



Superintendent of the Year Selection Committee:

It is with pleasure that I, on behalf of the PCS Board of Education, write this letter of recommendation in support of **our** Superintendent, Dr. Rodney Peterson, to be selected and recognized as “Superintendent of the Year” for the 2022 - 2023 Craig Phillips NC Superintendent of the Year.

Dr. Peterson is currently in his fifth year (2017-2022) as Superintendent of Person County Schools. At the beginning of his tenure, he met with all stakeholders to gain student, staff, community, business, and industry input to assist in the development of our 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. The plan was reviewed and revised annually and provided a clear direction for the district with well-defined goals in four focus areas.

As a result of these goals, our graduation rate has increased from 76% to 80% and English II scores have increased. Additionally, 100% of the district's elementary school teachers have exceeded growth expectations in reading and 90% of reading and English Language Arts teachers in grades 3 - 8 have met or exceeded growth. PCS has a 6-14 Workforce Development Plan with 14 different pathways for students and continues to lead the state in the percentage of CTE Credentials earned. These pathways have resulted in partnerships with several local businesses to provide internships and employment for students.

All students in Grades 8 - 12 have an active plan of study developed by the student, parent, and guidance counselor. All of our schools have developed MTSS Teams to provide targeted support and interventions to struggling students. Additionally, we have implemented AVID at Northern Middle School to assist staff in closing opportunity gaps and to improve college and career readiness. We are proud of the opportunities and outreach that this program provides for our students.

Under his leadership, PCS has implemented a partnership with North Carolina Central University to “grow our own.” As a result, our first cohort of teacher assistants will graduate this spring and transition to teachers in the fall. Additionally, we partner with the Central Carolina Teaching Initiative to provide a licensure pathway for educators who come to PCS without a teaching degree. This year the third cohort will become highly qualified educators.

Dr. Peterson utilized Federal COVID Relief Funds to maintain safe and healthy school environments and accelerate students' learning during the worst of the pandemic. He was instrumental in developing and implementing programs for students that expand on opportunities not often found in small rural systems.

These include: Dual Language Programs at two elementary schools, the PCS Virtual Academy large enough to have a school number, a principal, and students in grades K - 12, and most recently, a partnership with UNC-Chapel Hill to open Carolina Community Academy, at North Elementary School, in the fall of 2022. The academy will operate as a "school within a school" and will serve students in Grades K -2 and will be able to provide wraparound services to support students academically, socially, and emotionally.

Dr. Peterson remains active in our community and works to engage all stakeholders in the success of our students and the school district as a whole. PCS recently held Kitchen Table Talks to assist in the development of the PCS 2022 - 2026 Strategic Plan. The areas of focus will include, but are not limited to: Social and Emotional Learning, developing our Portrait of a Graduate so that PCS can ensure that students graduate from high school prepared for the world around them, and in continuing to increase our graduation rate.

Dr. Peterson continues to develop partnerships with leaders in the community. These partnerships have resulted in more involvement of stakeholders and increased opportunities for our students. He serves on the Economic Development Commission and Person County Recreation, Arts, and Parks Advisory Board. He is a member of Theresa Baptist Church where he attends with his wife and four children. He is also a Board member for CCRESA and NCASCD.

For the accomplishments above and so many others, I am pleased to nominate Dr. Rodney Peterson for consideration to be recognized as the 2022-2023 Craig Phillips Superintendent of the Year.

Sincerely,



Freda Tillman  
Chair, Person County Board of Education