

Teaching Job Recommendation



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MYTHIC
UNIVERSITY

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May xx, 20xx

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my sincere pleasure to write this letter recommending John Lerner for elementary school teaching positions. Mr. Lerner recently participated in an innovative, field-based teacher preparation program that culminates in a year-long internship at a professional development school (<http://www.ed.mu.edu/pds>). The internship program is a central feature of an ongoing partnership between the Mythic Area School District and Mythic University. As part of this program, I served as one of Mr. Lerner's university supervisors and co-taught the concurrent science methods course, SCIED 458: Teaching Science in Elementary Schools, in which he and the other interns were enrolled during Fall 20xx. I also co-taught web-based portfolio workshops in which he participated. Because of my close and various associations with him, I feel qualified to comment on Mr. Lerner's potential as an elementary educator. Mr. Lerner will make a valuable addition to your staff—he is an outstanding candidate for elementary teaching positions.

Within the professional development school context, Mr. Lerner had the opportunity to work closely with his mentor teacher, school and university faculty, and other interns to explore issues of teaching and learning for understanding, and to consider connections between educational theory and practice. As part of the elementary science methods course, Mr. Lerner collaborated with another intern to design and implement a series of lessons aimed at helping students investigate concepts associated with the principles of flight—thrust in particular. The development of his mini-unit required extensive background research, as well as the comprehensive assessment of students' prior knowledge of the content. The learning experiences he crafted included a variety of opportunities for students to participate as *young scientists* (e.g., making predictions, gathering and recording observations/data, and developing evidence-based explanations).

Throughout the year, Mr. Lerner continued to develop a progressive approach to science teaching, and has become very proficient at planning and teaching developmentally appropriate, hands-on, investigation-based science lessons. For example, I recently observed him teaching a lesson on electricity in which students explored basic circuitry. Mr. Lerner challenged his class to find multiple ways to make a bulb light using only one battery, one bulb, and one wire. Patterns in students' discoveries were used to generate evidence-based explanations for how circuits work. Mr. Lerner not only demonstrated a command of the subject matter, but also interacted with students and facilitated class discussion in a manner consistent with an experienced teacher. Students clearly respect him and respond to his proactive approaches to classroom management. It was truly a pleasure to observe this lesson!

As part of his participation in the program, Mr. Lerner had a number of opportunities to work with cutting edge applications of technology for supporting teaching and learning. For example, he used web authoring software to construct a web-based portfolio that included multimedia evidence from his courses and field experiences (e.g., scanned images, electronic lesson plans) to demonstrate his developing understandings and abilities associated with supporting children's learning (<http://www.personal.mu.edu/jlerner>). Mr. Lerner also integrated technology into the 4th-grade curriculum in a variety of ways, all intended to enhance student learning. His experiences with applications of technology should prove to be extremely valuable to any school or school district seeking to integrate computer technologies into its curriculum.

In short, Mr. Lerner is an excellent beginning teacher. Not only is he able to plan instruction that is engaging and developmentally appropriate, use a variety of assessment strategies to monitor and evaluate student learning, masterfully orchestrate classroom discussions, and effectively manage classroom routines and student behavior, but he also is a consummate professional. He is thoughtful, reflective, and committed to life-long learning and continued development as an educator. Mr. Lerner is willing to share his ideas with colleagues and capitalize on opportunities to learn from others. For instance, he attended and presented his work with web-based portfolios at the Holmes Partnership Meeting (2004) in San Diego, CA, where the teacher education program in which he is enrolled was awarded the Nancy Zimpher Award for Best Partnership. As I noted at this meeting, he is poised and articulate as a presenter, and his contributions are worthy of accolades.

In the context in which I have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Lerner, he has demonstrated his thoughtfulness, leadership skills, collaborative abilities, willingness to take risks, and genuine compassion for children and their development. After evaluating his work, observing his performance in class, and supervising his teaching, I feel confident that Mr. Lerner will make a significant contribution as an elementary educator. I give him my highest recommendation for teaching positions.

If I can provide additional information to support Mr. Lerner's application for a position in your district, please contact me (555-123-4567 or jteacher@mu.edu).

Sincerely yours,

Janet Teacher

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Associate Professor, Science Education

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