

May 5, 2015

Recommendation for **MEGAN KOSINSKI**

Dear Colleagues:

I have known Megan for eight months since she began her internship in Michigan State University's (MSU) teacher education program. In their post BA, fifth year, interns are placed in public schools under the guidance of mentor teachers. They teach multiple classes from September to May and concurrently take graduate-level courses in the MSU Teacher Ed program. Interns take charge of one class from September to May and, through the course of the school year, increase both their responsibilities and the number of classes that they teach. Their workload peaks in January when they assume the role of Lead Teacher over four classes for ten weeks. My yearlong role as field instructor involves conducting ten classroom observations, meeting with Mentor Teachers (MT) regularly to evaluate interns' performance, and talking with interns about their practice. Because I serve as a liaison between the university and school site, I am able to help interns bridge their learning and practice, and I gain a holistic view of the intern as a student and teacher. Alongside her MT Mr. Chiaravalli, I had close knowledge of Megan's teaching practice, having watched her both teach and reflect on her teaching.

Megan's school site, Haslett High School, was located in a suburban area five miles east of MSU, and she taught 12<sup>th</sup> grade college preparatory English and co-taught Advanced Placement English. In the college preparatory English class, Megan began her internship teaching her MT's unit plans, which consisted of writing the personal narrative and studying archetypes and ancient literature. By January, she was implementing her own unit and lesson plans, which included units about Bearing Witness, Greek literature, and Romanticism.

Megan possessed deep content knowledge in the English subject area. Her expertise emerged most noticeably during her Greek and Romanticism units during Lead Teaching. She did an immense amount of research and modeled them after her MT's pedagogical and curricular methods, so that the students would experience continuity as she took on the role of being the sole teacher. In her planning of the Romanticism unit, Megan discovered the reoccurrence of passion and established it as the central theme. Students expressed and explored their own passions, and as they read long and complex texts, like Goethe's *Faust*, they revisited the role of passion in their lives. Megan not only gave students an opportunity to share their voices in the classroom and encouraged them to find agency in their learning, but she also challenged them to examine and analyze texts critically. Assuming her MT's pedagogical methods, Megan focused on teaching skills, continuously scaffolding and articulating students' progress toward larger learning objectives. She offered clear rationale for each lesson and unit plan and provided students with teacher models before they worked independently. Megan also gave students opportunities to think metacognitively. She helped them create ePortfolios that included ruminations on their best work. She also had them reflect on their performance and the quality of their work when they received grade



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printouts. She designed high-quality learning experiences that revolved around rigorous content and guided students carefully through challenging texts.

Megan's use of technology in the classroom was unsurpassed. She integrated it seamlessly into her daily routine, familiarized herself with new technology before introducing it to the students, and used applications consistently so that students could gain mastery over them. She referred to the online agenda and calendar daily, so that students could view the short and long scope of their progression through a unit. She also utilized the flipped classroom, in which she delivered instruction online for homework in the form of a mini-lecture, and students came to class prepared to practice the set of skills introduced in the video. She used an application that fostered competitions among students and served as formative assessments. Students wrote their essays in Google Doc, and Megan evaluated and graded them using its rubrics. In addition to practicing a blended learning, she also utilized classroom space in effective ways. Students contributed to Word Walls that focused concepts like archetypes and figurative and sensory language. Students' seating arrangement varied from rows to groups, and she conscientiously structured group work to facilitate learning. I was most impressed that Megan was consistent in her ability to give explicit instructions, request formative feedback, and scaffold student learning. She exhibited skills that exceeded most educators' expectations of a new teacher.

Megan had an easygoing and respectful relationship with her students, who appreciated her mild-mannered and warm personality. She showed patience and commitment not just to their learning but to their well being too, and her willingness to share pieces of her life with them made her personable and approachable. Megan routinely checked in with students individually about their progress and performance, and she offered them ample opportunities to improve their work. Because activities often varied in structure and students often worked in pairs or in groups, Megan often roamed the classroom purposefully, gauging students' understanding and speaking with them one on one. Students understood that Megan valued their learning above their mutual relationship, so she was able to maintain authority without being authoritative.

Megan is assiduous, consistent, pleasant, and respectful to her students and her colleagues, and she will be a valuable addition to any educational institution.

I highly recommend Megan for a position at your school. If you would like to speak at greater length about Megan's qualifications, please feel free to contact me at (650) 387-0095 or [jloh@msu.edu](mailto:jloh@msu.edu) if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Loh  
Field & Course Instructor