Teaching Job Recommendation

MYTHIC UNIVERSITY
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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!