



**For Immediate Release**

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**KIPP Renaissance juniors begin Bard Early College in High School**

*Bard Early College Academy at KIPP Renaissance is first-of-its kind program for Bard in an existing public high school*

NEW ORLEANS, LA, October 9, 2018 -- KIPP Renaissance High School and Bard Early College host the inaugural matriculation ceremony today for high school juniors beginning their associates' degrees at Bard Early College at KIPP Renaissance.

The students will be joined by their families, KIPP Renaissance teachers, Bard Early College Professors, State Superintendent John White, KIPP New Orleans board members, Bard Early College New Orleans advisory board members, and supporters.

Today, 45 high school juniors from Bard Early College Academy at KIPP Renaissance will take part in the program's inaugural matriculation ceremony. The students completed the majority of their Louisiana high school graduation requirements by the end of sophomore year, allowing them to earn 60 college credits and work toward an associate's degree as full-time college students this fall. They will be taught by Bard professors while still on the KIPP Renaissance campus. The program enables students to complete two years of college, tuition-free, while earning credits that can be transferred to many 4-year institutions.

"The Bard Early College Academy at KIPP Renaissance erases the line between high school and higher education and removes the barriers that traditionally prevent students from matriculating to college," said KIPP Renaissance principal Towana Pierre-Floyd.

This program is the first of its kind in Louisiana--a complete degree-granting college within the walls of a public high school. This program is also a first for Bard; the college, which is based in New York, operates Early College High Schools in 6 locations, but this is

the first time they have launched a degree-granting program within an existing high school. Bard sees this as a scalable model to expand its Early College work.

The partnership builds on Bard's growing network of early colleges and on the promise of the early college model. The American Institute of Research found that students who earned 20 or more college credits in high school are 20 percent more likely to finish a bachelor's degree on time. Future Bard Early College Academy graduates are projected to complete four-year college programs at rates higher than their peers as well, saving tens of thousands of dollars in tuition and fees along the way.

Stephen Tremaine, Bard College's Vice President for Early Colleges, said: "The Bard Early College Academy is a new space between high school and college, one in which young people take on the rigor and intellectual ambition of a college course of study, still with the support and continuity of their high school community."

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#### **About KIPP New Orleans Schools**

KIPP New Orleans Schools is a Louisiana non-profit organization that operates 11 open-enrollment public schools serving 5,200 students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup>. KIPP New Orleans Schools is dedicated to empowering students with the knowledge and skills they need to pursue college and choice-filled lives. Since 2005, KIPP New Orleans has educated thousands of students and today supports over 1000 alumni in college and career.

#### **About Bard Early College in New Orleans**

Bard Early College in New Orleans (BECNO) is a tuition-free satellite campus of Bard College operating within the New Orleans public school system. BECNO, along with Bard Early College at the Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy and a network of six Bard High School Early Colleges, helps fulfill Bard's mission of increasing access to higher education.