

Nelika-Fai Watson

Vice Principal



Nelika-Fai Watson joined The Preuss School UC San Diego as Vice Principal in 2020. She began her career in education as a middle school teacher in Baltimore County, Maryland after earning a Bachelor of Science degree in English and Secondary Education from Bowie State University. Watson later taught first grade in Washington, D.C. as well as serving as Academic Coordinator for a local non-profit organization.

In 2005, Watson joined Girl Scouts of Central Maryland where she developed and implemented programs and curricula and contributed to the nationwide implementation of The New Leadership Experience. She returned to a traditional teaching position in 2008 as a founding faculty member of a 6th-12th grade turnaround school in Baltimore City. There she and her colleagues were instrumental in restoring the relationship between the school and the community at large and elevating student achievement. Watson has served in many teacher-leader roles, including department chair, team lead, and mentor teacher. Appointed the Senior Coordinator for the inaugural graduating class, she was chosen as the First Annual Laureate Faculty Excellence Awardee in 2012.

After earning a master's degree in Leadership in Teaching from Notre Dame of Maryland University, Watson was selected as an Education Pioneers Fellow and subsequently served as Assistant Principal in Baltimore City and later as Director of School Strategy and Logistics in Washington, D.C.

Most recently, Watson was the Director of Independent Study for two public, K-12 charter schools in San Diego County. Her commitment to ensuring that students receive a quality education is unwavering. Watson holds equity at the center of her work and believes that providing learners with high quality options are integral to ensuring that all students receive the best education possible.