

Ventana Vista Elementary School

Catalina Foothills School District

6085 N. Kolb Road – Tucson – Arizona – 85750 - Phone 520-209-8000

January 15, 2026

Dear Superintendent Bartlett,

I am writing to enthusiastically recommend Mr. Dave Johnston for the Catalina School District “Super Volunteer Award”. He spends countless hours supporting our school community.

Dave has a fourth-grade son who has attended Ventana Vista Elementary since kindergarten, which is also when Dave began volunteering at our school. For nearly five years, Dave has been a constant and invaluable presence at Ventana Vista Elementary School. Quite honestly, we are not sure what we would do without him. He also has another son, Connor, who is a kindergartener.

When his son, Callan, began kindergarten, Dave started volunteering during robotics class. One day, our robotics teacher, Mr. MC, asked Dave on his way out to help flip over a new robotics table he was building. When Dave realized how many tables needed to be assembled, he didn’t just offer a quick hand. He went home, grabbed his own tools, and stayed to help get the job done right. That initial act of generosity quickly turned into Dave helping Mr. MC build an entire set of robotics tables for his classroom—setting the tone for the next five years of unwavering support.

Since then, Dave has become the parent we can count on for just about anything. He has taken on heavy jobs, such as moving rocks and gravel and painting steppingstones for our campus beautification project. He has also tackled countless behind-the-scenes tasks—sorting through tens of thousands of LEGO pieces and organizing kits for classroom robotics lessons and our First LEGO League teams.

To put his dedication in perspective: Dave has probably handled more tiny LEGO pieces than most people see in a lifetime. I am fairly certain that if he stepped on a LEGO in the middle of the night, he wouldn’t even yell—he would simply tell you the exact part number and which kit it belongs to before turning on the light.

If you have ever walked into the Robotics room at Ventana Vista and seen perfectly laid-out robotics mats or complex models ready for instruction, there is a very good chance Dave played a role in making that happen. He regularly steps into robotics classes to support students whenever other volunteers are unavailable. Over the years, Dave has saved Mr. MC literally hundreds of hours of work by taking responsibility for building, sorting, and organizing materials. This allows the teacher to focus more fully on instruction, resulting in deeper learning for our students.

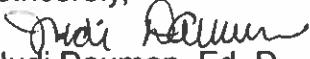
Beyond robotics, Dave volunteers wherever help is needed. He has supported kindergarten classrooms during activities such as gingerbread house building. Additionally, when an urgent situation arose that required an employee to be taken to urgent care—and the employee needed her car—Dave was the very first person I contacted. Without hesitation, he graciously drove her car to urgent care and did so without a moment's pause.

Beyond his willingness to help, Dave is simply an incredibly caring person. Over the past five years, he has become much more than a volunteer at Ventana Vista. He shares his enthusiasm for sports with our community, assists anyone who needs help, and consistently shows up with a positive attitude and a generous spirit. He does not do any of this for recognition—he does it because he genuinely cares about our students and our school.

Dave Johnston is exactly the kind of person the "Super Volunteer Award" was created to honor. He embodies the spirit of service, generosity, and commitment that makes Ventana Vista Elementary such a special place to learn and grow.

In summary, Dave Johnston's impact on Ventana Vista Elementary extends far beyond the hours he volunteers. His consistent presence, willingness to step in wherever help is needed, and genuine care for students and staff make him an extraordinary asset to our school community. He exemplifies the highest ideals of volunteerism through his selflessness, reliability, and dedication to student learning. I cannot think of a more deserving recipient of the Catalina School District Super Volunteer Award.

Sincerely,


Judi Dauman, Ed. D
Principal, Ventana Vista Elementary School