

Member Highlight

Jennifer Tong,
Assistant Principal, Person County
Schools, North Carolina



WHO IS JENNIFER?

Jennifer Tong has been in education for the past 21 years. She has served as a teacher, mentor, instructional coach, and school administrator with most of her time with Person County Schools in North Carolina. She currently serves as an elementary school assistant principal in three schools. This has provided her with the opportunity to work with a variety of principals, teachers, and students while having a greater reach than being at one school.

One of her favorite projects she has been working on is the Kindergarten readiness program across three elementary schools. It has been a great experience working with a different set of teachers at each school and helping their vision come to life. It is also a joy working with soon-to-be Kindergarten students and watching their excitement when they enter the school building. Each year Jennifer and her teams build on the feedback received from parents to make each experience better than the last one.

Jennifer's future goal is to be in a position where she gets to work with beginning teachers and eventually be at the college level. She wants to help build teachers' capacity so that all children will have a quality education where they will grow and thrive in life!

WISDOM FROM JENNIFER

"When you are a woman in education it is easy to over extend yourself, but remember that it is okay to set boundaries and it is okay to say no. Find things that bring you joy and feed your soul. People will take notice and be inspired by you."

"There are two quotes that I always try to remember because they speak to the purpose of why I do what I do. The first, "I can not do what you can do. You can not do what I can do. Together we can do great things." -Mother Teresa. It is important to surround yourself and build a team with people that can build on each other's strengths, because no one can do this work alone. The second, "The ones that matter the most are the children. They are the true Human Beings." American Indian proverb.

Finally, as a leader it is important to lead with empathy, listen, and be willing to do that same things that you are asking others to do. I had a teacher tell me this "You are a harder worker and get the job done, so it's easy to follow someone who is also working hard and getting things accomplished. And you trust your people. It's helpful when administration listen to teachers!" This will always stick with me and reinforces the importance of listening!"

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT BEING A WE LEAD MEMBER?

"I like the networking WE LEAD provides for women. It is important for women leaders to connect with other women leaders. I am inspired and rejuvenated every time I go to a WE LEAD event!"

