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To whom it may concern,

It is my privilege to recommend Dr. Gregory Ross for the position of Superintendent of Fayette County Public Schools. I write this letter of support not merely as a believer in the academic qualifications of Dr. Ross, but as a direct beneficiary of his vision, leadership and work-ethic when he was principal to my children at The Academy of Leadership at Millcreek Elementary.

When I first met Dr. Ross, I quickly found that his leadership is what made our Title 1 school become the best of what public education has to offer. The Academy of Leadership at Millcreek Elementary built a community of parents and teachers that were engaged and focused on the well-being of our children. This community was without a doubt built on the foundation Dr. Ross provided. After seeing this, I decided to get more involved at The Academy of Leadership at Millcreek Elementary. I became president of the PTA where I had the opportunity to watch first-hand the care and engagement Dr. Ross had with our students and families.

Dr. Ross knows that being a leader within education does not begin and end with the ringing of a bell, it is a 24/7 job that requires unique dedication. There are too many examples of the time and effort he puts in daily but one that was close to my heart is how he found ways to give opportunities to students to learn a new sport and be in different environments that they may not experience at home. I managed the third largest indoor tennis club in the country, Lexington Tennis Club and by working with Dr. Ross he was able to provide ways and unblock obstacles to give the children of The Academy of Leadership at Millcreek Elementary the chance they would have never had to learn a lifetime sport that reaches far beyond the tennis courts.

As you know, leading a Title 1 school is not without distinct challenges. That is why Dr. Ross successfully wrote and was awarded a 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant. The money offered through this grant was utilized and implemented to create the "Lions Den" a pre and after school program that enables children to experience activities that can enhance life experiences and employable skills. The program has been selected by top regional providers as one of the top programs in the quad-state region. Some of the programs offered are athletics, academic, instrumental and vocal music, and many careers areas such as coding, journalism and the sciences.

As a parent and past PTA president, I cannot imagine a better advocate for the children of Fayette County. Dr. Ross is truly an example of a leader that is most-needed in these trying and uncertain times. He is a leader that casts and implements a vision, he is focused on both the academic and personal needs of the children he serves, and he is able to bring various stakeholders, teachers, parents, guardians, and staff, together as one community seeking to educate and protect those most important to us – our children. For all the reasons mentioned above, and more that would not fit on this page, I whole-heartedly recommend Dr. Gregory Ross for the position of Superintendent of Fayette County Public Schools.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J Wallen".

Joanne Wallen
Director of Adult Competition
United States Tennis Association