

Williston Public School District #1

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To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Williston Public School District #1, I highly recommend the work of Wayne Callender and Partners for Learning. Because of our partnership with Mr. Callender and his associates our district has made growth at all levels, from kindergarten through grade 12. Three years ago, our district was at a standstill. No schools in the district had made AYP. Three schools and the district were in program improvement. Our teachers were working hard to provide interventions to an ever growing number of students who were identified for services. Our referral rate for special education was growing out of control and our retention level at the kindergarten grade level was approximately 12%. Additionally, with our rapidly growing population, we were enrolling students from 38 states and 20 foreign countries, all of whom were at varying levels of academic achievement. Our ELL population rose from one student to over 175. As a district, we knew we needed help, that we had tapped out our local expertise. We also knew that with five elementary schools, one middle, one high and an alternative school that we needed to have consistency across the schools and smooth transitions and services for students at all levels. Our district reading coach had attended a conference at which Wayne Callender was the presenter and she was very excited to share his work and to begin implementation of the Pathway Plan. Once we began to move in that direction, we felt that in order to make systemic change to increase student achievement we needed Wayne to assist us.

We have developed K-12 Pathway Plans in both reading/language arts and math. We have purchased SBR intervention programs and core curriculum and provided ongoing professional development to assist staff in implementation of the programs with fidelity. As a result, our student achievement levels have increased, in some areas significantly. Our referral rate for special education and for grade retention have dropped to about 1%.

Under Wayne's guidance, our district has developed non-negotiables for all staff which include: active engagement, bell to bell instruction and use of district curriculum with fidelity. Through Instructional Rounds, administrators and staff monitor the non-negotiables and provide individualized professional development.

The vision of Williston Public School District #1 is to welcome and celebrate the individuality of students, staff, parents and community.

We educate with passion in a safe and respectful environment.

We strive to educate with the highest level of technology.

We pledge to prepare children to graduate and achieve personal success.

Our district has been recognized by the state for our efforts with students at the Middle and Elementary School levels and we will be presenting our district's growth model and pathway plan at the North Dakota State RTI conference in June, 2015. Additionally, other schools have asked to observe in our district.

Partners for Learning has helped move our District to a higher level of professional development and student achievement. We would not be where we are today without the guidance and professional development from Partners for Learning.

Sincerely,



Dr. Viola LaFontaine
Superintendent