

To Whom It May Concern:

I have had the wonderful privilege to be an educator under the leadership of Dr. Jerrod Wheeler for the past five years at Espy Elementary School in Nixa, Missouri. As an elementary teacher for the past twenty-one years, I can unequivocally say that Dr. Wheeler is the finest principal that I have ever had the opportunity to work with.

Dr. Wheeler has the unique ability to encourage students to strive to meet their academic potential, and this was very evident in one of the extraordinary events he orchestrated here at Espy. One example of this occurred prior to achievement testing when he organized a "Rock Star Day" to encourage the students to "Rock the Map". Students and faculty were asked to dress as rock stars, and Dr. Wheeler himself dressed up as a rock star complete with long blonde wig. He even planned a musical concert with a local band to "pump up" the students in an assembly. Dr. Wheeler goes above and beyond to put his students first, and his determination shows with Espy Elementary leading the school district with first place Missouri Assessment Program scores in fourth grade, and first grade Stanford 10 achievement scores.

Another example of his leadership shows in the fact that our school has led the Nixa School District in attendance for the past five years. To encourage great attendance, Dr. Wheeler planned and executed quarterly perfect attendance parties at school with theme's such as "Disco Fever", "A 50's Sock Hop", "Beach Blanket Party", and "Wild West Party". Children were so very excited to attend these fun events, and had it not been for Dr. Wheeler's insight and influence, these events would not have occurred.

This school year of 2009, Dr. Wheeler has helped Espy Elementary earn the prestigious Missouri Gold Star School Award. Through his persistence and leadership, he has illustrated to the Missouri Department of Education, all the positive attributes that our school possesses, and Espy was one of only fifteen schools statewide that earned this outstanding award. Our school in particular, was chosen for our strong academic results. These results do not occur overnight, but, with the encouragement, positive reinforcement, and genuine caring nature of a leader like Dr. Wheeler.

It is with certainty that Dr. Wheeler's portfolio of reference letters are quite extensive... however, it has been my goal to illustrate the human and caring side of this wonderful principal. Yes, all the positive adjectives, that many letters of this kind contain would suffice, but those words would pale in comparison to truly illustrate the compassion, motivation to succeed, ability to provide a wonderful working environment for teachers, and consistent outstanding student achievement, that Dr. Wheeler strives for.

For the above-mentioned reasons, it is without reservation, that I recommend Dr. Wheeler as a caring, compassionate, and academically successful principal. Unfortunately, this will be Espy Elementary's loss of a great leader, but another school's opportunity to experience the wonderful expertise of this outstanding educator.

Sincerely yours
Becky Forrester
First Grade Teacher