KIPP:NEWARK
SPARK ACADEMY

P 973.481.0327
W www.kippnj.org/schools/kipp-spark-academy
A 275 Sussex Avenue, Newark, NJ 07107

OPENED 2009
LEADER Tamika Killins
HOURS 7:45AM–3:30PM (M, Tu, Th, F)
7:45AM-12:30PM (W)

KIPP New Jersey's first elementary school prepares students to succeed in their journey to and through college, starting in kindergarten.

88%
ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH

10.2%
QUALIFY FOR SPED SERVICES

74%
AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

8%
LATINX STUDENTS

16%
MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS

706
OF STUDENTS

K-4
GRADES

ABOUT KIPP SPARK ACADEMY
Located in Newark's central ward, SPARK Academy was founded in 2009 with 100 kindergartners. Since then, SPARK has grown to educate over 700 students in grades K-4. Upon completion of elementary school, many SPARK fourth graders have the option of moving onto to one of our four Newark middle schools.

ABOUT KIPP NEWARK
KIPP Newark schools are part of the nationally recognized "Knowledge Is Power Program" non-profit network of college preparatory, public charter schools educating elementary, middle, and high school students. In 2002, 80 fifth graders walked through the doors of our first middle school in Newark, New Jersey. KIPP Newark has since grown to teach 6,321 students in grades K-12 across 12 schools in Newark. Ninety of KIPP Newark students currently qualify for free or reduced meals.

KIPP Newark alumni earn college degrees at more than three times the national average compared to their peers. By offering highly effective educators with strong bonds to families, more time in school learning, services that support a variety of student needs, and a culture focused on achievement, our students are on the path to and through college, career, and beyond.

"SPARK Academy went above and beyond what my expectations were for any school." –KIPP SPARK ACADEMY PARENT

WHAT MAKES KIPP SPARK ACADEMY UNIQUE?

WE ARE NEWARK, NEW JERSEY
SPARKsters learn early and often to leave a place better than they found it, and that applies to Newark as much as the hallway in their school. Through service learning projects and character education, they learn to be the change in our city.

TEAM AND FAMILY
We work in partnership with families to support student growth: Families should expect a response to an inquiry from their teacher within 24 hours and have the chance to participate in family focused events throughout the year. There's also a family association of parent volunteers committed to strengthening the partnership between scholars, the school, and the community.

SUPPORT FROM KINDERGARTEN TO COLLEGE & CAREER
From day one, students are on a path to college or a career of their choice. Classrooms at SPARK are named after colleges, grade levels are named after the year kids go to college, and students visit and learn about colleges throughout the year.

HOW ARE STUDENTS PROGRESSING?

OUR CURRICULUM
Our elementary schools implement curriculum literacy programs that support reading engagement and growth. In grades K-2, we offer the highly-ranked Magnetic Reading Foundations. Students in grades 3-4 are offered a program called Phonics for Reading to build foundational skills. Our math curriculum utilizes the Illustrative Math program, which empowers students to build on what they know about math to infer solutions to problems and represent their thinking in multiple ways.

PROGRESS REPORTING
Students are tested throughout the year to make sure they are learning, so we don't just rely on state tests to know if they are on-track. To track student reading proficiency and growth, we use iReady ELA and mCLASS DIBELS assessments. Teachers have custom-built dashboards to make this data actionable on a daily and weekly basis. We collect data points on each of our students and families are frequently updated on student progress.

MEET TAMIKA KILLINS, *SCHOOL LEADER*

Tamika's 20-year career as an educator and leader began in Petersburg, VA, where she worked as a fourth-grade teacher. She brought her lifelong passion for education back to her home state in 2012 when she joined KIPP SPARK Academy in Newark, NJ. As an educator she was known for her engaging lessons, as well as strong classroom culture and relationships with families. In 2017, she became the dean of students at SPARK before being named KIPP SPARK Academy's school leader in 2020. Tamika holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Virginia State University. Her 20-year career as a teacher and leader began as a fourth-grade teacher in Petersburg, VA. In her spare time, she is a Girl Scout troop leader, the Secretary of her church education board, sings on the choir, and spends time with her husband and their two daughters.