

Redwood High School

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June 15th of 2018

RE: Letter of Recommendation

To Whom It May Concern:

It is a distinct honor and pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Mr. Matthew McHan. I served as the principal of the Redwood High School for the past five years and I directly supervised Matt this past year as he served as our founding Digital Entertainment Arts program teacher for the '17- '18SY. Redwood High School (RHS) serves as Sequoia Union High School District's alternative high school. During his tenure, Matt served as a fine art and digital arts teacher, technology site lead, and member of the Equity Leadership Team.

I confidently write this letter on his behalf witnessing his effective instructional practices with the districts most challenging students and witnessing his initiative, can do attitude, and overall teacher leadership qualities. Mr. McHan was highly effective building strong rapport, interpersonal relationships and offering a rigorous digital and fine art program. Outside of the classroom he sought ways to expand his impact on students by growing his leadership abilities and opportunities.

As an educator, Mr. McHan is passionate and has an equity mindset approach to education broadly. As a classroom teacher he employs an asset minded approach with students, he is culturally sustaining in pedagogy and curriculum, was highly professional and dependable and was a fierce advocate for our high need student population. Redwood High School students decide to come to our school because they need a different educational setting to earn their credits and ultimately their high school diploma. Students face a myriad academic, social-emotional, economic and behavioral challenge. Instead of deterring him, Matt thrived and readily welcomed these challenges to meet the needs of all students. He was a very reflective practitioner, always aiming to constantly improve his practices. Given the challenging nature of our school, this only reaffirms his commitment and desire to serve all students. He quickly gained the trust and respect of students both important in terms of classroom management, but also and more importantly in effectively delivering instruction and positively impacting student learning outcomes. His classroom instructional practices are a strength as his students created amazing artwork via his scaffolded and differentiated approaches. Regularly, I was amazed with his ability to get students to excel that struggled in other classes. He has an uncanny way with validating students and their experiences. He does it in a way that challenges students to grow their sense of self, voice and efficacy.

Mr. McHan did an exemplary job in his first full year of teaching given the student population, enduring temporary facilities, and completing the design and building of a state of the art Digital Entertainment Arts classroom and CTE pathway. He also served on the Equity Leadership Team, which was the instructional and decision leadership group for the school that planned and facilitated staff meetings to be meaningful and engaging along with developing initiatives for the school. Given all of this, even as a first year teacher, he

quickly earned the respect from his colleagues, in most cases senior colleagues. He held his own and actively engaged with all staff during meetings, one-on-one with other staff to learn and grow his own practice, and he readily accepted district level responsibilities on committees. He was a great collaborator as evidenced by his development and co-facilitation of professional development for the staff when our school faced school wide student discipline challenges. He worked with a colleague to develop responsive protocols and practices to address these student challenges. Finally he served as the school technology lead representing RHS in district meetings and provided support to teachers when technology challenges came up. He also helped redesign and maintain the school's website to reflect the students we served.

In summation, Mr. Matthew McHan is a caring, committed, passionate, effective, equity and social justice minded educational practitioner and leader. His deep held belief in the power of education to transform lives irrespective of the challenges students face was clear in all of his interactions with students, colleagues and parents. He believes in students and he demonstrated that each and every time he stepped onto our campus. He was an invaluable member of our school community and his leadership in and out of the classroom was instrumental in the transition to our brand new state of the art facilities.

I share my highest recommendation on Matt's behalf in the pursuit of any educational position. In hiring him you will bring on board a deeply engaging, charismatic, hard working, inspirational educator to serve students, staff and parents well. He will surely be a strong asset to the district he serves. Please do not hesitate to reach me for more details.

In Community Spirit,

MA Rodríguez

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