves and their peers.

Teachers at KIPP SHINE Prep deeply believe in developing and nurturing relationships with students and families. Leveraging the school's 97% student retention rate and the fact that teachers often teach multiple siblings from the same family, staff members are able to build deep and lasting relationships. SHINE strengthens these relationships with both students and families through consistent communication (family newsletters, personal notes from teachers, text messages and phone calls, behavior chart notes, school newsletters, SHINE's social media presence, etc.). SHINE recognizes that educating students is a team effort – students, teachers and families working together to achieve success. To cultivate and strengthen these relationships, SHINE hosts many events throughout the school year for families to attend. Some are social events that create opportunities for our students, teachers and families to spend time together, while others are parent workshops, focused on sharing new information that will help parents support their child outside of school.

Thirteen years later, KIPP SHINE Prep teachers and staff continue to stand firm in their belief that all students can achieve, regardless of their background, home language, zip code or family history. Every year, SHINE continues to make a commitment to SHINEsters to help them chart their path towards living a choice-filled life.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

KIPP SHINE Prep engages students in an academic program and learning environment that builds a lasting foundation of core knowledge and skills. All curricula are standards-based and driven by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). How curricula are used is defined by the needs of SHINE’s diverse array of learners through careful analysis of a wide range of student data. Recognizing the importance of building a strong foundation in literacy, all SHINE teachers, regardless of the individual subject area, approach their curriculum as though they are reading teachers, imbuing opportunities for students to interact with all subjects through rich texts and writing tasks.

KIPP SHINE Prep takes a balanced approach to literacy that provides students with authentic opportunities to make meaning of and interact with challenging texts both as readers and writers while they incrementally acquire foundational reading knowledge and skills. These foundational skills laid out in the TEKS, including phonemic and phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, print concepts and fluency, are emphasized from the very beginning in pre-kindergarten 3. Through engaging mini-lessons, all students develop reading and writing skills and habits that they are able to apply daily to their independent, on-level practice with teacher coaching. Ensuring students interact with rigorous, authentic texts is a campus-wide imperative. As a result, the literacy curriculum at KIPP SHINE Prep emphasizes the integration of nonfiction, informational texts from myriad sources in all grade levels. To constantly monitor the progress of students as they develop as readers, SHINE leverages two key metrics: a developmental reading assessment that measures overall reading level equivalency and a monthly computer-adaptive assessment.

KIPP SHINE Prep builds students’ numeracy foundation through a comprehensive curriculum specifically designed to meet the challenges and rigorous demands of the TEKS and tell a coherent story that weaves connections between concepts and academic years. Acquiring foundational math skills begins in the earliest years of SHINE’s math curriculum. The primary focal areas of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten math are laying a solid foundation of numeracy through understanding counting and cardinality, beginning to explore numerical operations, and comparing objects by measurable attributes. Building upon this foundation, students in first through fourth grade are exposed to daily opportunities to build fluency with numbers and operations and engage in open-ended problem solving that applies mathematics to their everyday lives. Daily lessons challenge students to think flexibly about numbers, relationships, mathematical processes and strategies, and use language – oral and written – to explain and critique their thinking. SHINE’s math curriculum also utilizes a computer-adaptive component that allows students to progress through the entire scope of the grade-level’s work on their own learning paths at their own pace. Leveraging this technology enables teachers to differentiate their content delivery to smaller groups of students and differentiate the pace and rigor of daily lessons. SHINE’s priority of individualizing learning while emphasizing deep, conceptual understanding and open-ended problem solving informed its decision to adopt this math curriculum and approach.

Teachers use a digital curriculum created by a Houston-based school of education as the primary science resource. SHINE teachers and leaders chose this curriculum because of the personalized learning paths offered to students on its online platform. KIPP SHINE Prep students are exposed to science concepts through exploration of rich, inquiry-based tasks, science-based texts, and hands-on projects. The science curriculum at SHINE extends beyond the core classroom and into the Health & Wellness course which all students in kindergarten through fourth grade attend. In Health & Wellness students find real-world application of the life sciences and nutrition as they explore the school garden and discover the biological and nutritional qualities of the foods they harvest.

KIPP SHINE Prep’s social studies curriculum seeks to establish students’ foundation as responsible citizens in society who are engaged in thinking about their relationship to their community and their connections to their history. Beyond studying our community’s place in a global context, KIPP SHINE Prep teachers infuse history into character lessons presented at weekly grade-level assemblies called “SHINE on Fridays.” During these gatherings, students who have demonstrated character strengths exemplified by the historical

figures they are studying are celebrated. The synergy of the social studies curriculum and SHINE's broader work in character education enables students to see the connection between their shared history and the impact they can make in their communities and society.

KIPP SHINE Prep's pre-kindergarten 3 and 4 programs champion the development of literacy, oral language, mathematics, and socio-emotional skills through a variety of research-based curricula. Teachers write daily objectives using the Texas pre-kindergarten guidelines to ensure alignment with the kindergarten through fourth grade TEKS. Through bi-quarterly progress monitoring, teachers and leaders ensure that the youngest SHINEsters are meeting the expectations of state guidelines and are prepared for the upper grades. The beginning-of-year academic performance of Kindergarten students, particularly in their mastery of letter-sound correspondence, ability to compose and decompose numbers, capacity to communicate, express themselves, and self-regulate, is evidence of the positive impact of SHINE's pre-kindergarten programming on students' long-term success.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Kindergarten through fourth grade students at KIPP SHINE Prep participate in opportunities that seek to nurture and develop the whole self through the Excellence program. For 50 minutes each day, in four week rotations, students cycle through four courses: Art, Music, Health & Wellness, and Learning Lab. Exposure to cross-curricular learning in these settings engages and motivates all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative problem solving.

The art program is structured to provide students with instruction in the four basic strands of art laid out in the TEKS: observation and perception, creative expression, historical and cultural relevance, and critical evaluation and response. The year's work in the art classroom culminates in a school-wide art show that features pieces from a wide variety of media and seeks to provide all students with an opportunity to respond to and analyze the work of self and others.

The music program provides an environment for students to explore the foundations of music theory and gain exposure to a plethora of vocal styles. Students in all grades hone performance skills in quarterly musicals while Third and Fourth grade students take part in meaningful exploration of musical instruments and notation.

Health & Wellness is the synergy of traditional physical education and nutrition curricula. Through this program, students learn fundamental movement skills and begin to understand how their body functions in relation to physical activity. Beyond learning how to engage in a physically-active lifestyle, students are taught to build meaningful connections between their diet and overall well-being. Partnering with a local nonprofit, KIPP SHINE Prep has developed a unique elementary classroom setting in which all students work in and harvest fresh fruit and vegetables from a school garden and learn to prepare healthy food items.

All students in kindergarten through fourth grade are also enrolled in a technology class called Learning Lab. This course, aligned to the Technology TEKS, provides students with a space to build foundational keyboarding and computer application skills, creatively explore literacy and numeracy online resources, and learn safe and responsible practices as digital citizens when using digital tools and resources. Beyond Learning Lab, students in Fourth grade participate in a weekly coding club in which they apply critical-thinking skills to solve problems and build fluency in the most common coding languages.

At KIPP SHINE Prep, exposure to the Spanish language begins in the pre-kindergarten 3 classroom with 20 minute mini-lessons delivered by a classroom teacher. Students in pre-kindergarten 4 through fourth grade participate in 45 minutes of Spanish Language Arts instruction every day delivered by a member of the Spanish teaching team. As part of their curriculum, students explore the diverse cultures of the Spanish-speaking world through song and dance while acquiring TEKS-based, foundational language skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Since the school's founding in 2004, KIPP SHINE Prep has remained committed to Spanish-language instruction. The decision to provide native and non-native Spanish speakers with daily Spanish-language

instruction is rooted in the belief that bilingual education not only expands opportunities for our students as citizens in their ever-changing community and society but, more importantly, equips them with a mindset and level of cultural awareness necessary to productively communicate and engage with the world around them. Research continues to show that multilingual exposure facilitates the basic skills of interpersonal understanding. Beyond these benefits to all students, many of whom speak non-English and non-Spanish languages at home, the Spanish program at KIPP SHINE Prep also provides cross-curricular support to our Spanish-speaking English Language Learner (ELL) population who are able to make meaningful connections between their learning in the English Language Arts and Spanish Language Arts settings.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

KIPP SHINE Prep’s approach to instruction and meeting the needs of all students begins and ends with the mentality that innovation lies in the “how”, rather than the “what.” Teachers start by looking at their daily schedules and grade-level structures to find ways to meet the diverse needs of students. Teachers are constantly exploring the depths of differentiation in their classrooms and how these decisions maximize their effectiveness. Leveraging differentiated resources on technology and flexible scheduling, teachers critically analyze multiple points of student data across multiple years and make decisions such as whether students should be in particular reading groups within differentiated blocks, join intervention groups, or need more extensive accommodations.

Every classroom from kindergarten through fourth grade is equipped with enough technology for half of the class to be engaged in online learning at any given time. This enables teachers to work with smaller groups of students for specific, skill-based re-teaching, while the remaining half of the class works on curriculum-supported software that propels their skills to a higher level. KIPP SHINE Prep views the teacher as the most powerful resource in the room and students have equitable access to this resource based on their need. The 2:1 student-to-device ratio gives teachers the ability to be more flexible with their instructional time and shifts teacher thinking from the traditional paradigm of one teacher teaching all students in the same way for the exact same amount of time each day. This paradigm shift, enabled by utilizing technological resources, ensures the achievement gap is bridged between students who need more teacher time and smaller groups and students who are on a personalized, accelerated learning path. For example, in a typical English Language Arts and math class students will spend over half of their time receiving small group instruction or differentiated support from adaptive software.

Alongside the strategic use of technology, which creates space for teachers to be creative and innovative with student groupings and use of instructional time, use of assessments and student data at KIPP SHINE Prep is a driving force in determining the level and nature of support all students will receive. Beginning in kindergarten, student data from open-ended math assessments are used to uncover deeper layers of student understanding and determine instructional next steps. KIPP SHINE Prep uses data from a national norm-referenced assessment to gauge how students in kindergarten through fourth grade compare to their peers across the nation. After each of the three administrations of this assessment, teachers are equipped with individualized, standards-based student data that is used to inform decisions such as which areas to prioritize in the curriculum and which areas require immediate remediation. To constantly monitor the progress of students as they develop as readers, SHINE leverages two key metrics: a developmental reading assessment that measures overall reading level equivalency and a monthly computer- adaptive assessment that teachers heavily rely on to drive instruction in early and advanced reading skills. Data from the computer-adaptive metric create individualized online learning paths on a program used by all students in pre-kindergarten 4 through fourth grade in their literacy classrooms and at home. This differentiated approach allows students to grow and develop at a pace tailored to their unique needs.

In an effort to maintain high levels of achievement in some grade levels while working to improve others, the leadership team at KIPP SHINE Prep gives teaching teams the flexibility to design their schedules to include intervention and enrichment blocks that best match the needs of their students. When teachers and leaders identified an achievement gap of greater than 10% on a norm-referenced assessment among ELL’s in the incoming fourth grade class, they proactively created a schedule in which students rotated to an afternoon fifth period. This additional class period is a daily, dedicated time for accelerated instruction for the majority of students and small-group remediation and intervention for those students still in need of

extra support. As a result of this schedule change, students receiving additional small-group support made significant growth on the winter administration of a norm-referenced assessment.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

KIPP SHINE Prep believes in the art of intentional communication with our students. Each grade level at SHINE develops their own system to support students' choices in the classroom and strategically crafts language to use with students and families that is rooted in SHINE's core values and KIPP's character strengths. At the center of this communication is love, respect, and a belief that school success depends on strong relationships between students, teachers and families. Whether a student at SHINE is struggling or soaring, SHINE teachers and leaders want them to know that they are loved, respected, and have individuals in their school that will do everything they can to help them grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

SHINE teachers are pivotal in nurturing school culture and helping to develop the academic, social, and emotional growth of students. Students are motivated to grow socially and emotionally through earning points aligned to specific character traits in a school-wide economy and student store. Every Friday, teaching teams across SHINE celebrate the "SHINEster of the Week" - students who demonstrate growth on the myriad metrics SHINE uses to define academic excellence and exemplify the value or character strength being highlighted and taught in character lessons. This recognition motivates students who wish to be honored by teachers and peers as well as recognizes the social and emotional growth of students.

SHINE teachers and leaders are as intentional about the staff culture as they are about student culture. All SHINE leaders strive to create an environment in which teachers feel challenged as educators, supported by the school's leadership team, motivated by student achievement and rewarded for their hard work. In addition to highlighting a staff member each week as the "Big SHINEster of the Week" (similar to the weekly student recognition), a team of teachers plans special events throughout the year to bring teachers together to celebrate and highlight staff achievements and build a strong sense of unity and belonging. SHINE believes this type of ongoing recognition motivates and inspires teachers to work hard and further develop themselves as educators. SHINE leaders demonstrate their deep care for and investment in their staff through hand-written notes, public recognition, staff meals, spot bonuses for above and beyond work, opportunities to attend personalized, differentiated professional development and off-campus school visits.

Simply put, SHINE operates as a team and family. As partners in achieving SHINE's collective vision of building the foundation that sets students on a path to a choice-filled life, students, families and staff treat each other as family, support one other when challenges arise, and celebrate successes.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Each new SHINEster receives a home visit from two members of the SHINE staff prior to their first day of school. This provides a unique and personalized opportunity for SHINE teachers and leaders to begin developing strong relationships with families focused on SHINE's goal of preparing students to go to and through college. During the home visit, SHINE teachers and leaders present new SHINEsters with their very own KIPP SHINE Prep t-shirt, signaling their transition to our team and family. Teachers and leaders also spend time reviewing SHINE's core values, one of which focuses on building a strong foundation in literacy. Each student receives a new bilingual book which is read to them as part of the visit. The home visit is a special celebration, recognizing the importance of the unique journey each student embarks upon when they enroll at KIPP SHINE Prep and sets the expectation that family involvement and strong relationships are key components of student success.

SHINE teachers and leaders know that strong home-school communication is one of the key levers to student success. At KIPP SHINE Prep, all teachers are provided with cell phones in order to be easily accessible to families for questions about student performance, homework, upcoming events and ways families can support their children at home. SHINE holds mandatory parent conferences throughout the year so families remain well informed about their child's academic progress. Lastly, KIPP SHINE Prep sends home its annual report card from the KIPP Foundation as well as from the Texas Education Agency

so families are knowledgeable about the school's performance on a larger scale beyond SHINE.

KIPP SHINE Prep is privileged to partner with two local organizations that contribute to the overall wellness of our student community and, therefore, positively impact student achievement. SHINE leverages wrap-around services such as medical support from an on-site nurse practitioner and behavioral health support from a counselor in a school-based clinic run by a local community health organization. Having a clinic on-site is a significant benefit to the community as it provides students and families easy access to services and maximizes student learning time because students do not need to leave campus for extended periods of time for medical appointments. Through a multi-year partnership with another local nonprofit organization, SHINE is able to offer families the opportunity to receive two bags of fresh produce for eight weeks each fall and spring. Recognizing the importance of modeling a healthy lifestyle for students and families, the intention of this partnership is to begin to change the way families think about their diet and food choices.

3. Professional Development:

KIPP SHINE Prep's approach to professional development for teachers is directly aligned to the school's approach to teaching and learning. SHINE believes targeted, differentiated professional development aimed at meeting the diverse needs of the teaching staff ultimately has the most significant impact on growth and development. SHINE provides professional development opportunities rooted in both academic standards and research-based best practices related to teaching and learning. SHINE recognizes that in order to retain high-performing teachers, it is necessary to continuously provide rigorous and relevant professional development opportunities for all experience levels. Rather than offering a prescriptive, "one-size-fits-all" approach, SHINE teachers are frequently given the opportunity to choose their own professional learning path through school-based and district development sessions. District professional development focuses on broadening teachers' skill-set, building a deeper understanding of assessment tools and their use, and using student work and data to drive instructional decision-making. The goal of this professional development is to further develop, and increase the quality of, teacher performance which will positively impact student achievement outcomes. Leaders at SHINE are actively involved in professional development as well through enrollment in the KIPP School Leadership Program (KSLP), Leadership U, and regional leadership development training.

Another guiding principle behind SHINE's professional development approach is the belief that regular, structured time during the school day for teachers to collaboratively plan and study the content they deliver is just as valuable in building teachers' skill-sets and capacities as the more traditional professional development sessions they attend. Bi-weekly content team meetings provide a dedicated space for teachers and leaders to deeply study and internalize grade-level standards, hone upcoming lessons, norm on assessments, and analyze student work in an effort to maximize the quality of daily instruction and grow as a professional learning community. As a result of strategic and ongoing data analysis in content team meetings, teachers have enhanced their own ability to identify trends in student performance and develop strategies to meet students' needs. One trend that teachers have consistently identified is a gap in the achievement levels of ELL's, particularly in the area of vocabulary acquisition and comprehension in nonfiction texts. To address this gap, SHINE teachers and leaders use content team time to thoughtfully create small-group re-teaching lessons and develop lesson planning strategies that proactively address the needs of ELL's.

At KIPP SHINE Prep, teachers and leaders share a similar mindset around what is possible in public education and strive to ensure that everyone in the building is constantly growing and challenging themselves to be better and more knowledgeable. This continuous learning approach has a direct impact on student achievement and school improvement.

4. School Leadership:

Is this what is best for students? This essential question is at the heart of every conversation and decision made by SHINE's leadership team. SHINE's leadership philosophy is based on a model of shared leadership. SHINE has a school leader, an assistant principal and two instructional coaches. The school

leader and assistant principal work collaboratively to develop and drive the vision for teaching and learning, student achievement and school culture across all grade levels, pre-kindergarten 3 through fourth grade. The two instructional coaches, along with the assistant principal, provide direct support to all teachers through ongoing cycles of observations, de-briefs, model lessons and other coaching supports. Teachers often see these leaders as the sixth member of their teams; that is, another grade-level teammate who is available to support and coach them and who has a direct and lasting impact on the success of the students. SHINE leaders are partners in setting the tone for student culture through being constantly present in classrooms and co-facilitating grade-level character lessons at “SHINE on Friday” assemblies.

In addition to these leaders, every grade level also has three shared teacher-leaders who contribute to the overall success of the team and its students. The grade-level chair serves as liaison between the grade level and school leadership team and provides leadership and direction-setting for the team. The operations chair manages grade-level logistics, including planning and executing off-site field lessons. The values chair cultivates and strengthens school culture through the intentional planning of culture-building initiatives and events aligned to the school values and KIPP’s character strengths.

An integral component of SHINE’s shared leadership philosophy is a constant focus on building staff capacity as leaders. In alignment with the school’s differentiated approach to teacher professional development, SHINE also provides myriad opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership skills while remaining in the classroom as instructional leaders. At the district level and through KIPP’s national organization, teachers have opportunities to attend leadership training and participate in various leadership development cohorts which connect teachers from across the KIPP national network of schools.

The SHINE staff works collaboratively to ensure the mission and vision of SHINE are executed consistently and with fidelity. SHINE teachers and leaders, in their shared leadership approach, also work to ensure that school policies, programs and resources are aligned to the school’s mission to prepare underserved students for college and the competitive world beyond and are firmly focused on student achievement.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Walk into the whole-group meeting areas of any grade level at KIPP SHINE Prep each Friday morning and one can witness firsthand the essence of what makes SHINE successful. Students begin their weekly “SHINE on Friday” sessions with grade-level chants and songs that seek to build unity and a sense of belonging as members of a team and family. Teachers lead character lessons through engaging read-aloud’s, careful study of historical figures, and student-led discussions. These lessons focus on the character strengths and traits SHINE believes define successful, fulfilled human beings – chief among them being grit, self-control, curiosity, and optimism. Following the lesson, students who have demonstrated growth on the myriad metrics SHINE uses to define academic excellence are recognized. Students who have embodied the character strengths and traits the grade level is studying are celebrated as exemplary SHINEsters.

The teachers and leaders at KIPP SHINE Prep believe this weekly, sacred time sets the tone and establishes the common language that defines the positive, empowering student culture in the building. The founders of KIPP believed that the true key to the kind of sustained success that leads students to and through college and on the path to living choice-filled lives is the synergy of working hard and being nice, summed up in KIPP’s mantra “Work hard. Be nice.” Teachers and leaders at SHINE strive to create a school environment that promotes a mindset that success is far greater than simply how you perform on any given assessment.

Beyond these weekly “SHINE on Friday” sessions, KIPP SHINE Prep teachers and leaders work hard to cultivate a student culture and environment that is conducive for maximizing student achievement. This intentional focus on character education and socio-emotional growth is seen in individual grade-level’s management systems which use a school-wide common language aligned to the character strengths and traits KIPP values most. SHINE leverages wrap-around services such as student and family behavioral health counseling provided by a local community health organization to ensure unique challenges and needs are addressed. Each grade level has a specific leadership position called a Values Chair. This person is principally responsible for making the school-wide character education vision and goals relevant for their students and driving the content delivery of character lessons each week. KIPP SHINE Prep is a place that believes a focus on the academic side of an educator’s work alone – no matter how robust – will ultimately fall short of the goal of helping students chart their path to a choice-filled life.