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To Whom It May Concern:

Brandy Wortinger is currently working as a fourth grade teacher at Live Oak School for the 2014-2015 school year. I am serving as Brandy's supervisor, meeting with her regularly to discuss all aspects of her teaching practice.

In her short time at Live Oak, Brandy made an impact on our students and their learning. Using a concept she learned at a workshop, she created centers to encourage our fourth graders to think deeply and critically about mathematical concepts. Through direct instruction, skills practice as well as reading and writing about these concepts, students can apply their mathematical learning and communicate their thinking. During math time, I regularly see engaged students, who are excited and ready to share their understandings.

Brandy models life-long learning, recently participating in a workshop related to Harvard School of Education's Project Zero's "Making Thinking Visible" approach to teaching. She encouraged students to make personal connections with their material, reason with evidence, as well as use their powers of observation to explain, interpret, and wonder. She made thinking visible primarily within our language arts and social studies curriculum, using the "Wonder Wall," a place for students to create questions about new material, which they will later be able to answer.

As an educator, Brandy set high behavioral expectations for her students. Utilizing Responsive Classroom strategies, the students easily follow classroom routines, transitioning seamlessly from one activity to the next. The fourth grade classroom community is one in which students support and uplift one another; however, when students disagree with one another, she provides them with a platform to hear and listen. Through "The Peace Wheel," they resolve their conflicts and ultimately decide on solutions together.

As part of our team-teaching model, Brandy collaborates with a partner, a fellow experienced teacher; together, they share ideas for lessons and units, creating richer and more meaningful assignments. If Brandy were to stay at Live Oak, I could envision her working with her colleague to further develop our fourth grade curriculum.

During her time at Live Oak, Brandy has improved the fourth grade community. Her reflective nature and commitment to student learning and growth will be an asset to any school. I'm sorry to see her leave here so soon.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Roslyn Benjamin
Assistant Head of School
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