

Region Name: KIPP Indy

Elevator Pitch

We know that, in order to have a life of choice, our students need to access a world free from climate change and environmental injustice. We also know that, with the right lens and exposure, our students have the curiosity and leadership to address these issues in their future careers. This is what environmental literacy is. We spent this week building our own instructional skillset and developing a plan to build environmental literacy at KIPP Indy. Our goal now is to integrate environmental literacy activities and outdoor learning experiences into existing curriculum and field lessons. As school leaders, we need your support to ensure coaches and content teachers have the time, support, and feedback so that all students have equitable access to these learning experiences. We would love to meet with you next Friday at 10am to talk through how we could roll this out to staff at Onboarding this summer.

Region Environmental Literacy Vision Draft:

KIPP Indy Public Schools will be a destination for students in Central Indiana for environmental literacy education, and an exemplar school for how to integrate outdoor activities, field experiences, student leadership, and environmental stewardship throughout the K-12 curriculum.

A life of choice is only possible in a world that provides it. No matter how much work we put into creating educational opportunities for students who have historically lacked equitable access to them, those opportunities will be lost in a planet ravaged by climate change. At the same time, this moment in history is perfectly suited for curious, hard-working, and optimistic students to apply their creativity and leadership towards tackling the underlying problems that are driving climate change, as well as towards rectifying local issues of environmental injustice. By exposing students to these issues both in their backyards and at large, as well as integrating environmental literacy throughout their existing reading and math curriculum, students can be empowered to effect change during their K-12 education and beyond. Countless career opportunities await students in green technology, environmental engineering and consulting, public policy, non-profit administration, and many other avenues directly working on these environmental issues. Moreover, individual lifestyle choices and a lens for understanding our impact on the environment will become a matter of habit for KIPP Indy students, and combined with leadership skills, will be habits students can inspire others in their community to adopt.

Objectives: Approaches and Rationales

1. **Environmental Field Lessons (K-8...in the future 9-12):** Expose all students to one annual environmental field lesson with integrated environmental literacy instruction. Each lesson will be unique to each grade level, and all students in the grade level will be eligible to participate.
 - Rationale: This gives students an opportunity to apply the environmental literacy skills and understandings they develop through their instructional curriculum. Through the instructional component, each field lesson will also open students to having more in-depth interactions with the environment around them -- solidifying what they've learned, investing them in content, and giving hands-on examples of real-life application. Finally, by removing eligibility requirements, we ensure all students receive this exposure, rather than it being a privilege for a subgroup.

2. **Environmental Literacy Curricular Integration:** Integrate environmental literacy activities, experiences, and instructional strategies throughout one unit for each content area at every grade level in the region.
 - Rationale: Teachers are less likely to “teach” environmental literacy if it is another added responsibility in their day. In order to make it more sustainable, the environmental experiences will be integrated into units and lessons the teachers are already teaching. This begins with the ELA Wheatley Curriculum, which already has units that are well-suited to environmental literacy integration. Teachers will continue to internalize and implement this established curriculum, preparing for the environmental experiences while they prepare the daily lesson. By beginning with established KIPP curriculum that is network-wide, we can implement pilots in classrooms to compare academic, behavioral, and student experience results not only among classrooms in the region, but across KIPP network.
3. **Environmental Literacy Instructional Development:** Incorporate at least five interactive environmental learning experiences for teachers at region-wide professional development, designed for teachers to easily integrate environmental literacy into their ongoing instruction, and beginning with a pilot cohort.
 - Rationale: Another barrier for teachers’ success in implementation of experiences to build environmental literacy is the lack of knowledge or the lack of comfort with leading students in the activities. These activities often appear as unstructured outdoor time to teachers, which can create classroom management and instructional rigor challenges. ELID would develop teachers’ competency in providing strategic environmental literacy lenses for students both in class and during outdoor experiences. The PD would facilitate teacher participation in specific outdoor activities they can then immediately implement in classrooms of any content area or grade level. This exposure will ease teacher anxiety around ELCI, and give teachers an opportunity to engage in an active discussion about what environmental literacy can look like in their content and in their rooms, allowing them to take some ownership of the integration. Moreover, this provides an opportunity to highlight and elevate existing bright spots in the region, as well as to leverage community partners who already provide support to educators in this area.
4. **Student Empowerment:** Empower a student leadership committee at each school in the region that incorporates a diversity of voices and meets at least monthly with school leaders. Leverage student voice in planning student leadership and environmental experiences, including field lessons, capstone projects, and student summits.
 - Rationale: Students already have platforms for leadership at each school, but they could be greatly enhanced and empowered. Moreover, students often feel limited to change within their school, and lack of exposure to both the outdoors and to issues that go beyond our school building limit the scope of their curiosity and agency. By elevating the platform of student leadership and crafting a more elaborate workstream, students can play a much more integral part in driving experience, leadership, and impact.
5. **Systems-Level Modeling:** Ensure that our school operations at all levels are models of environmental stewardship, including employing best practices for food waste and rescue in our food service system, recycling and composting correctly and at scale, replacing disposable materials with reusable materials, and reduction of water use, energy use, and waste where possible.
 - Rationale: If our school is not modeling strong environmental stewardship, it would be difficult to convince students of its importance. Many of these tasks are discrete, achievable shifts we can make in our contracts with service providers at our school, and should be components of conversations as contracts are discussed and re-negotiated. Finally, we also have an obligation to our regional Vision Statement to ensure we are doing what we can to protect our community and our Earth. If we are to ensure that “one day, all children in the Indianapolis community will...live a life of choice while continuing to improve themselves and their community,” we have to ensure that our actions align with creating conditions for a world not ravaged by the harms of climate change, because that world lacks the economic opportunity, health equity, environmental justice, and sense of awe that our students deserve.

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Action Steps (from now through the 2021-2022 academic year)

Long-Term Goals	Audit	Align	Pilot	Measure	Scale
Environmental Field Lessons (EFL) <u>Stakeholders</u> Grade Level Team Leads School-Based Operations Team Regional Operations Team	Identify existing bright spots and gaps for EFLs that are regularly planned and implemented at each grade level. Identify community partners for enriching EFL opportunities.	Align on a developmentally appropriate school-wide field lesson scope & sequence that eliminates redundancy and ensures an EFL at each grade level.	Pilot integration of environmental literacy instruction into EFLs at one key grade level at each school, supporting teachers with resources and development.	Collect student learning and teacher experience data from pilot, and use learnings to incorporate environmental literacy instruction into all EFLs region-wide.	Eliminate student eligibility requirements for EFLs to ensure equity of access, and provide workshops for families to engage with and learn alongside their students.
	By May 2019	By July 2019	By May 2020	By July 2020	By July 2021
Environmental Literacy Curricular Integration (ELCI) <u>Stakeholders</u> Curriculum Team Content Coaches Lead Planners	Audit existing Wheatley (Literacy) and Eureka (Math) scope and sequences for low barriers to entry for ELCI based on existing topics and curriculum.	Develop supplemental materials, outdoor experiences, and lesson plans for ELCI for key grade levels that will conduct pilots that are aligned to Wheatley and Eureka.	Implement at least one pilot ELCI unit in each content area at each school, supporting teachers with instructional resources and professional development.	Collect comparative data on module assessment results and student survey responses in ELCI classes, and expand the team of educators to develop and implement ELCI to all grade levels.	Integrate ELCI into at least one Unit in each core content area at each grade level region-wide. Develop and support teachers to implement low-lift ELCI aligned to their existing classroom content.
	By May 2019	By July 2019	By May 2020	By July 2020	By July 2022
Environmental Literacy Instructional Development (ELID) <u>Stakeholders</u> Exemplar Teachers Content Teachers Instructional Coaches Community Partners that lead and support ELID	Identify existing bright spots where teachers are supplementing content instruction with environmental literacy activities, and community partners who support teachers in ELID.	Develop a one-day ELID curriculum for regional onboarding, focused on elevating bright spots, teacher-led participatory learning, and inclusive instructional connections by content and grade level.	Facilitate ELID PD during onboarding for an opt-in pilot cohort of teachers, inviting community partners and exemplar teachers to co-facilitate, and including time for teachers to integrate ELID.	Observe ELID cohort in classrooms, videotaping exemplars. Conduct follow-up ELID on staff PD days to highlight exemplars, reflect on learnings, and workshop new strategies.	Integrate ELID into annual PD schedule at least five times throughout the year, and ensure instructional coaches have an observation tool to use when teachers are implementing ELID.
	By May 2019	By July 2019	By August 2019	By May 2020	By July 2021
Principle-Driven Goals	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
Student Empowerment <u>Stakeholders</u> Student Leaders School/Regional Leaders Families Homeroom Teachers KIPP Through College	Ensure each school has opportunities for students interested in leadership to meet and discuss problems and solutions at the school.	Facilitate access for students to interface with mentors in environmental careers of interest	Integrate student voice into deciding and planning environmental learning experiences and field lessons	Guarantee time for student leaders to speak with school, regional, and district leaders about identified issues.	Develop grade-level capstone projects that incorporate social justice, community service, and environmental literacy
	Existing Structures: Student Government (3-5) Student Committees (6-8)	Existing Structures: 7th Mock Interview Day 8th Career Day	Existing Structures: Student Survey Student Government (3-5)	Existing Structures:	Existing Structures: KIPP Indy Student Summit MLK Day of Service Project

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Systems-Level Modeling <u>Stakeholders</u> School/Regional Leaders Operations Teams Contracted Facilities Management Contracted Food Service Contracted Transportation	Replace disposable trays, flatware, and cups in food service with reusable or “trayless” equivalents.	Operate a region-wide smart waste management system, including recycling and composting, with fidelity.	Minimize food waste through food rescue for student snacks and donations of non-perishable foods.	Implement smart electrical outlets, charging ports, and lights that minimized wasted energy use.	Encourage buses and cars dropping off students to turn off engines to reduce idling and reduce air pollution and fuel waste.
	Stakeholders: Food Service, Water Utilities, Facilities Management	Stakeholders: Food Service, Groundskeeping, Waste Management	Stakeholders: Food Service, Waste Management	Stakeholders: Electric Utilities, Facilities Management	Stakeholders: Families, Transportation

Metrics for Success: *(What will success look like for you?)*

- Incorporate environmental literacy instruction into all Environmental Field Lessons region-wide
- Environmental Literacy Curricular Integration for at least one Unit in each core content area at each grade level, region-wide
- Develop and facilitate a one-day ELID curriculum for regional onboarding, including follow up ELID to highlight exemplars, reflect on learnings, and workshop new strategies
- Develop grade-level, student led capstone projects that incorporate social justice, community service, and environmental literacy