



WEST BLOOMFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
NATIONAL EXEMPLARY SCHOOLS

## WEST BLOOMFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL

3380 Orchard Lake Road

West Bloomfield, MI 48324

Main Office 248.865.3670

November 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter as a recommendation for Mr. Anthony Grupido. Our school, previously Abbott Middle School and now West Bloomfield Middle School, has benefited from a grant from the Greater West Bloomfield Community Coalition (GWBCC), which enabled our students to participate in yearly sessions with Anthony, *The Mental Health Magician*.

In years passed, he came to our school and we had every 6th grade student participate in his live, face-to-face presentation. Given the pandemic, and our move to a temporary remote learning setting, we asked if Anthony could pivot to virtual, as we continue to believe that the topics he covers and the messages he has for our students are important and necessary. Anthony graciously accepted our offer and recently we held a live zoom for every sixth grader to attend. We started with over 150 students logged in to watch and when he ended about 45 minutes, later the students were still viewing and engaged.

Anthony kept their attention with magic acts, a video of his big trick, and incorporating student volunteers remotely. Any person who has tried to teach 150 sixth graders at once knows it is tricky and I don't have to tell you how that is compounded in a zoom/remote setting. The feedback was positive. We received two insights from parents who viewed the session and Anthony was very receptive to hearing and planning to act on those recommendations for the future. Most importantly, after the session, we captured the chat (in which Anthony answered questions). Using the chat, we were able to address, with the assistance of our counselors, ten students who needed additional help and assistance. This is very similar to the number of follow up students we have after his previously face-to-face sessions as well.

Both personally and professionally, I have enjoyed the sessions I had the opportunity to see over the last few years. I have appreciated his willingness to take a chance with the zoom/remote setting and his engagement with our students remains constant. I recommend the experience either remotely or in person for middle school students. The only change I may make if we are remote next fall is to ask him to hold the event in the evening, so parents can attend. Students who missed the session watched the recording of the zoom with their parents and I received positive feedback from those families. Additionally, having parents engage in the process may open up lines of communication at school and at home regarding making good, healthy decisions.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your consideration.

*Lisa A Graff*

Lisa A. Graff, EdS  
Associate Principal  
West Bloomfield Middle School