

28 October 2011

A Department of
the City of Salina

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Dear Reader:

I am writing in support of teaching artist Joseph Vincelli.

I have known Joseph since we booked him as a roving flute player for our arts-based Smoky Hill River Festival, three years ago.

Since that time, we have subsequently booked his full band for Festival performances twice, and have hired him as a residency/teaching artist for the past two years. This fall, we involved his entire band in a three day residency, culminating in a concert with our middle school and high school jazz bands, playing with or alongside professional musicians. During that time, Joseph and his band made contact with nearly a thousand students, and over 250 adults from throughout Saline County.

Joseph is an artist who holds a deep passion for music. In fact, he is one of the most intensely focused musicians that I have seen in over twenty-five years of arts administration. Joseph models his artistry at a very high level of playing, backed by countless years of practice and teaching.

Mr. Vincelli has a message that is easily embraced by teachers and students alike. He displays his passionate understanding of music and reinforces practice technique in a way that teachers especially, appreciate. He empowers students in improvisation technique and motivates them to simply elevate their playing. I have heard students, after a short five minutes of instruction, improve their rhythm and cohesiveness in playing that is discernable even to the untrained listener.

In conclusion, Joseph has an infectious smile and personality – you can't help but like him the moment you meet him – for his enthusiasm, his openness, and his gifted playing of his beloved and battered saxophone.

Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns. I would be pleased to speak with you.

Sincerely,



Sharon Benson, Arts Education Coordinator