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To Whom It May Concern:

I write with my highest recommendation of teacher and department head Deborah Johnston. I have known Deb and served as her evaluating supervisor since we were lucky enough to hire her in 2006. In that time, I have personally witnessed Deb's work as a teacher, curriculum designer and, for three of those years, department head.

We felt very fortunate to attract Deb to a teaching position in Seattle and credit her true commitment to world history, together with our global curriculum and Global Service Learning program as two of the main reasons we were able to do so. One of the few PhDs in world history that we have run across, Deb's work in curricular development was known to us well before we hired her and suffice it to say that we were not disappointed with the work she has done for us. In addition to re-creating our 10th grade world history course and adding a centerpiece project of a Model UN Day for the entire sophomore class each year, Deb has created and taught electives in Modern Mideast, Modern Africa and a dynamic and innovative team taught course with one of our physics teachers in Big History. The impact that Deb has had on our curriculum has been seminal for the school and its students.

In the classroom Deb has high expectations for her students but is also a thrilling teacher that Lakeside students have responded well to for all the years she has been here. Well-prepared and self-reflective, Deb brings a monstrous knowledge of her content area and a delightful relationship with her students that yield excellent reviews year in and year out. The environment in her classroom is highly supportive and safe for students: her expectations both for in-class behavior and for out of class work are clear and reasonable; she provides rubrics for just about every assignment and all of this combines to mean that there are no "mystery codes" that some students get and others do not. She is highly affirming as a teacher: it is not unusual when watching her teach to hear numerous comments from her towards her students such as, "that's a great question" and "that's a really good point". Finally, and perhaps most importantly, her classes strike an important balance between high challenge and high support. She treats her students with respect which means challenging their capacities at every turn.

Lastly, as a department head Deb served admirably in a department that made it challenging on her. Her greatest strength in this role, predictably, came in her classroom observations,

the evaluations she helped me perform and in the care she provided for her colleagues. Deb was as organized and thoughtful about her departmental leadership as she was in her classroom and the department certainly benefitted from those traits.

Overall, Deb has been a huge asset to Lakeside School and the school will be weaker were she to leave. If you have further questions or would like to talk more about the strengths that Deb brings to her work and her classroom, please do not hesitate to contact me: talking about Deb's work in schools is a pleasure.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of Nathaniel Healy. A small portion of the signature, which appears to be 'N. Healy', is visible below the redaction.

[Please contact us for a signed copy. Thank you.]

Nathaniel Healy
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