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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Learning-Focused. Central Middle School began working with Learning-Focused in 2008 at a summer retreat for the CMS teaching staff. The August retreat had over 50 staff members and administrators from our school working through the first two days of the four day *Connections for Learning* training that included *Transforming Standards into Learning* and *Connecting Exemplary Practices in Acquisition Lessons*. Following the August retreat, CMS held a September training (*Connecting Extending Thinking*), an October training (*Planning Units for Learning*) and two days of coaching. All six of our Learning Focused training sessions were led by the same trainer which had a very positive impact with my staff.

Since working with Learning-Focused, there has been a dramatic difference in the classrooms of CMS. All of our staff members use the Learning-Focused Acquisition, or EATS, lesson plan to ensure that students are directed to the lesson's learning task (the Essential question), that there is an activity that jumpstarts student learning (Activating strategy), that teachers are using research-based instructional strategies, including providing opportunities for students to summarize their learning throughout the lesson (Teaching strategies) and that all students have the opportunity to pull their learning together at the end of the lesson (Summarizing strategies).

Our work with Learning-Focused has transformed Central Middle School. There has been a change in the conversations that teachers, administrators and parents now have; the conversations are focused on instruction. We have also seen a 10% reduction in student discipline issues.

I fully support Learning-Focused and the work they do for schools. If you have any questions or would like to talk with me about our work with Learning-Focused, please contact me at 672-1772 or dguido@capital.k12.de.us.



Darren T. Guido, Ed. D.,
Principal