

To Whom It May Concern,

As a member of the Douglas County School Board, I had the opportunity to observe Keith Lewis as a middle school principal, director of human resources, and superintendent. Keith was a star performer and outperformed expectations in each position.

While I could write a thesis on Keith's qualifications and characteristics, I would like to focus this letter of recommendation on three areas: work ethic; understanding of labor relations and contract negotiations; and ability to recruit, identify, and hire top talent.

Work Ethic

Keith was hired by our board in May of 2020, an unprecedented and pivotal moment in the world and public education as the pandemic had shut down schools and businesses a couple months earlier. For even the most seasoned superintendents, these were hugely challenging times. The location of my home requires that I drive by the district office for most errands that I need to run in town. Without exaggeration, if I drove by the district office any time between 8 PM and midnight, I would see Keith's car in the parking light and the light on in the superintendent's office for more than 50% of the time. In fact, when I served as board president, I stopped at the office late at night and encouraged him to go home. Keith's work ethic, preparation, and professionalism is second to none. Keith will be the first person to tell you that he does not know everything about education, but he can always find the answer to a question or a solution to a problem if he does not already know it. When you hire Keith, you hire someone who will get the job done, period.

Understanding of Labor Relations and Contract Negotiations

Keith took over as human resources director after several years of not-great relations between bargaining units and the district. Keith dove into this job and challenge as he did everything else and educated himself seemingly overnight. Within a year we were completing negotiations with bargaining units quickly and efficiently and the relationship with the leadership of associations was better than it had been in years.

Furthermore, Keith's understanding of policies, procedures, and labor laws kept our district out of legal problems. Whenever there was a formal complaint or due process hearing against the district, we were well-prepared. The right records had been kept, the correct procedures and laws had been followed. Keith's attention to detail to make sure all our i's were dotted and t's were crossed kept us out of trouble multiple times.

Ability to Recruit, Identify, and Hire Top Talent

As a middle school principal, HR director, and superintendent, Keith had an amazing ability to find the needles in the haystack of talent. As I mentioned in the last section, our district was always well prepared in due process hearings and legal actions. However, this was not always

the case. Before Keith became a district level administrator, our district had an issue with not correctly documenting issues with special education students and their unique needs and requirements and we paid out a fair amount of money in settlements. Keith set about fixing this issue and assisted in hiring a new cabinet member to fix this issue, which reduced the district's settlement amounts by around 50%.

Keith consistently found great cabinet members and principals both from within and outside our district. His employees, whether direct reports or further down the chain, almost universally love and respect him. One of his cabinet members told me that he would run through a wall for Keith.

In conclusion, I highly recommend Keith Lewis for the role of human resources consultant. Perhaps, you are wondering if you want to be the guinea pig for Keith's new business, or if you should go with a more established firm. To be frank, if you have the opportunity to have Keith work for you, you would be foolish to look elsewhere. When hiring Keith, you will get somebody who will over-deliver and outperform your expectations.

If you would like to discuss Keith any further, I invite you to call me on my cell phone: 775-315-5154.

Sincerely,

Robbe Lehmann