

March 23, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Steven Bliss. I have had the privilege of working with Steve for the past five years in my capacity as a Dover School Committee member. During my tenure, Steve served as the Assistant Superintendent for three years before stepping into the shoes of the retiring Superintendent of Schools two years ago, having received the unanimous support of all three school committees. I personally felt a tremendous loss accepting Steve's recent resignation from this position. Steve has my complete respect and admiration for his exceptional interpersonal skills, professionalism and leadership qualities. He leaves our school district in an appreciably better position than when he started, leaving behind a strong management team and improved processes across the school district.

It is my opinion that Steve's management of all functions of the Superintendent was commendable. Duties included oversight of instructional leadership in our schools, facilities management, fiscal management including budget establishment and financial accountability based on established goals and available resources, human resource management of three hundred employees, and legal, ethical and policy compliance. He performed these duties with an acute attention to detail and deadlines, and a precise communication of progress towards goals and expectations throughout the year.

Beyond my high regard for his management of daily operations, Steve exhibits many important leadership qualities. Steve builds trust and engages partnerships both on campus, with his administrative team, with educators, with students and with parents, as well as off campus, with town officials and with the community at large. He accomplishes this with outstanding interpersonal skills, a convention for clear and timely communication and a management style "by walking around". Dover-Sherborn students know their Superintendent. He is on their campus, in their classrooms and on the field sidelines. He sets high expectations for his team and for himself and he is committed to continuous improvement. These qualities transcend the administrative functions and influence innovative instruction, meaningful educator evaluation and high student learning outcomes. Steve appropriately challenges the status quo in his pursuit of continuous improvement which he couples with a high sense of urgency for change that has led to his oversight of several strategic process revisions within our school district, including the tri-annual educator union contract negotiation in his first year as superintendent, a complete overhaul of all non-union annual contracts, a revision of the educator evaluation process aligned with new state mandated benchmarks, a reorganization of special education delivery and a student emotional wellness campaign that in my opinion may be the greatest legacy he leaves behind at our school district.

Without reservation, I highly recommend Steven Bliss for a management or executive position in any organization. I would be happy to speak to you personally should you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this letter in more detail.

Sincerely,
Lauren Doherty