

May 2, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I enthusiastically recommend Lizzie Nash for a position teaching mathematics at the high school level.

Lizzie was my intern at Holt High School, Ninth Grade Campus during the 2012-2013 school year. Holt is a suburban school with approximately 480 ninth grade students. We have some ethnic diversity in our student body – about 84% Caucasian, 6% Hispanic, and 5% African-American. We also have a range of family incomes with approximately 17% qualifying for free or reduced lunch.

We operate on a six period day. Lizzie taught four sections of geometry, one section of honors geometry, and collaborated in another section of honors geometry. She also helped to staff our after-school math help room.

### **Knowing Subject Matter and How to Teach Them**

Lizzie has a good knowledge of geometry concepts and how they relate to other areas of mathematics. She has a desire to connect these concepts to experiences that our students have outside the classroom. She turned two of her experiences outside the classroom, bathroom remodeling and verifying the size of carry-on luggage, into mini-projects for our students. She also has a willingness to investigate why various conjectures work, including unexpected student conjectures. This encouraged students to be inquisitive.

Lizzie has improved her ability to teach geometry during the year. The final unit she taught was well planned. She adjusted the unit in response to student needs. She included thoughtful assessments, both formative and summative, that strengthened student understanding. During this unit she showed ability to anticipate student misconceptions.

### **Working with Students**

Lizzie's greatest strength is working with and relating to students. She learned the names of our approximately 140 students and began interacting with them immediately. She used some "get acquainted" activities that prompted students to share their experiences and feelings. Our students were enthusiastic about sharing who they were and learning about others.

Lizzie provided help for struggling students before school, after school, and even during lunch on a regular basis. Her compassion and empathy opened the door for students who might otherwise have not sought help. Some students would come in to work on homework after school almost every day. Her patience and availability put geometry within the reach of every student.

Lizzie's feedback on student assignments was thoughtful, actionable and always constructive.

### **Creating and Managing a Classroom Learning Community**

Lizzie's teaching style created a true learning community. Students knew they were expected to participate and they stayed engaged. Her questions were non-threatening; students could sense the caring behind the inquiries. Lizzie also asked questions to focus students thinking, helping them reach valid conclusions. She responded to incorrect thinking with positive prompts toward valid solution paths.

Students knew they would be treated fairly and with respect.

Lizzie constructed an online Moodle-based course that mirrored our classroom instruction. She linked to helpful online content and authored some chalk talk style reviews for several of our chapters. Students were able to access online help tailored to our specific classroom.

### **Working and Learning in a School and Profession**

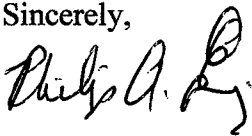
Lizzie quickly became a respected part of our math professional development sessions. Her comments and insight brought a refreshing perspective. She reflects regularly on her teaching and also on the practices of others that she observes.

Lizzie joined a PLC (Professional Learning Community) group that experimented with various ways to integrate technology into the classroom. She participated on an equal footing with the other faculty members.

Lizzie participated in parent teacher conferences. She relished the opportunity to involve parents in the learning process. Lizzie developed the ability to provide constructive correction that was helpful for our parents.

Lizzie is caring and dedicated. She showed great improvement in planning and delivering instruction through the year. Lizzie will be an excellent teacher.

Sincerely,



Philip A. Ewing