

Friday is “Bank Day” for kindergarten through third grade students at KIPP Delta in Helena. Jasmin Diaz, Kipp Through College Program Assistant, works mainly with high school age students so helping the younger kids through the Elementary School Bank Accounts program is her “refresher day”.

Low- and moderate-income children with at least \$500 in savings are three times more likely to enroll in college and four times more likely to graduate. As part of KIPP Through College, the school has partnered with Southern Bancorp and SchoolSavings.com to help build the habit of savings, as well as improve math, civic and social skills. KIPP provides \$25 seed money for each student to help them to start saving.

On “Bank Day”, Ms. Diaz helps the students with their deposit slip. They must know their full name, learn to count their money and make sure everything on the deposit slip is correct. They are rewarded and encouraged with tickets for every deposit of \$.25 or more. “They are so excited that they will go through their backpacks looking for money to deposit. I have had to explain many times that you cannot deposit Chuck E. Cheese tokens.”, says Ms. Diaz.

Students can use the tickets to visit the goody box and win prizes. Southcorp and the school both work hard to have great prizes—ranging for bubbles and stickers for each individual deposit to movie passes, Amazon gift cards, Echo dots and tablets which they are eligible to win if they have made at least ten deposits throughout the year.

This past year KIPP Delta elementary students opened over 340 accounts, made over 2,000 deposits and saved over \$13,000. The program will continue to expand one grade per year to follow them through the eighth grade where they have the opportunity to participate in a 529 College Savings Plan. Once again, KIPP provides the initial \$25 deposit.

KIPP Through College was developed to support first generation college students in achieving a college education. In addition to the savings program, KIPP Through College includes College Match and College Persistence teams. College Match helps students identify the right college, provides counseling, ACT Prep and financial aid counseling for students and their families. The College Persistence Team provides emotional support to students through texts, calls, emails and campus visits. They also monitor academic progress, help with financial aid, internships and career options.

Based on the success of graduates so far, KIPP set the goal of an 82% college graduation rate by 2020 for the graduates of Delta and Blytheville Collegiate Highs. We are cheering for you!

For more information on KIPP Delta Public Schools go to <http://kipdelta.org>. If you are interested in a 529 Savings Plan for your student <https://www.arkansas529.org> to get started.