

2021

LEOPARD YEARBOOK

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LOVEJOY HIGH SCHOOL

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March 19, 2021

RE: Letter of Recommendation for Kara Adler

To whom it may concern,

When Kara Adler was hired by Lovejoy ISD to work at Lovejoy High School, she was told her job would entail advising the online newspaper, the broadcast program, teach journalism and intro to broadcast courses. No one mentioned the pile of responsibilities waiting for her once she was handed her keys and shown to her classroom.

Being a one-high-school town, our district looks for ways to do more with less since there aren't many employees at the administration building. And while most new teachers get to ease into their lesson plans and wrap their minds around how to handle grades, Kara had to take that on and then some.

After meeting the district athletic director, Kara was told she was now the person in charge of the digital scoreboard recently installed at the football stadium. And while many think this job is controlled by computers who do the work, the humans behind the computers have to pour hours into their work in order to build a quality fan experience. Kara was the mastermind behind all of this. And while she is familiar with all the tools and trained on the software, she had to jump in and get comfortable being uncomfortable. She had to notify our principal that she was asked to do these extra projects from the district level without him knowing they were coming. She had to work with community stakeholders who paid for content to air on the scoreboard during games and still found time for lesson plans. She had to mediate between booster club parents who expect perfection and the district that wasn't willing to pay for it. She had to negotiate and self-advocate for her and her students, and create a job description for this added responsibility that really turned into a full-time job within itself. And she did all this while creating a realistic workload for her students, which fostered long-term relationships with all the stakeholders involved in the success of this new medium.

As Kara's mentor, I worked with her to process all of this. I watched this haphazard idea of getting the qualified person already on the payroll to add this to their already-long list of responsibilities. I watched as this responsibility grew into attending multiple seasons of nightly games for multiple sports. All along, Kara impressed me as she worked to accommodate all parties. She persevered when her job grew to another digital scoreboard installed in our gymnasium, where her responsibilities increased to attending even more game nights and pep rallies to direct the visual production. Kara had to still advise – the real reason the broadcast program exists – and work with the team to air six shows a year. She also advised the online newspaper that pushes out 3-4 stories daily, coached our UIL journalism team in the spring for their competitions....oh, and she taught classes too.

To watch Kara flourish in the middle of all this, she has continued to amaze me. She started teaching the year the pandemic shut the nation down. Her second year was in the midst of teaching in dual environments simultaneously, some face-to-face and some virtual. And not once have I ever seen her wain. If there is one who is a consummate professional of teaching and advising student media, it is Kara Adler. Not only does Kara have the rapport of students, you can tell she absolutely loves learning and wants to impart that on others. She wants each student's voice to be heard and feel they are seen. She has an eye for curriculum and knows how to tailor it for what works best for her students. If a student is not performing, she drills down to why. She doesn't give up on them and she is not afraid to work with parents.

There have been many times I wanted to intervene for her to get this scoreboard duty written out of her job description. Kara was persistent and wanted what was best for the district. Ultimately, she wants what is best for kids. She is a lifelong learner who will continue to grow as education evolves. She does not settle for mediocre, her students and the publications under her tutelage have received state and national awards. When she started her job, she took over a dying broadcast program that had eight students, who were also helping with the scoreboard duties by default. She grew that to 16 students this year and next year the projected enrollment size has doubled again. It is Kara's influence on the culture that has grown the student media program.

And Kara's qualifications don't stop there. While she currently teaches and advises journalism, she is also qualified to teach English, technology courses, and ELL students. She has thought ahead on her certifications to be versatile depending on where she lands. Kara Adler is a career teacher and she will be an asset to your district.

Thank you for your consideration,



Rebecca Pollard, MJE

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