



# Leadership Center

## LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT



**Nick Stearns, Principal**  
Kathryn Newport Middle School  
Menifee Union School District

Nick Stearns presently assumes the role of the founding Principal at Kathryn Newport Middle School, situated within the Menifee Union School District. His appointment to this position occurred in December 2022, and his official commencement took place in February 2023. The school formally welcomed its inaugural cohort of 950 students on August 10, 2023. A pivotal aspect of this venture was the assembly of an exceptional team. Committees convened before the academic year's onset to establish the school's Guiding Principles, character education framework, and High School Readiness program. Collaborative efforts were also invested in determining the school's emblematic elements; including its colors, mascot, and logo - the Mustangs, championing the motto "Let's R.I.D.E.!" which stands for Respect, Integrity, Determination, and Empathy. It was paramount for Stearns to foster the engagement of all stakeholders in these processes, underscoring the collective ownership of the institution.

With a background as a former collegiate football player and high school coach, Nick Stearns emphasizes the significance of creating conducive environments for his staff, students, and families, enabling them to flourish and attain their aspirations. He states, "My role carries immense significance as I possess the opportunity to serve and empower students and staff, enabling them to realize their goals and aspirations."

Stearns' counsel for fellow leaders centers on the establishment of a robust support network. He attributes his achievements to the synergy of those around him. He recognizes in his own path how the connection to school and those around him were essential in his ability to graduate, and move into post-secondary opportunities. He underscores the importance of recognizing personal strengths and areas necessitating growth by having Kathryn Newport Middle School distinguish itself in providing a Career Technical Education pathway to their students in the areas of Health Services & Medical Technology, Arts, Media & Entertainment, and Dance.

One of the books profoundly shaping Stearns' leadership approach is [The Five Dysfunctions of a Team](#) by Patrick Lencioni. It was introduced to him by his former Principal Ernesto Lizarraga during his tenure at Bell Mountain Middle School as a special education teacher. The book fundamentally reshaped his outlook on how teams can collectively evolve to attain their objectives.

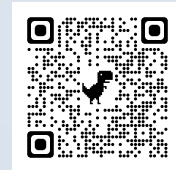
Nick Stearns' journey in education spans since 2007, encompassing roles such as Speech Language Pathologist, Specialized Academic Instructor, Assistant Principal, and Principal. He has contributed to the educational landscapes of Santa Rosa Academy, Hemet Unified School District, and Menifee Union School District throughout his various positions. The ongoing school year, 2023/24, marks his tenth year of administrative service.

Married to Denise, a 3rd grade educator at Lisa J. Mails Elementary School within the Murrieta Valley Unified School District, the couple has three children: Dominick (12), Noah (12), and Amelia (7). Alongside his commitment to the inauguration of Kathryn Newport Middle School, Stearns is currently enrolled in the School Business Management Certificate Program at the University of Southern California. During his leisure moments, he relishes road trips, quality time with his family, and indulging in the savory delights of Texas BBQ.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

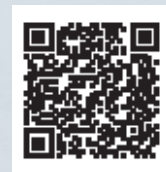
**Leadership Center -  
Open Office Hours**  
Last Wednesday of each month

SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW TO  
REGISTER TODAY



**Equity Conference**  
September 21-22, 2023

8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Renaissance Esmeralda, Indian Wells  
44400 Indian Wells Lane  
Indian Wells, CA 92210



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Office of Education  
Leadership Center is  
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