

WESTON HIGH SCHOOL

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April 12, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter in support of Anne Slotnick's application for a position as a teacher at your school. I have had the pleasure of working as Anne's supervisor this year when she came to fill a part-time, one-year drama/speech teaching position at Weston High School (WHS). I only wish I could offer Anne employment next year, but as she is now looking for full-time work and we do not have that to offer, I regrettably will have to see her move on to another school. Whatever school is lucky enough to employ Anne will find her to be the professional, energetic, creative, and mature teacher she has been here all year.

As a graduate of WHS, Anne returned to us as a welcome addition to the English/Drama department. Even as a first-year teacher, Anne arrived at WHS with a strong grasp of appropriate exercises for her acting students. For example, her varied approaches to such tasks as mastering the monologue – working on the beats, working on the physicality of the character, imagining the character in situations outside of the monologue, and more – all enriched her students' ultimate products. I was truly impressed with the wide range and productive outcomes of the various acting activities I observed in Anne's classes.

In addition, Anne added teaching Speech classes to her duties second semester. Speech is a required course for all students and is mostly made of up sophomores. Anne was willing to work within the proscribed curriculum for this course, but she truly made it her own. Her acting background certainly helped her build students' expressive skills, and Anne again employed a wide range of speeches, games, and assessments to foster her students' growth as public speakers.

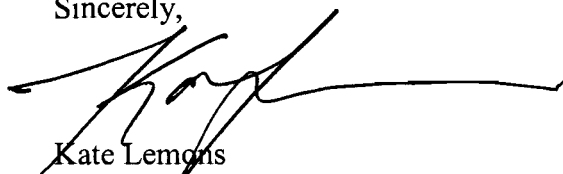
Anne also proved herself a very versatile teacher who could meet the needs of a wide range of students. She took on the very great challenge in her very first teaching experience here of working with students with a diverse range of learning challenges including a hearing impaired student, a sight impaired student and two students with severe learning disabilities. She modified her curriculum so that all of these students could actively and appropriately participate in the class. As a new teacher particularly, Anne's flexibility was truly impressive. I remember watching her two students from our GOAL program – a program designed for students with severe learning challenges that allows them to interact in the regular education classes as much as possible – perform a "scene" from *Green Eggs and Ham*. Anne came up with this modification to the Acting 1 scene requirement so that the students could learn relatively simple language while still acting out a true "scene" -- in fact an argument. Her students embraced this work enthusiastically, and their scene performance was as engaging to watch as any of the more traditional scenes performed that day.

Lastly, Anne is an open and receptive new teacher. I've enjoyed every one of my conversations with her about teaching. She actively employed suggestions I made after my first observation, and subsequent observations proved to me that the tweaks I recommended had been quickly and effectively woven into her teaching to further improve her innate talents. Anne is also able to articulate her reasoning behind choices that I may not have understood at first glance in an observation. As someone who has never taught acting, I learned a lot from Anne when I asked her to explain her reasoning for something that seemed a bit surprising or unusual to me. Anne was able to make sense of it and prove its worth readily and clearly. This has proven to me all year that Anne knows not only what she is doing in her classes but why she is doing it.

Anne is a wonderful acting and speech teacher, and frankly, she could probably teach anything about which she had knowledge and interest. She has excellent teaching instincts, connects with students while maintaining the appropriate supervisory role, and knows her students and their needs in detail. You would truly be fortunate to have her come to work in your school.

If you have any questions about this recommendation, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Lemons', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kate Lemons
English/Drama Department Head