

TO: Dr. Whitrock and the Ripon Area School District Board of Education
FROM: Shawn Gartzke, Principal of Barlow Park Elementary
DATE: April 10, 2025
RE: Recommendation for Hire — Halley Whitcomb

It is my recommendation that the following individual be hired for the 2025-2026 school year:

Name: Halley Whitcomb
Position: Barlow Park Kindergarten Teacher
Location: Barlow Park Elementary

Certification:

Position or Subject (WI DPI Code)	Level	State	Year Expires
1088 — Regular Education (Early-Middle Childhood)	PK-6	WI	6/30/2027

Education:

Name of School	Degree	Date Earned	Major(s)
Marian University	Bachelor of Science	01/2024	Elementary Education

Work Experience:

Name of District/ Organization	School/ Location	Position	Job Tasks
Ripon Area School District	Barlow Park Charter	Kindergarten	Classroom Teacher
Oakfield School District	Oakfield Elementary	Intern	4K, Subbing

Process:

# of Applicants	11
Quality of Applicants	The positions drew 11 applicants in total, 4 of which submitted applications after interviews were scheduled. The 5 candidates interviewed ranged in their number of years of experience from new graduates to over 18 years of experience. Of those we interviewed, we were extremely impressed with what they each offered our district and the process of narrowing it down to two finalists was a challenge for the team.
Interview Team	Shawn Gartzke, Tammy Fox, Landri Vogelsang, Amber Willoughby, Carrie Phillips, Marissa Schauff
# of Candidates Interviewed	5
Quality of Candidate Interviewed	As mentioned, the candidate pool was deep. However, Halley remained a top choice for the team based on her interview as well as our past experience with her on our staff last school year in a temporary position. Our interview with Halley was fantastic. She is from the area and is excited for the opportunity to return to Barlow Park. Halley interviewed like someone who has been doing the job for some time, although she is still fairly new to teaching. She carried herself with extreme professionalism and developed excellent rapport with interview team members. She was exceptional at explaining her process of lesson planning, delivery and assessing for effectiveness. She is enthusiastic and student centered. Halley would be a wonderful addition to our team!

Notes/ Reference Checks on Candidate	Halley's references spoke about her passion for teaching, especially students in the primary grades. They talked about how she gets down to their level to support and interact with them. She is open to feedback and has great communication skills. They also describe her as outgoing and a relationship builder with students and staff alike. Collaboration with team members was also a noted strength. All references said that they would hire her without hesitation if given the opportunity.
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