Tuesday, May 6th, 2014

To Whom It May Concern;

I have had the pleasure of working with Melissa over the past five years, but working most closely with her during my last two years at Princeton High School. During this time Melissa and I formed a close relationship centered on our work with curriculum, specifically around the development of a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) curriculum. Also, because I served as one of the district’s Instructional Coaches, much of my job focused on developing and implementing meaningful professional development. Melissa worked hand in hand with me to develop appropriate and timely professional development for all teachers at Princeton Middle and High School.

Melissa is a visionary. She has a natural ability to think about the big picture. As an art teacher, Melissa clearly has a vision for how electives, specifically the arts, fit into the development of school curriculum. However, Melissa’s knowledge of curriculum does not exist only around fine art standards. Melissa is mindful to educate herself around all of the state and national level changes to curriculum in order to develop ways to create interdisciplinary connections. Melissa understands the importance of educating the whole child and provides her students with meaningful connections between the content the students are learning in her class and relevant student experiences.

Melissa has attended, developed and led professional development both within and outside of the Princeton City School District. For example, Melissa attended the High Aims Project-Based-Learning (PBL) training where she, along with her colleagues, were charged with creating and presenting an interdisciplinary PBL lesson. Along with attending this training, Melissa helped me organize, plan, and even attended the Common Core workshops for English and Mathematics. Even though Melissa is an art teacher, she finds value in understanding standards for all classes and even more importantly how to make connections between these classes.

During my time at Princeton, Melissa and I worked collaboratively on the development of a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics) curriculum for 6-12th grade students. This curriculum would encourage interdisciplinary lessons and co-teaching opportunities so students could see the big picture connection between content areas. Melissa and I also had the opportunity to present our work at the National level at the STEM Tech Conference in Kansas City, Missouri in November of 2012. Similarly, we also presented at the state level at the Ohio Arts Education Association Conference in Cincinnati in December of 2012. Along with her membership to the Ohio Arts Education Association, Melissa also is a member of the Clay Alliance and National Art Education Association. Melissa also volunteers her time at Crayons to Computers over the summer. At Princeton High School Melissa has presented technology workshops to the staff, is the Art Club Advisor, and voluntarily creates all graphic art needs for the school. Melissa also developed and taught Princeton’s first animation class and is developing the digital arts program.

Melissa is unbelievably hardworking and committed. She will always follow through on tasks, and typically produces above and beyond work. She has an innate ability to think about others and build relationships. Her dedication to do what’s best for teachers, and ultimately what is best for students, is admirable and something that all teachers view and strive to do. I am honored, and lucky, to have work with Melissa. Please consider her for employment in your district.

Thank you,

Elizabeth del Campo Hartman

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