

Cynthia B. McPherson

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a department chairperson at Belleville High School, I had the pleasure of working with Kevin Kelly for a number of years. During that time I found him to be intelligent, hard-working, personable, a great problem solver and someone who was extremely dedicated to his work. I was impressed by the fact that he was always willing to take on new responsibilities and how seemingly effortlessly he carried them out.

When he started as a teacher in our social studies department, he soon became known as a colleague who challenged his students and had high expectations of them. His creativity was extraordinary and before long, students were clamoring to be enrolled in one of Mr. Kelly's classes. He quickly became one of the most beloved teachers on our staff. More than once, he organized successful student trips to London and was involved in student council and class sponsorships.

An example of his creativity and motivational skills was shown when he organized a school-wide Jeopardy tournament. I recall that when Kevin told the staff what he planned to do, some of the more seasoned teachers were reluctant to participate. This had never been done at our school. Despite the skepticism, he was able to convince the staff that it was a worthwhile project. We all agreed to help out by making up questions based on the subjects we taught. Kevin then worked his magic by orchestrating the promotion of the tourney. Students made signs for the hallways and wrote catchy commercials which ran during the morning announcements. Before we knew it, students were really getting excited about the tournament. When all but the last two classes were eliminated, Kevin arranged to have the final round broadcast throughout the school during the last hour of the day. The frenzy and enthusiasm of the students was a joy to experience. At the time I had been teaching at that school for many years and had never seen students get so excited about something other than athletic contests. They were excited about academics! It was as if we were vying for the state championship in football! It was obvious to all of us that the person responsible for that excitement was Kevin Kelly.

Kevin also was an assistant principal during my last 2 years at Belleville. His leadership style was extraordinary. He seemed to instinctively know where problems would occur and he immediately would start to solve them. He had a knack for diffusing potentially volatile situations with his humor. He always acknowledged and gave credit to hard workers when he addressed an audience, be it at staff meetings or in the presence of parents and community members.

I have very fond memories of the time I worked with Kevin. I always knew he would be successful at whatever he chose to undertake. He is a born leader and I'm certain he would be a tremendous asset to your organization.

Very truly yours,

Cynthia McPherson
Retired teacher

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