

**Joey Kolosky**

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**INTERIM  
EDUCATION  
MEETING**

**February 16, 2012**

**Licensure Proposal**



A very heart felt thank-you...

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I first want to say thank you for letting me participate in this committee; I am honored and privileged that you have considered hearing my story and have invited me to these proceedings.

Since receiving the invitation to speak here today I have been filled with validation and excitement. Just knowing that I have been given the opportunity to present my case to you has lifted my spirits immensely; no matter the outcome I feel fortunate just to be here. Again, thank you for your time, patience, and your cordial invitation.

Sincerely,

Joey Kolosky

## My Story

When I was young (late teens and early 20's) I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life, this may sound like all of us at one time. I thought, like all kids do, I knew everything. I felt if I just graduated college I would be offered a great job with great pay. Sadly, as we all know, this simply isn't what life is all about. That is the mentality I had though, and with that mentality I "cruised" through my undergraduate studies in art. I enjoyed the subject but I was incredibly ignorant on the value of a college education.

The story sounds familiar doesn't it? A lot of kids go through life not knowing what they really want; sometimes it takes trial and error, and a little kick in the pants to motivate them. I was the kid that didn't like school, who knew everything, and thought I would put the world in my pocket one day. I ended up graduating with an average 2.7 GPA and thought that was just fine. Then I was thrown out into the cold world and was proven otherwise. I was stuck in a job I hated and had no goals to pursue. This is until I found education as a profession.

I enrolled in West Virginia University in 2003 and majored in Special Education: I found that I loved teaching. I became passionate about something and excelled in my program. I graduated with a 4.0 grade point average and would of gotten higher if I was allowed to.

I took my first job teaching Special Education in Florida to a very diverse group of students: rich white beach kids, Cuban immigrants, southern good ol' boys and girls, and African- American students. They were quite the collection indeed. I learned their culture, what makes them tick, and how to teach them. I learned a lot about what a teacher goes through, and learned I really loved the profession.

I then moved to Colorado because honestly, Florida was too hot for me. I found a home in Colorado Springs at North Middle School. There I taught one year of Special Education to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in a resource room. Again, I had the gambit of kids: LD, BD, MD, white, African-American, Mexican-American, Polish, German, and many others. North is an International Baccalaureate (IB) world school. They attracted all students, and with the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force both having bases in the town the diversity had a wide breadth.

I taught several subjects that year: Mathematics, Language Arts, Reading, and U.S. History. I enjoyed this immensely, but at the end of the year I received a phone call from my current principal asking me if I would like to teach art. With my hours in art from my undergraduate degree I was Highly Qualified to do so in Colorado. I thought about it and said yes. The following year I set out to teach a new subject.

I found out art, like all subjects, was difficult to teach: with the materials, class sizes, and responsibility of putting on art shows and events the stress was taxing. But I also found out I was incredibly good at it, and loved it more than teaching Special Education. I loved the creative freedom, being able to teach the entire population of the school, and being able to still teach my Special Education students. It was a win-win situation. What aided me the most was I was able to draw on my Special Education training and directly implement strategies in differentiated instruction and classroom management to make the transition smooth and painless. I finally found a passion and I thrived.

I taught art, and coached football and basketball at North Middle School for five years. I met my wife (a North Dakota native), got married, and had a little boy. I was living the dream, but realized I had other goals and passions to pursue. So, I applied to the UND Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership. I was accepted and we made the choice to move back home.

I made quite the turn around: from a kid who really didn't like school and barely got by, to a man that found his passion in education and who is now excelling in a doctoral program. I would now enjoy being able to do what I love here in North Dakota until I can find a leadership position in a school. To be able to teach art here would be beneficial in a few areas. First, I would have a few more options in pursuing work. I know Special Education is a high demand field and I shouldn't have trouble finding a position, but art is where my true passion lies. Second, if I could find a position teaching art in a school I would feel very comfortable solely based on my previous five years of experience. And lastly, I've gotten very good at teaching art and I would like to utilize my skills.

Thank you again for reading my story and proposal. I appreciate your time and I know it is valuable. Please also know that I know the rules are in place for reasons: they are for the best interest of students. I feel that granting me an art endorsement will coincide with that principle and ultimately benefit the students of North Dakota.

Sincerely,

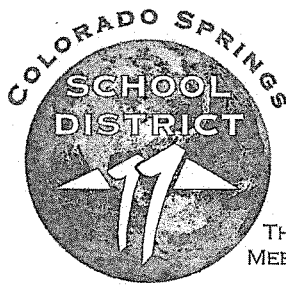
Joey Kolosky

## My Proposal

In all good will, my request is to be issued a license to teach K-12 Multicategory Special Education, and to have a K-12 Art endorsement. I have outlined why I feel I should be given this endorsement below.

### Rationale:

- 1) I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art from West Liberty State College, a Master of Arts degree in Special Education from West Virginia University, and I am currently in the UND Doctoral Program pursuing my Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership.
- 2) I have spent the past five years (2006-2011) North Middle School teaching art in Colorado Springs, Colorado. As an art teacher I taught all aspects of the visual arts such as: ceramics, sculpture, painting, drawing, computer art, and fiber art. I have also developed and implemented my own art curriculum, assessments, personal projects, and school murals.
- 3) I have completed the Colorado Teacher Induction Program in Art (2009). Essentially the Colorado Teacher Induction Program is a program that a teacher must complete to obtain their five-year professional teaching license. In the program I documented a year's worth of lessons, in which I demonstrated pedagogy, differentiation, and assessment strategies. See certificate.
- 4) I have completed International Baccalaureate (IB) Visual Arts training I and II.
  - I: For new teachers; introduces them to IB philosophy, best practices and how to implement program. (June 19-21, 2006)
  - II: For experienced teachers; teaches in-depth techniques and pedagogy in teaching the visual arts. (January 26-29, 2007)
- 5) I have had two student teachers in art. First, Phil Wassel (2009-2010), had a year-long practicum to receive his Master's in Teaching from Colorado College, in Colorado Springs, CO; the second, Hanna Pelican (2010-2011) was a high school senior receiving dual college credit through the University of Colorado, Boulder. Her study was also a year-long, culminating in student teaching at the end of the 2011 school year.



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February 25, 2011

*To Whom It May Concern:*

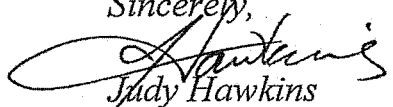
*It is with great pleasure that I recommend Joseph Kolosky for any teaching, coaching or educational assistant position. Joey is an art teacher at North Middle School where I am the new principal. Prior to that, he taught Special Education here as well. He has been trained in the International Baccalaureate program. In addition, he coaches extensively: several sports and both boys and girls.*

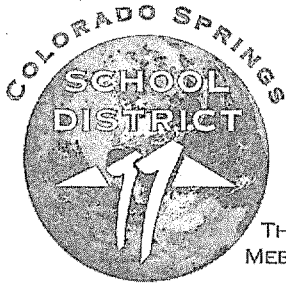
*Joey has a breadth of experience and a depth of understanding in both the practice and the teaching of art. His background in Special Education as well as his coaching augments not only his talent but his ability to make art a meaningful experience for students.*

*Joey is also extraordinary as a coach. Students enjoy the opportunity to play for him because he has the ability to build a sense of teamwork, improve individual skills and generate excitement around the learning. He has high expectations for student behavior and the students rise to meet them. Not only do his teams perform well but they exhibit integrity and character, rare attributes in today's athletic environment.*

*Joey has the ability to build relationships with students, work collaboratively with colleagues, create rapport with parents and design positive, professional, and standards-based learning opportunities for students. He has a positive outlook and a professional demeanor that would be an asset to any school.*

*I recommend him highly and without reservation.*

*Sincerely,*  
  
Judy Hawkins  
North Middle School/Principal



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Nicholas M. Gledich, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

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Shalah Sims, Asst. Principal

Rebecca Gallegos, Coordinator

Karol Szymanski, Secretary

February 8, 2012

*To Whom It May Concern:*

*It is with great pleasure that I recommend Josef Kolosky for any teaching, coaching or educational assistant position. Joey spent several years as an art teacher at North Middle School where I am currently principal. Prior to that, he taught Special Education here as well. He has been trained in the International Baccalaureate program. In addition, he coaches extensively: several sports and both boys and girls.*

*Joey holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Fine Arts and Master of Arts degree in Special Education. This allows him great versatility in that Colorado statute considers him highly qualified in both Art and Special Education.*

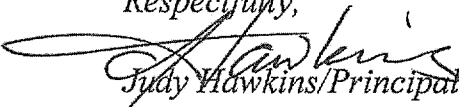
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*I recommend him highly and without reservation.*

Respectfully,

  
Judy Hawkins/Principal  
North Middle School



Mary Ley, Project Director  
1115 North El Paso Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903  
[www.d11.org](http://www.d11.org) (719) 520-2023 [leyme@d11.org](mailto:leyme@d11.org)

April 6, 2011

To whom it may concern,

I feel so fortunate that Joey Kolosky gave me this opportunity to craft this letter on his behalf. I met Joey the first year he moved to Colorado Springs as a middle school Special Education teacher and I have followed his career path as he transferred into the Art position and role of football coach. You would be so lucky to be able to employ Joey. He is reliable, works hard, sensitive to student's needs and requirements, and bottom line – he is fun. He is fun to work with, makes learning fun, eases the daily stresses for the staff members around him, and he reminds all of us that we have a choice each day to embrace our jobs and families. Joey always works cooperatively, was strong in co-planning and executing interdisciplinary units.

Mr. Kolosky was outstanding in his roles of Special Education and Art instructor. He was creative in both positions and always found new and innovative ways to reach children and bring them to their full potential. Joey also works well with parents and uses his humor to ease some of the roughest situations.

I personally know Joey as my role as an administrator but I also had Joey many times watch my son when my husband who works for the International Olympics and I simultaneously had my occasional trip to the US Department of Education in Washington DC stay at our home and take care of him. I never had to worry about Joey driving him to all of his activities, or take care of my home, and even run my problematic dog.

Please feel free to call me anytime so I can emphasize what an honor it would be for you to select Joey Kolosky for this position.

Best regards,

*Mary Ley*

Mary Ley  
Project Director

Colorado Springs School District 11

[leyme@d11.org](mailto:leyme@d11.org)

719-464-8020 - cell



Nicholas M. Gledich, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

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To Whom It May Concern,

April 8, 2011

Please accept this letter in support of Mr. Joseph Kolosky. In working together throughout the three years that I've been the IB program coordinator at North Middle School, I have found Joey to be an energetic and creative teacher and an advocate for his students. His classroom management style is effective for students with a variety of commitments to learning and his lessons are engaging. The atmosphere he creates in his classroom welcomes students, motivates them, and creates interest in his subject matter.

Joey has been a wonderful colleague to work and learn with. He is an effective team member that shares ideas and weighs in on tough issues. His opinions and ideas come from experience and a natural sense of what will work with students. Without any notice, Joey was told at the beginning of the year that he would be teaching combined IB and traditional art classes this year. Further he was told that he could not lower expectations for the classes and had to keep the pace at the level expected for our highest-level learners. Joey met this challenge beautifully because he believes that all of his students can learn, and this is the motivation that drives his work in the classroom. I've seen Joey process difficult situations with students and hold them accountable in such a way that makes them want to improve their behavior.

As perhaps the greatest testament to his success, Joey was able to take on the vision of creating a student art show for the past three years, and he has turned that vision into a meaningful, inspiring experience for scores of young people and the adults in their lives. While single-handedly jurying, mounting, and displaying hundreds of pieces of student work, sacrificing his own time in the name of his students, Joey has created an experience that is the first taste of success for many students. I've had several parents seek me out to let me know just how please they are with the level of their student's learning and enthusiasm. His knowledge and his desire to continue to hone his craft and are testaments to his dedication.



I believe that Joey Kolosky will continue to be a fantastic teacher no matter where his classroom is located and that he would be an asset to any environment in needed of a creatively-minded, hard working individual. I wish that we were able to keep him at North, as I feel that his contribution to the school's culture is irreplaceable. Thank you for taking the time to consider this worthy teacher, and I hope that you will aide him in the next steps on his journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RH' with a stylized flourish.

Ron Hamilton  
IB Coordinator  
North Middle School