



October 24, 2024

To the Hiring Committee:

I am writing this recommendation for Mrs. Rachel Lopez who is an applicant for your teaching position and I couldn't be more thrilled to do so. I have known Rachel for the past two years as I was her faculty supervisor for a Master's in Education final project at the University of Nevada, Reno. We worked very closely together as Rachel culminated skills learned in her graduate program coursework and her incredible acumen for creativity to develop a tremendous curriculum and instructional guide for 8th Grade Art. I have supervised many students over my years as a faculty member, both in the program that Rachel was a part of and in other capacities; I can confidently say that Rachel was one of the most motivated, bright and pleasant students I have ever worked with. Her love of art and its meaningful presence in students' lives as a way to enhance wellbeing and mental health is deeply ingrained in who she is not only as an educator but as a person. This foundational belief motivates her to excel in her work ethic, to produce meaningful and innovative content and to strive to be the best teacher she can.

The final project was a significant undertaking—not only developing a series of original lesson plans aligned with identified learning outcomes and standards through which she created a very exciting approach to the fundamentals of artmaking—but in integrating with this curriculum vital initiatives of engaging students in positive mental health. From the public health field, we know that creative expression can mitigate risk factors that are present in so many young people. Rachel's project, which combined art skills acquisition with open dialogue and expression about mental health challenges, demonstrates that she will work diligently for the most vulnerable in her student population to find ways to break through barriers. Through the culmination of this project and now in her role as a student teacher in the middle school classroom (which she loves), Rachel has shown herself to be a highly skilled teacher, a compassionate person, and one who can put her head down and get a daunting project done while she has significant other life responsibilities. Most importantly, through the project she devised, it is clear that she strives to create an energy in her classroom that demonstrates to her students that everyone has a right to be there and to be seen and heard in their full humanity. This baseline belief in the power of ethical education will set Rachel up well to move into a full-time teaching position.

Thus, I strongly believe that Rachel's abilities, empathy and aspirations make her an excellent candidate for your position. She is not afraid to assert her own lived experience and way of seeing the world as an artist to be an integral aspect of the teacher and leader she is and hopes to become. And her passion for teaching will drive her to both immerse herself in learning to be a better educator but also to challenge in an open, creative and collaborative manner when systems, practices and content might be outdated or no longer serve the needs of her students. This is truly where her strengths lie. I hope that you will give her materials detailed consideration and insofar find her very deserving of your position.



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Please feel free to reach out for more information or with any questions.

Kind regards,

Dr. Karin Waidley



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