

December 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter of reference is in support of Mr. James Walker, currently Navigator in the Office of College and Career Readiness. I have worked with Mr. Walker for almost three years as a leadership coach and on-call principal, and have had multiple opportunities to observe him with students, staff and greater community. When I think of Mr. Walker in a professional context, three strengths come to mind: Arranger, Adaptor and Relator (three of his top 5 strengths from the Clifton StrengthsFinder 2.0 assessment).

**Arranger**

Mr. Walker has been assigned various duties and tasks in his multiple years with St. Paul Public Schools, including teaching assistant, classroom teacher, site coordinator for extended learning, cultural specialist, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports coach (PBIS), administrative intern, and his current role. The success of supporting students and staff in all of these positions requires a strong ability to organize and execute; yet always needing to utilize flexibility and agility when needed. I have observed Mr. Walker being able to carry out assigned work and get productive results with challenging and/or struggling students as well as teaming with teachers and staff to meet classroom and school objectives and goals.

**Adaptor**

Mr. Walker's work has been heavily with students and families of poverty and/or trauma, so going with the flow is an everyday reality. Adaptability is a huge element of being successful with his clientele, yet having a strong vision of what the future can hold as well as the short and long term goals to accomplish success, is always part of his delivery of services. I have observed him with students and staff in turning around negative to positive attitudes and next steps with grace.

**Relator**

Mr. Walker is highly able to build relationships with students, families, staff and greater community. He has been a mentor to a variety of people in different settings, and his work in schools has been successful due to this strength being operative. I have observed him working with troubled youth and supporting teachers and staff with true empathy and results oriented behaviors.

Mr. Walker's expertise and educational background have given him a unique set of tools that are suitable for a variety of positions including administrative positions such as assistant principal, coordinator, and/or director, depending on the venue being pursued. Mr. Walker has much to offer formally and experientially.

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