



# KIPP PUBLIC SCHOOLS JACKSONVILLE EQUITY FOR ALL



## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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Now more than ever, the words of Marian Wright Edelman, “you can’t be what you can’t see” resonates for me as a black woman especially with the amplification in women of color ascending to more leadership positions. This is especially evident with the recent election of the first woman Vice-President, Kamala Harris.

As we celebrate March as Women’s History Month, which was preceded by Black History Month. I am reminded of the power of Edelman’s quote. It is especially poignant for me as a Black Woman as I embody both representations of cultural celebrations. Its significance defines my journey and purpose as the first Black woman principal of the school I led early in my career. This was a momentous occurrence for me as a black woman because my educational experiences growing up was dominated by non-black educators except for two black women who taught me during elementary school. Unfortunately, it would be over 10 years until graduate school, before I would have another teacher who looked like me or represented my culture.

For me, becoming a leader was non-negotiable. I wanted to make a difference for other educators, especially educators of color. As a teacher leader, I found joy in not only making a difference for students but also in building capacity of adults within the educational field. To have a greater impact, I sought a master’s degree and later a doctorate degree in Educational Leadership and Policy and have been able to work with many amazing women in and out the educational space. As Chief Schools Officer, one of my many responsibilities is to lead the development and success of our school leaders. The work we do together whether during our one-on-ones, group school walks, or team planning for improvement in practice continues to ignite my passion for leading as their capacity continues to grow. It is truly an honor to lead an all-woman team of amazing leaders. This is extremely rare. In the US less than 15% of superintendents are women, though they make up almost 75% of our nations’ teachers. It gives me joy that our female students get to see women in leadership positions who could inspire and encourage them to be whatever they set their minds to be.





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My mission continues to center on providing access and opportunity to other women who aspire to leadership positions. Prior to KIPP Public Schools Jacksonville (KIPP Jax), my work consisted of preparing aspiring school leaders for the Principal role which resulted in many women reaching their dream aspirations of being a principal and driving the academic improvement and achievement to prepare the next generation to lead. These experiences and the agency of my current role allows me to guide the School Leaders at KIPP Jax and empower them to own the vision for their schools. Being a part of a vision that includes a joyful, affirming experience for all our students is a gift and I am grateful for the opportunity. It is my goal to change the trajectory for black and brown children, allowing them to have choice over their futures. I hope to leave a legacy that lives on through others who impact the lives of students everywhere.

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## KIPP JACKSONVILLE COMMITMENT

*High quality teaching in our classrooms is not only about getting great academic results; it must also be about encouraging and equipping our students to use their voices to call out injustice and to build a more just world. We are more committed than ever to making sure ALL decisions that affect students at KIPP Jacksonville are filtered through a lens of equity and racial justice.*

## KIPP JACKSONVILLE MISSION

*Together with families and communities, we create joyful, academically excellent schools that prepare students with the skills and confidence to pursue the paths they choose – college, career and beyond – so they can lead fulfilling lives and build a more just world.*

