

Davis Joint Unified School District
Holmes Junior High School
1220 Drexel Drive, Davis CA 95616 530-757-5445 X106

Mike Dufresne, Vice Principal



May 8, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my extreme pleasure to recommend Leigh Choate for a position of Vice-Principal at Emerson Junior High School. I have been fortunate to know and work with Leigh over the past several years here at Holmes Junior High in her role as a Physical Education teacher and most recently as the Holmes Junior High Athletic Director. Leigh takes great pride in her work, and goes beyond what is expected in her lesson planning and teaching. She has earned the respect of the staff and truly understands the unique challenges that junior high students face. She is well liked by her students and they often report that Mrs. Choate really gets to know them and supports their development and personal growth.

During the past two years, Leigh has taken on the additional duties as our athletic director here at Holmes along with serving the same role at Harper Junior High. It is through the new position that Leigh's leadership and organizational skills have really been showcased. Leigh is a "big picture" and backwards planning individual as she can look at the myriad, different details that must be accomplished and create a seamless and efficient athletic program. She has been able to look at the existing system and make many bold changes that have served to streamline and simplify many policies and procedures. Some of the changes included creating a more systematic and uniform policies at all three junior highs in town and hosting a beginning of the year parent meeting to solicit support and explain expectations of student athletes. Insisting that students connect with their teachers during their often-short seasons to make sure, they are performing in the classroom as well as the athletic venues. Providing close supervision and oversight of the coaches and adults that have student contact and if necessary disciplining or removing those that do not meet standards. Finally, managing and organizing numerous schedules, ensuring coaches are hired replacing worn out equipment and supplies and leading fundraising efforts to support the program across the district.

Along with being a strong teacher, Leigh has expressed interest in using her administrative credential to serve the Davis Joint Unified School District's Administrative Leadership Team as an on-call administrative substitute. In this new role, she has had the opportunity to serve at Holmes Junior High on several occasions and other secondary schools throughout the district. On the occasions, I have had Leigh cover for me while I was out I quickly and pleasantly discovered that she was able to handle both small and large behavioral issues along with assisting staff and supervising students and left detailed notes about issues that may need further investigation or follow-up. Most recently, I have worked with Leigh in her new role as a long-term vice principal at both Davis Senior High School and her current position as interim vice-principal at Emerson Junior High School. The reason Leigh has been asked to fill in for other administrators in our district as they have agreed to move to other sites to fill sudden vacancies is because her hard work, dedication and above and beyond approach to the job. Leigh has demonstrated an innate ability to seek out potential problems and work to solve these problems many times without guidance or supervision. Her organizational skills and attention to detail is a tremendous asset to any site and has been noticed in her current assignment at the Emerson campus. Her willingness to move to three different sites this year alone demonstrates her willingness to remain flexible, mission focused and dedicated to serve the needs of our district. Leigh is the real deal, and she will continue to work hard to serve the students, families and staff of Emerson Junior High.

Feel free to contact me to discuss Leigh's qualifications and strength of character. Leigh is a collaborative hard worker and is passionate about education and educational leadership. Any school community would be fortunate to have Leigh Choate as a member of their staff.

Michael Dufresne

Michael Dufresne

Vice Principal, Holmes Junior High School