



Wines Elementary School

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Dr. David DeYoung, Principal

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To Whom It May Concern:

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Please accept this letter of recommendation for Brittany Tinch as she pursues a teaching position at the elementary level. Brittany completed a yearlong student teaching internship at Wines Elementary School this year. As the principal of Wines, I have had numerous opportunities to observe Brittany in the classroom and interact with her at formal staff meetings and other less formal situations in the school. In all of my interactions and observations with Brittany, I have been impressed with her professionalism, confidence, and her positive interactions with students and adults. While I am often willing to serve as a reference for student teachers, it is rare that I write a full letter of recommendation. In Brittany's case, I offer this letter with enthusiasm and without reservation.

Brittany has had the good fortune to be able to spend an entire year in her Kindergarten placement. This allowed her to have extensive observation experiences with her cooperating teacher who is widely recognized as a leader in the field of early childhood education. Her extended time in the class then allowed her to seamlessly take control and make the classroom "her own" as the second half of the year began. In observing Brittany, I see not only a confident instructor, but also a teacher who has taken her observations and discussions with mentors seriously and incorporated what she has learned into her instruction. This ability to combine her own natural talents and confidence with what she has learned is the mark of a teacher who is ready to take on her own classroom.

Brittany's time at Wines has allowed her to have a wealth of experiences in instruction and assessment. Brittany now has experience and expertise with the Ann Arbor Balanced Literacy Framework and the Fountas and Pinnell phonics program. She has utilized the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark reading assessments and has engaged in ongoing use of running records and informal assessments to provide differentiated instruction for students. Brittany has become familiar with the Everyday Math curriculum. She has been an active member of the Kindergarten professional learning community and data team. I am confident Brittany will be able to take what she has learned from these experiences (and others) directly into a new role as a full time teacher.

One unique experience for Brittany this year has been her experience working with students with special needs in her classroom. At our school, we have three self-contained classrooms for students with severe Autism. One of these classrooms is made up exclusively of kindergarten-aged students. We believe strongly in an inclusive model at our school and these students are included into general education for as much time as possible. Three of these students spend extensive parts of their day in Brittany's classroom and Brittany now has vast experience in working with the unique learning and behavioral needs of students with Autism. In addition, there is another student with Down's Syndrome who is fully included into the kindergarten classroom. Brittany has spent extensive time working to address the unique needs of this student as well. I cannot stress how unique and important these experiences have been for Brittany's development as a well-rounded educator.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't admit that my observations of Brittany's progress have been quite unique this year. In addition to being the principal at Wines, I am also the father of twin boys who are in Brittany's kindergarten classroom. I have been able to experience Brittany as a principal and a parent. I can say with confidence that I have been incredibly pleased with the relationships she made with my boys and she has contributed greatly to their development. I would be proud to have my children in Brittany's classroom in the future!

Brittany is positioned well to be a successful teacher at any grade level. If you would like to contact me to discuss Brittany Tinch, please email me at deyoung@aaps.k12.mi.us or by phone at (734) 320-7163.

Best regards,

David DeYoung, Ph.D.

Principal

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