



Danielle Smiley

A little bit about me!

My name is Danielle Smiley. I am a 35-year-old wife, and mother to 3 beautiful black boys. They are in Kindergarten, 2nd, and 4th grade. My sons are the reason that I became a teacher!

As a child I use to play teacher with my brother in my imaginary classroom. I loved mimicking my teachers' mannerisms, and especially loved reading to my imaginary class. My love of teaching first came from my mother who was an English teacher while I was growing up.

As I got older my passion changed and I went to school for Psychology with an emphasis on Applied behavioral Analysis. It wasn't until the Covid 19 pandemic that my love of teaching returned. As a mother I was forced to become a stay at home "teacher" when my kids were sent home to learn virtually. I enjoyed everything about it, I even set up their playroom as a classroom. During the pandemic I was able to get a firsthand experience of the education system. This helped me to really see the struggles that my children and many others were having in school and also the lack of a culturally relevant curriculum.

As fate would have it, I stumbled upon a Facebook post on the Black Mamas page from Nia Stanley about an opportunity to become a Resident Teacher with Propel Schools. At that moment I reached out to Nia and applied. The Resident teacher program changed my life! I have now been apart of Propel schools for 3 years and am currently a 4th grade ELA teacher. I absolutely love being a 4th grade ELA teacher. As a black educator, I am able to provide my black and brown students with something that I did not have growing up. Having a teacher that looks and sounds like them! I get to provide them with culturally relevant information and also get to let them explore parts of themselves they knew nothing about.