

Member Highlight

Dr. Stephanie Raiford,
Principal



WHO IS DR. STEPHANIE RAIFORD?

Dr. Raiford is the principal at Mills Park Middle School in the Wake County Public Schools District. Her biggest accomplishment was completing her doctorate in 2021 while balancing a new job at the largest middle school in the district, navigating the pandemic, and caring for her family. Stephanie is a results-driven leader with a proven record of success in strategic planning, family and community engagement, equity-centered practices, and leadership development. She is devoted to nurturing enduring impacts that prioritize education.

Stephanie draws her greatest inspiration from her mother, who consistently urged her to venture beyond her comfort zone. Her mother's unwavering encouragement has instilled within Stephanie the boldness to break glass ceilings as women were not encouraged to advance in education during her mother's time. Because of her mother, she is committed to empowering women and cultivating a generation of confident and transformative female leaders. Stephanie provides time and space for continuous improvement and collaboration amongst all stakeholders.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO HER?

When Stephanie began her career, she was a high school science teacher and coach. However, her path to leadership has really shaped who she is today. Her career has blossomed due to the amazing leadership of wonderful female leaders. She is most proud of developing women leaders to see their best self. She believes that women need to build their networks, as traditional networking does not always fit how women lead.

WISDOM FROM STEPHANIE

"Don't be your own barrier. We can limit ourselves by circumstance and not see it as an opportunity to grow."

"I think women need more mentors and lessons on how to grow their networks outside of their district."

"Schools should be centered on helping the big people help the little people."

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

"I love the ongoing communication and customized opportunities for professional learning for female leaders."

