



May 13, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Peter Griffin. I have worked with Peter for the last seven years in Denver Public Schools. He is an outstanding educator and leader. His professional practice is distinct in several areas including his use of relationship development, his knowledge and application of cutting edge technology and instructional strategy, and his personal leadership.

Peter focuses his teaching on what's best for students. During countless conversations, meetings, and direct observation of his teaching and staff development, Peter consistently reminds his colleagues that decisions and professional practice must be guided by how they will support student learning. Pete's classroom practices manifest this belief in the way he smoothly adapts assignments for students with learning support needs as well as through the rapport he develops with his students. Pete knows that his students will be more engaged and more productive when he invests some time into getting to know them as individuals. This 'relationship credit' is important to his success in an inner city high school where his students can be highly mobile, emotionally volatile, and behaviorally unpredictable.

The link between the use of technology and strong instruction is always in the forefront of Pete's planning. He believes that students should develop solid learning skills, research skills, and communication skills using technology as a tool. He has a long-standing partnership with other academic departments to foster this connection between core academic development and the use of technology rather than creating projects that have limited academic depth. This insures rigor and relevance in his instruction. His classrooms and professional development are characterized by a variety of learning approaches. Some projects will require a mastery of skill, others ask students to work together in a collaborative process, and others will focus on communication and literacy, based heavily on writing and oral presentation. All of this is balanced with consistent and effective classroom management.

During the years I've known Peter, his personal leadership has impressed me. While Pete has clearly defined views about personal and systemic leadership, he has never been content to operate from a rigid, static professional belief system. He routinely reads current thoughts, models, and perspectives about leadership, system change, and professional learning communities and then takes the information to various teams with whom he works. He does not allow his professional practice to sway with the pendulum that often drives broad educational practices, but instead thoughtfully considers how the new information can support work with students.

I strongly recommend Peter Griffin for consideration of the position of assistant principal in your district. He will commit his boundless energy, educational talents, and unwavering dedication to your students and community. Please contact me at 720-423-4868 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Karen Ann Ellis
Director of Career and Technology Education (CTE) and the Arts
Denver Public Schools

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