

Ready for the Future

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I'm finally back in the office after being out for two weeks. My travel season is drawing to a close soon as I only have two more short trips to make. Personally, I'm kind of ready for my normal routine for a while. It gets a little hectic with all this travelling, clothes start piling up at home, dishes don't get washed (I blame my roommate for that...just kidding).

One school particularly stood out for me the last week. KIPP Pride High School. An academically rigorous high school that has become a national model for excellence with its extra long school days (from 7:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) and strong community of students, teachers and parents.

As soon as I arrived, I was greeted by about 20 smiling high school students, all genuinely happy and excited for the college representatives to arrive, as if we were some important ambassadors.

We were served a catered dinner and seated with students from the school. They asked great questions and it was really refreshing to just be with ambitious and hard-working students. Some of these students had pretty grueling schedules, the long school day culminated with tutoring younger students and volunteer work in the evenings. I can't even remember the last time I volunteered.

As it turns out, in addition to attending longer school days, students from grades 5-8 commit monthly Saturday school and a three week summer session. Most of the students are minority students and 80% of seniors will be first generation college students. The school has been profiled by the New York Times, Fox News and ABC Sports. Additionally, most of the teachers at KIPP matriculated from the Teach For America program.

Seeing such a committed community to the success of the next generation was very inspiring. When I was leaving, all I could do was smile.