

Personal Bio

Katrina Yvette Helm is a 25-year veteran teacher that has earned an undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia in 1995, and a master's degree from the same institution in Special Education and Educational Leadership. She then relocated to Maryland in 2016 where she decided to continue her studies to developing her reading skills. It was at Notre Dame of Maryland University where she earned a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Education (CASE Program) with an emphasis on reading to become a Reading Specialist. Ms. Helm later decided in 2020 that she wanted to obtain her doctorate. She was accepted to George Washington University on a full scholarship the first year, so she began her educational journey to obtain her doctorate in their Special Education and Human Development program. She looks to earn her EdD in Special Education and Human Development in 2024.

She is employed at Summit Hall Elementary School in Montgomery County Schools. She currently works as a Home School Model teacher for students with special education needs. As an advocate for all children, Ms. Helm specializes with working with students from marginalized backgrounds. Her teaching practice and global values are succinctly captured in her slogan, "All Students from All Walks of Life, one child at a time." This overarching ethic has been at the center of her work as a special educator to ensure that every child is afforded the education that they need. As a special educator in elementary settings for the past 17 years, Ms. Helm has leveraged her skills in authentic family-school partnership practices to meet children and their families where they are. Ms. Helm believes that meeting the individualized needs of children *and* their families is a critical step toward increasing equitable educational opportunities. As an educator and change agent, she connects the village around every child and family, linking them not only to school resources but also to the supports and services of other agencies. Ms. Helm is currently pursuing her doctoral degree in Special Education and Disability Studies at The George Washington University, with an anticipated graduation date in 2023. Her research interests focus on the links between culturally responsive teaching practices, neuroscience, and the systems change to promote learning and growth for all students.

Ms. Helm is a proud parent of a now 21-year-old daughter, [REDACTED], who attends college at Montgomery Community College and works for Fairfield Inn. She also, is a parent of a 15-year-old daughter, [REDACTED], who she recently adopted through the West Virginia Juvenile System. She believes that all children are a valuable entity of our ever-evolving world. As the adult, we each owe a part to the young generation to have influence in their future. Her love for children, education, and family is what drives her desire to be an effective part of the Maryland State Department of Education.

Katrina Y. Helm

Qualifications

- Fully credentialed educator in the state of West Virginia
- Master's degree in Special Education/ Educational Leadership/Advanced Education
- Years of experience working with government agencies in school improvement
- Certification in Administration (Administration I and II)
- 2 Years in Leadership Academy training (observed and worked with principals in schools)
- Advance Professional Certification (Maryland State Department of Education)

Education

Marshall University – Huntington, West Virginia
B.A. Criminal Justice (1995)
M.A. Special Education (B.E.D.) (1998)
Administration Certificate (2016)

Notre Dame of Maryland University (2019)
M.A. Advance Studies (Reading Specialist)
George Washington University (2023)
Special Education and Policy

Experience

Montgomery County Schools-Gaithersburg, Maryland
Summit Hall Elementary School,
Home School Model Special Education Teacher

August 2021 to present

Providing special education skills, strategies, and techniques to students in 4th grade who exhibit educational deficits in reading, writing, and mathematics. Providing small group instruction in reading and mathematics to special education students. Analyzing student data to determine appropriate needs and interventions for students. Providing case management for students in special education within the general education setting. Collaborating with parents, staff, and administration regarding services for family and students. Reviewing student data who are in need of interventions.

Montgomery County Schools- Silver Spring, Maryland
Fairland Elementary School,
Special Education Teacher- Emotionally Disturbed

August 2018 to August 2021

An integral part of the school's leadership team. Taught students in grades 4th and 5th all subject areas. Created lesson plans for diverse needs. Oversaw the daily needs of the classroom and Special Education Program. Prepared for weekly meetings with Special Education staff and alternate meetings with the 4th grade team. Focused on curriculum study to align with Common Core standards and student needs in general education setting. Co-taught with the 4th grade reading teacher. Collaborated on daily lessons and routines in the classroom. Provided daily classroom management with paraeducators.

Baltimore County Schools-Windsor Mill, Maryland
Windsor Mill Middle, Reading Special Education Teacher

August 2016 to August 2018

Taught middle school students that have difficulty with their reading skills the foundational skills of reading. Evaluated students' current skills and data to create effective goals to help the students move forward and gain the valuable knowledge in reading to help them become more successful in the 21st century. Created Student Learning Outcomes to aid in schoolwide goals and objectives of school improvement.

U.S. Attorney's Office-Charleston, West Virginia

August 2012 to February 2016

Handle with Care Facilitator

Played an instrumental role in helping the school develop trauma sensitive interventions for students exposed to trauma and violence; Presented to teachers/administrators about how to create trauma sensitive schools and the benefits to students.

Kanawha County Alternative School - Charleston, West Virginia February 2011 to June 2012 ***Special Education Specialist***

Oversaw special education program; Reviewed files and set up meetings for students to return to home school; Participated in Individual Education Plan meetings when needed; Established a rapport with students and discussed their plans; Coordinated with home schools to assure students' needs and deadlines were met; Supervised special education teachers to review student's work, Individual Education Plans, and assessed the students' strengths and weaknesses.

Kanawha County Schools – Charleston, West Virginia ***Special Education Teacher***

August 2007 to July 2016

Created daily lesson plans to meet the individual needs of each student; Used assessment data to plan curriculum and assess learning; Implement technology to correlate with class lessons; Counsel students on decision-making skills; Ensures education plan of each student is instituted accurately; Assisted the curriculum team with deciding appropriate curriculum for students; Professional Learning Community (PLC) Representative for Special Education; and Team Leader.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools – Charlotte, NC ***Special Education Teacher***

August 2004 to June 2006

Supervised daily lesson plans to meet the individual needs of the students; Implemented and created Individual Educational Plans and behavior plans to help the students become more successful; Communicated with families and other professionals regarding each student's progress; Incorporated daily social skill lessons within the classroom; and Completed quarterly and yearly assessments, as needed.

Professional Affiliations/ Leadership

Teaching Assistant- Master's level course: Special Education- George Washington University, Summer 2021

Professional Development Schools Coordinator (PDS) - Charleston, WV, (2010-2016)

Guest Lecturer - West Virginia State University, (March 2012)

Educational Consultant - Charleston, West Virginia, (August 2008)

-Center for Professional Development

-Disney

-State Department of Education

Teacher Spokesperson (2016) - Handle with Care- Trauma Intervention Program

Professional Trainer:

Trainer of trainer for Center for Professional Development in:

- Respect and Protect (State Department consultant)
- Safe and Supportive Schools (State Department consultant)
- Policy 4373 (State Department consultant)
- School Improvement Specialist (Center for Professional Development)

Personal Statement

It has been my privilege to serve as an educator for over a quarter of a century with other educators, stakeholders in education, and school districts. During my tenure, I have advocated for students, educators, and been the voice of reason when districts needed additional supports and services to meet the needs of their students.

This journey has been one that has developed me to be an effective special educator that I hold myself to be today. It has also pushed me to stay educated, always alert of the changes in laws and policies for special education, while staying abreast of the messages from our unions and the various departments of education. Serving on the State Board of Education will afford me the opportunity to preserve effective 21st century teaching practices. However, while in education, I have voiced my concerns for all students and educators. Hearing their frustrations and thoughts of leaving education brought me to a realization that being a member of the State Department of Education affords me to be the liaison between educators and the State Department.

It is my philosophy a different set of lenses is needed to grow and understand the expectations, dilemmas, and setbacks within education. As a member of the state board, I understand that as an educator, I must be open-minded to learn and grow in the position. Although I have knowledge of educational concerns, I understand the importance of knowing the other side. Therefore, I must be teachable. I also realize that I provide the lens of the educator, the expertise, and experiences.

My experience allows me to add an equitable lens to the board. Maryland consists of diverse communities and therefore diverse perspectives and needs should be analyzed. My contribution as a member of the board is to provide those perspectives. To be an active member of playing a part in policy implementation from the perspectives of marginalized communities and educators helps to make the process well-rounded.

As a current educator and EdD. candidate, it has enabled me to view the needs of teachers of teachers from various perspectives. I have consistently shown the ability to collaborate with teachers and administrators to create effective outcomes. Being an EdD. candidate, has exposed me to the latest research and findings.

I am humbled for the opportunity to be considered for the Maryland State Board of Education teacher elect position. I am confident through rich collaboration with State Board officials we will mitigate learning loss, expand resources for local school systems, while working within the monetary restraints of our state budget. It will be my honor to represent all teachers in the great state of Maryland.

Thanks for your consideration,

Katrina Y. Helm

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January 30, 2022

Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Mr. Choudhury:

I am pleased to recommend Ms. Katrina Helm for the position of Teacher Member of the Maryland State Board of Education. I have had the privilege to work with Ms. Helm professionally in a number of collaborative initiatives and she has proven herself as an innovative thinker, an ardent advocate for the students we serve, and someone who possesses extensive knowledge in multiple areas. One of her areas includes a thorough understanding of what defines a culturally responsive education. As a special education teacher, Ms. Helm seeks the most effective ways to create multiple entry points so students can enter a curriculum. By doing so, Ms. Helm creates a classroom environment conducive to all her students' success.

Ms. Helm listens with compassion and is open to alternate ideas. As an advocate for all students, she is a valuable well of knowledge. She is a warm demander and decisive. Ms. Helm's sense of humor can lighten the moment, especially in an awkward situation.

I recommend Katrina Helm for the Teacher Member of the Maryland State Board of Education. She will be an indispensable team member with her professionalism, creativity, and advocacy.

Sincerely,

Cianti Williams
Staff Development Teacher

[REDACTED]

January 29, 2022

RE: Katrina Helm

Dear Reviewer:

I am writing to recommend Ms. Katrina Helm to fill an educator's seat on the Maryland State Department of Education. I have known Ms. Helm for over two years. She came highly recommended when we were seeking tutoring support for my grandson who has special needs and needed assistance adjusting to middle school. Ms. Helm impressed us as a well-prepared educator, knowledgeable about the strategies to help students excel and skilled in working with a variety of students, especially those with special needs.

She supported my grandson for these past two years, beginning with a comprehensive assessment of his reading and mathematical performance levels. Subsequent to her assessment, she provided suggestions to us for supporting him at home and she developed a plan to tutor him with the goal of increasing his reading comprehension level. In addition to working on his skill level, she established a productive relationship with him. This has been important to his growth, as he avoids interaction with others. We have seen tremendous growth in his reading skills, and attribute it, in great part, to her work with him. For example, he left sixth grade with a reading comprehension level at grade three. She worked intensively with him over the summer of 2021 and when he returned to school in the fall, his testing indicated that he had moved ahead by one grade level. Her focus with him includes developing reading and study skills, but also broadening his social skills.

On a more general note, we have found Ms. Helm to be an outstanding professional educator, able to relate to the student, as well as the family. She is able to assess performance, plan intervention, implement educational strategies, and work with the family to determine how the student can be supported at home. In addition to her knowledge and skill for working with students, she is also aware of trends in education and policies impacting the lives of students. She is current on educational and community resources to support students, and she has a heart for her work. We greatly appreciate working with her and would love to see her representing educators on the Maryland State Department of Education. We are available to further discuss her qualifications and our recommendation.

Regards,



Virginia J Smith
Grateful Grandmother

SUMMIT HALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

101 West Deer Park Road

Gaithersburg, MD 20877

Tel: 301-284-4150 • Fax: 301-548-7543

Lisa Henry
Principal

Danika Wiggins
Assistant Principal

January 30, 2022

Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Mr. Choudhury:

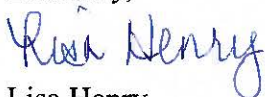
This letter of recommendation is for Ms. Katrina Helm for the position of Teacher Member of the Maryland State Board of Education. Ms. Helm is an effective and efficient educator, a special education teacher whom I have had the opportunity to work with, observe and evaluate this year. She possesses in-depth knowledge in the area of special education, inclusion, program development for students with disabilities, and effective instructional strategies that she uses in making decisions that are in the best interest of all children. These decisions reflect both Ms. Katrina Helm's personal philosophy as well as that of Montgomery County Public Schools – to lay the foundation for students to become independent, successful members of society.

Ms. Helm leads by being part of the process – leading by example and developing a spirit of cooperation among all participants. She is an outstanding team member who works with her team to develop solutions for students in all grade levels, not just the 4th grade students for whom she is the case manager. By contributing her expertise in the area of instructional best practices for students with disabilities, with teachers and staff, she strives to support a steady increase in teacher capacity and student academic proficiency. This combined with her ability to establish and maintain relationships with students and their families in our Title I school, lead to success for all.

Ms. Helm's passion and advocacy for all students is infectious. Her pleasing personality and calm demeanor enable her to work effectively with teachers, students, and parents. She is very organized and completes tasks efficiently. She seeks the necessary information and gives appropriate feedback to all parties. She is eager to learn and is always willing to accept new and different challenges. She sets high goals for herself and works diligently to achieve them. She thinks logically and solves many problems during her workday – always consulting teams to achieve the desired result. An individual of impeccable integrity, she makes decisions from a strong set of personal values and ethics.

I recommend Katrina Helm without reservation for the Teacher Member of the Maryland State Board of Education. She is an asset to Montgomery County Public Schools and will be an invaluable member of the team.

Sincerely,



Lisa Henry
Principal