



My name is Candice DeGrafinried—aka Ms. D. As a child I attended all DPS schools and graduated from Montbello High School. After high school, I furthered my education by completing my undergraduate degree from CU Denver with a Liberal Arts Degree in English Writing and completed my graduate degree from Lesley University with a Master of Education in Literacy: Reading, Writing, and Language. I earned my Elementary Education Administration Endorsement License via the Denver University, Ritchie Leadership Program.

I am a lifelong learner, educator, instructional leader, and school administrator of 25 years. My professional career started in Denver Public Schools in the Montbello Community as a Kindergarten teacher and School Librarian. In my first year of teaching, I worked at two schools and split my days between Oakland and Maxwell Elementary. At the end of my first year, I was able to obtain a full-time 4th-grade teaching position at Oakland Elementary where I taught for the next eight years. At the end of my eighth year, I transitioned into school leadership and became an Instructional Coach supporting classroom teachers. During this time, I also completed my credentials to become a school administrator.

For the next seven years, I worked as a school administrator in Denver Public Schools. However, living outside of the Denver metro area and being a mother of two young daughters, it became necessary to transition to the Brighton School District to work closer to home and support the day-to-day needs of my small daughters. Currently, I have been a principal in the Brighton 27J School District for the past 10 years. It has been rewarding to watch my daughters thrive in the school district in which we live. I have also missed the culture and sense of belonging I experienced in DPS. This past fall my youngest daughter started college in Atlanta which has allowed me to be able to return to the school district of my childhood and professional beginnings—DPS. I am excited to return to DPS where I can be a part of a diverse school community that believes in equity and inclusion for ALL students and staff.

I am excited to be a candidate for the principalship at Hallett Academy because, like the Hallett Community, I believe, “Every Student deserves to have learning experiences that promote a sense of wonder and belonging that will afford them the skills necessary to become successful young people who are ready for college, career, and beyond!” I believe in providing **ALL** students a safe, positive, and inclusive learning environment. I believe this “whole child” learning approach begins with working with parents and the community in schools where academic and social-emotional learning is a priority and happens in **every classroom, every day for every child.**

I am passionate about creating a positive and nurturing learning environment for students and staff. Building relationships with families and participating in their child’s journey is rewarding and beneficial for all stakeholders. My years of experience as a teacher, coach, administrator, and elementary principal allow me to contribute to shaping the academic future of a child by providing the necessary educational tools while also creating a learning environment where every student feels valued and supported. I believe students should know they are safe and cared for from the moment they walk into their school in the morning until they leave at the end of the day. As the principal of Hallett Academy, it will be my mission to continue with the academic growth that the students, staff, and community have experienced thus far, while also aligning with the broader educational goals of our school district. I believe in the African Proverb: It takes a village to raise a child and **WE ARE** the village for the children at Hallett Academy.