

My name is Millicent Rogers, I was educated in Durham Public Schools and have chosen to raise my son as a DPS Student. It is because of this that my heart and advocacy belong to Durham, it is my responsibility to step up when called, to bring forth change that I have requested. I have demonstrated my abilities in leadership in various capacities including PTAs, The Durham People's Alliance as the Education Action Team Lead and Rebound, Alternatives for Youth as Board Chair. During my work within PTA, I grew a deeper understanding of the need for parents and educators to work together to ensure local and state governments fully fund the public school system. During my experience in traveling to DC and Raleigh to meet with lawmakers as they developed budgets and policy that impact the public school systems, I realized that there are many groups of people that are asking for the same outcome—but that we must work together to reach the end goal.

As a new board member, my primary goal would be to empower and engage teachers. Teachers are the roots of the school system, who educate and nurture students and are the primary school contacts for local families. Teachers need to be supported with resources, autonomy and flexibility whenever possible. The school board can ensure this support by publicly encouraging the Durham community to lean on public school teachers as experts on students, providing solid PD from proven local, state, and national organizations, and create a transparent mechanism for communication between families and teachers. It has been my experience with PTA, in my professional work serving Duke University professors, and other community organizations, that when educators are empowered by leadership and recognized as having institutional value those that they serve are more likely to be actively engaged. In other words, supporting teachers is one of the most effective ways to support students.

One way to better incorporate teachers into decision making is to ensure that a variety of teachers have access to school leadership teams, including SIP teams. Teachers have a direct view inside homes when they connect with our students virtually, via e-mail, and can communicate needs for intervention with the school counselors and social workers. Their insights and ideas are essential to creating functional, equitable and inclusive schools and school-based programs.

Teacher Work Conditions Surveys provide valuable information about the conditions that students are being educated within, and parents deserve to have access to those metrics. It is the responsibility of all of us together to work collectively in developing a plan that will improve teaching and learning environments. Teachers deserve to work in conditions that are beneficial to their health, spirit, and abilities. If chosen for this seat, I would be mindful that we are calling on teachers to hear their perspective, ensure they have the necessary professional development, to make sure they have the tools they need to connect to parents and families. I would also constantly consider the policies put on teachers from lawmakers and the district.

I have the time and ability to be able to do this work because of the flexible schedule that the University allows me for community involvement and my demonstrated commitment to working at times that are outside of the standard work day. I have the full support of my family and

village behind me to help me with making sure my son remains actively involved in his school work and extracurricular activities. My family has always encouraged me to be clear about my concerns around inequities in Durham Public Schools for black and brown students, I have done that, I have made asks and calls for actions from this exact school board that I am seeking an appointment from. It is at this time that I am willing to devote my time, talents and experiences in bridging the gap between families, district administrators, and teachers. Together we can move the needle to a more equitable working and learning environment that yields a better outcome for all.