



## KIPP DC: Honor and AIM Academies



District of Columbia  
Office of the State  
Superintendent of Education

## ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY SNAPSHOT

### 2022-23 HIGHLIGHTS

- Successfully launched school-wide paper recycling programs at two KIPP campuses. KIPP’s leadership and operational management team organized professional development training and procurement of recycling bins.
- Participants in AIM GREEN, an environmental literacy after-school program for all interested fifth graders, learned about recycling and were responsible for collecting materials from the blue recycling bins twice per week. These students were also in charge of sharing with teachers and students the importance of recycling.
- All grade 4 students participated in a virtual field trip with the US Botanic Garden. As an incentive, students received a Makey Makey coding circuit to help enhance their coding skills.
- Fifth grade students in the AIM GREEN program visited the National Children’s Museum and the US Botanic Garden.



### ABOUT THE SCHOOLS

KIPP DC’s Honor Academy and AIM Academy foster rigorous and supportive learning environments that prepare students for academic success in high school, college, careers, and beyond. Honor Academy enrolls students in grades 4-8 and AIM Academy enrolls students in grades 5-8. Students at both campuses are engaged in a diverse curriculum of not only English, math, history, and science classes, but also dance, theater, art, and physical education. Both campuses offer a daily, a 50-minute Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)-aligned science program for all students. Teachers at both locations are committed to supporting the social-emotional development of their middle school students by developing close relationships with their students and families, ensuring a smooth transition into adolescence.

“It was so wonderful seeing my students become so engaged in their community! They had so many questions about not just the recycling in their neighborhood but also the history of recycling in the District of Columbia, the impact it had on the environment and how they could be part of saving the world ecosystem.”

– Neshea Williams, KIPP DC AIM Academy,  
5th Grade Level Chair

## ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PROGRAM

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The Environmental Literacy Program has been a valuable and instrumental tool in engaging and educating students at Honor and AIM Academies. Students have opportunities to experience the joy that comes with learning about their local community and how they can help keep it safe and clean. Students conduct a waste audit of the lunchroom and classrooms to inform implementation of a school-wide recycling and waste reduction program. Environmental experiences also include visits to a pumpkin patch farm, the US Botanic Garden, and other local education sites. Fourth grade students have hands-on lessons holding and observing live worms to learn how vermicomposting is good for the environment. Grade 5 students learn how different insects are attracted to different types of foods and live in different ecosystems. They work in four-person teams to build bug motels out of recycled and repurposed household items, such as milk cartons and jugs, shoe boxes, and toilet paper rolls. Overall, the environmental literacy program is engineered to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to become Washington, DC's next generation of environmental leaders.

### NEXT STEPS

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All students will continue to receive 50-60 minutes of science instruction daily. Specific grade-level projects and field trips that started this year will continue next year for each new grade level of students. The goal is to integrate environmental literacy into the required science program to augment student field experiences, project-based learning projects, grants, and community partners. Both schools will continue to focus on growing the recycling program by reaching out to the other schools within the KIPP DC network and asking them to join in the efforts.



### LESSONS LEARNED

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- Starting a major program at your school requires more than just you and your vision – recruit the support of your principals and administrative teams, building maintenance teams, and fellow teachers as much as possible. The visions you want to implement for your students and school community may not have lasting effects to keep the program going without a team and family approach.
- After school environmental literacy programs should consist of multiple teachers helping out. While it is important to have a lead adult in charge of creating and scheduling student work, having multiple adults trained, invested, and involved will help ensure that any program is fully implemented.
- There are plenty of resources and materials out there with little to no cost for educators and school leaders. Washington, DC is filled with organizations that have programming or curriculum for students, and some organizations will help cover the costs!