

**ATHOL-ROYALSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**OFFICE OF PUPIL SERVICES**

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<http://www.arrsd.org/Special_Education.html>

June 5, 2020

Dear Search Committee:

Please accept this letter of recommendation for Kelly Mertens. In my role as Pupil Services Director in Athol/Royalston, Kelly was highly recommended to me by trusted colleagues and so we hired her as an outside consultant to provide professional development to all of our special education teachers. Kelly’s first session, “Disabilities and Their Implications on Learning in the Classroom”, was so successful we asked Kelly back for two more sessions. Kelly returned to provide professional development to extend the discussion on disabilities and classroom implications to include practical strategies and resources to help our teachers provide high quality instruction designed to meet the needs of all learners. On her third visit to Athol, Kelly provided a comprehensive, interactive presentation on Executive Functioning. All of Kelly’s presentations were met with high praise from our special education teachers. Feedback included “...bring Kelly back for every PD day”, “by far the most meaningful PD I’ve had in my twenty years”, “thankful for the resources and strategies I received”.

Kelly was exceptionally easy to work with. She is very collaborative and communicative and we never had to worry about follow through or the quality, accuracy or relevance of the information Kelly shared with our staff. Kelly’s presentations were funny, engaging and moved at a pace that kept all participants very actively engaged. Kelly provided concrete examples and visuals to break down complex concepts and gave the teachers time during the sessions to work with each other to talk through concepts and explore materials. As is the hallmark of any great professional development, Kelly’s presentations were immediately useful to the teachers; they often expressed they were able to employ the strategies in their classes without delay. Kelly shared her resources and presentations with us freely, which gave us the opportunity to easily refresh concepts learned as the year went on. Finally, Kelly built her presentations based on the tenets of Universal Design, and often made that connection for the teachers, in essence practicing what she “preached”.

As part of her work with us, Kelly offered 1:1 or small group consultation on the mornings of our professional development days. She was sought out by the teachers and often very busy on those mornings. Kelly was able to provide concrete, relevant strategies in the moment that teachers found supportive and actionable.

In the short time I have worked with Kelly, she left a strong, positive impression. She is very professional, knowledgeable and reliable. I highly recommend Kelly to you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at: 603-944-6566.

Sincerely,

Kate Clark

Kathryn Clark