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Walter R. Sundling Junior High School
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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of recommendation for Elise Hackl, who I have known since August 2017. Elise and I have worked together in a junior high, Autism-focused classroom. Elise comes twice a week for about 40 minutes to teach our students adaptive music with general education peer buddies.

When I first began working with Elise, I found her to be the teacher I turned to with questions. Her understanding of each individual student, including their needs and abilities was something to marvel at. Her whole-child approach is evident while she moves through the room, meeting the students where they are. Her use of prompting always allows the students to always have a voice, whether it is in their music selection, instrument preference, or response to questions. It is through her appreciation of the students' opinions that they have come to look forward to each class, usually stating it as their favorite part of the day during their daily communication home.

Towards the end of the 2017-2018 school year, Elise was a driving force in the construction and implementation of our Music Buddies program. After being given a list of general education buddies, Elise created a comprehensive music curriculum that engaged both the students and the buddies. She provided the time to teach and practice skills, including both music, listening comprehension, and social interactions. During the fall semester, one of the crowning achievements of the class was a piano recital held for parents, faculty members, and community members. Students who started the year with no piano experience performed a variety of songs in front of a small crowd.

Elise is a well-rounded, student-centered teacher. She is flexible and creative as well as extremely collaborative. I could not ask for a better teammate when working with my students and peer buddies. For these reasons, I highly recommend Elise for this position. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Katie Eckberg

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