

Statement provided by Marie Helms to Parents for Kids Health:

MARIE HELMS –Candidate for Davie County Board of Education – 2022

I am pleased to announce that I have filed to run for the 2022 Davie County School Board.

Please follow Marie Helms for Davie County School Board on Facebook for more info or contact me at mariehelms7@gmail.com

A little about me and what I believe:

My husband and I moved to Davie County in 2007 with one of the contributing reasons being the great school system Davie County had to offer. I am originally from Minot, ND where I spent weekends between our family farm, and the local lake. Respect and integrity were staples we learned early, we were taught the road to success was through discipline, work ethic, big dreams, and not only did everyone in our town know each other but everyone supported each other. We had 1 public High School and were known for our school spirit and academic achievements. I was raised in a family rooted in public education, my mother and father retired with 65 years collectively from the public school system at the administrative levels.

When I moved to Davie County it reminded me of where I was raised and more importantly where I wanted to raise my kids. I have an 11 year old daughter with complex medical and educational needs at Cooleemee Elementary and a 13 year old son at Ellis Middle school. Because of their educational experiences I have extensive knowledge in both the regular curriculum as well as the extended curriculums to include IEP's and the 504 plans. Supporting children with special needs and/or learning disabilities is a cause I am very passionate about at the district and state levels. I also have a vested interest in public education because, for my daughter Elliana, public schools are currently her only option.

With confidence, I can say that I am a fierce advocate for students and teachers. I believe every child is a gift, is capable, and when motivated and given the opportunity, can accomplish anything they dream. Each child's potential is different and, as adults, I believe it is our responsibility to inspire, challenge and encourage each child to find that potential. It is my opinion that public education should be rooted in academics, math, reading, science, history, and writing and not influenced by activism or political agendas.

I also adamantly believe that teachers' roles in public education are the number one driver for our students' academic success. I believe that teachers should be able to choose, from multiple resources, tools to empower kids of all levels. Teachers should be given the freedom to teach each student to their

individual potential, and teachers should be given the autonomy to hold students accountable both academically and behaviorally. They should be respected, they should be accountable for students' academic success and not students psychological, social emotional, behavioral, political and/or emotional outcomes. I believe support staff for teachers is imperative and they should have ample access to psychologists, behavioral specialists, TA's and counselors for their students, but teachers should not have to take on these primary roles in addition to being educators. I believe teachers have a true gift of leading our youth academically and can set our kids on a path to greatness when we empower them to do so.

This is why my number 1 priority will be advocating for both children and teachers in Davie County while striving to understand what is happening in education at the state level and how that has to be implemented and will impact our schools at the local level.

I believe a child's family is the core of a child's life, the school and community should be a support for the family. By supporting and helping to strengthen families we free up our teachers to be the educators God intended them to be. I believe parents, teachers, support staff and district personnel should be partners working together to advocate for our students while also feeling free to engage in open dialog without fear of retribution. I believe in transparency, and that open communication and constructive conversations are paramount to a successful school district.

I graduated from the University of North Dakota. My professional background includes: Charlotte Mecklenberg Police Officer, Senior District Manager for USA Today, Director for the YMCA of NWNC, Tyde Swim Coach, Teacher's Assistant at Mocksville Elementary, and a National Field Trainer/Area Manager for a leading biopharmaceutical company.

I have acted as a volunteer with Big Brother/Big Sister, the booster clubs at Shady Grove and Ellis Middle Schools, I have been an ambassador for Make a Wish of NWNC, I am on the NC Parent Advisory Counsel, and am the Davie County Liaison for the Carolina Teachers Alliance. I am part of the team that founded Empower Davie Youth in Davie County with a mission to inspire, motivate and empower our youth regardless of any obstacle standing in their way. I sincerely believe each child has the potential for greatness and with the right motivation and educational systems in place I believe we can see that greatness achieved!

I have always had a passion for helping children succeed and would be honored to work with the school board to advocate for and represent the students, teachers, and family's values in our community. Collaborating to make decisions based on facts, data, and firsthand knowledge about students' experiences and needs is essential. Having children in the elementary, middle, EC, and AIG programs, I've seen firsthand the needs of our students at all levels, and I would be honored to serve Davie County working together to continue the tradition of excellence in education Davie County is known for!

