



SAULT STE. MARIE AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dr. Timothy D. Hall, Superintendent

December 9, 2014

Melanie Dunbar
HOPE Animal Assisted Crisis Response
1292 High Street, # 182
Eugene, OR 97401

Dear Ms. Dunbar:

I am writing to you today to express our deep appreciation for the support provided by our local HOPE team. We have called upon Nick and Julia Meier, along with Jett and Katie Lynn, to assist us twice already this year, and we are thankful for their quick response and their genuine concern for the well-being of our students and staff.

I will spare you the tragic details, but in the fall one of our Middle School students was killed in a hunting accident while traveling with her father. Last week, one of our High School students took his own life behind the high school. Needless to say, these two incidents caused significant emotional distress for our community, and in particular, our students.

Sadly, our district has experienced enough tragedies over the years to have developed a very good crisis response team and program. Counselors, teachers, administrators, other staff, and community members all contribute to the effort to provide support to our students. I as the Superintendent of Schools am able to observe these caring adults do whatever they can to help our students. One of the things that impress me most about Nick, Julia, Jett, and Katie Lynn is the way in which they "support the supporters." Yes, we ask them to come to our school and support the students (and they do nothing less than a phenomenal job), but when they are in our buildings, I always note how they support our adults as well. Their quiet, unassuming, calm, and approachable demeanor makes them the ideal therapy for students and adults alike.

The HOPE program provides valuable support when our district is in crisis. Nick, Julia, Jett, and Katie Lynn are wonderful representatives of the program and we cannot thank them enough for the support they provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Hall", written over a white background.

Dr. Timothy D. Hall
Superintendent