

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **KIPP St. Louis Joins the Mosaic Ambassador School**

St. Louis Mosaic Project is proud to announce that KIPP – The Knowledge is Power Program – St. Louis is joining the St. Louis Mosaic Ambassador Schools Program. The St. Louis Mosaic Project Ambassador School Program encourages member schools to become more welcoming and inclusive for international families. The vision of KIPP St. Louis is: All families in St. Louis will have access to a world class network of public schools that will prepare children with the academic skills and character traits necessary to thrive in college and in life.

KIPP St. Louis has several programs and class offerings in the efforts of making an inclusive environment for foreign born families. They survey the foreign born families to gather information in order to understand what type of programming international families are most interested in, with multilingual fitness event and immigrant advocacy fair being some of the options. KIPP St. Louis also offers a class series to immigrant and refugee families that is facilitated by the International Institute of St. Louis. Celebrating the Welcoming Week and Hispanic Heritage month is another way they welcome families with different backgrounds. An asset-based English as a Second Language instruction is provided to all scholars who speak another language at home, as they come from a variety of places around the world such as Mexico, Cuba, Syria, Philippine, Tanzania, and Kenya. Additionally, KIPP St. Louis recently started the monthly reading events with books in the international families' native languages, so parents can come read books with their children while they eat breakfast together.

Throughout the K-12 education, KIPP St. Louis has a staff member whose work is dedicated to ensure parents' access to the information of their child's education, including a parent-teacher conference and a call from the school nurse translated. Staff at KIPP St. Louis also reflect their passion to creating an internationally-welcoming environment. They have staff who have lived abroad for extended period times, and staff who have heritage from different countries such as Mexico, Dominican Republic, and China. KIPP St. Louis also has staff who occasionally attend the Professional Latino Action Network (PLAN) meetings with a mission to identify individuals, business, or organizations who can serve their Latinx community.

One of the unique ways that KIPP St. Louis welcomes international families to their school is visiting their new families at home. They visit with an interpreter when the families want or prefer, and bring gifts to new scholars and important information to the parents. Additionally, they are in the process of getting bilingual signage at all the schools as well as becoming a member of the Immigrant Service Provider Network (ISPN) to help the KIPP St. Louis families have access to services beyond education such as housing.

### **About St. Louis Mosaic Project**

The St. Louis Mosaic Project was launched in 2012 in response to an economic impact report, outlining St. Louis to be lagging in immigrant growth as well as highlighting the economic benefits of increasing its foreign-born population. The Mosaic Project is a regional initiative that is professionally managed by St. Louis Economic Development Partnership, World Trade Center St. Louis and a 32-member committee. Its goal is to transform St. Louis into the fastest growing major metropolitan area for immigration by 2025, to add 25,000 more foreign born to the region from 2016-2025 and to promote regional prosperity through immigration and innovation. Learn more at [www.stlmosaicproject.org](http://www.stlmosaicproject.org).