

October 2, 2023

To the Family of Mrs. Sarah Stevenson,

On behalf of all of Charlotte, I wanted to express our deep sorrow for the loss of Sarah. Her legacy in our city is profound, and her tireless work towards equality has made Charlotte a better place.

Sarah's story, from her roots in Heath Springs to her groundbreaking role as the first Black woman on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board, has been an inspiration to many, including me. There was never a time that she wasn't willing and available to offer sound advice to me and many others on any subject. Her involvement in the creation of the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Forum alone speaks volumes about her commitment to fostering dialogue and understanding in our community. It was her vision to create a sanctum for important conversations, especially for the African American community.

I've always been struck by Sarah's genuine care for the community, from advocating for better school uniforms to holding steadfast in her beliefs even when faced with criticism. Her resilience and hope were palpable.

The awards and honors she received throughout her life are numerous, and rightly so. Still, it's the day-to-day impact - the lives she touched, the conversations she fostered - that resonate the most. Her legacy will no doubt continue to inspire and guide our community for generations to come.

In these tough times, please know that the entire city stands with you. Sarah meant a lot to all of us, and we'll remember her fondly.

With warmth and condolences,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vi Lyles". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping underline for the name "Lyles".

Vi Alexander Lyles
Mayor