



September 30, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

It has been my pleasure to work with Melissa Dorris during her enrollment at The College of Idaho. I have served as Melissa's advisor and as her instructor in several literacy courses. She is currently a student in the C of I fifth year certification program and concurrently enrolled in MAT classes. I believe that Melissa would be able to transition into the fifth grade position in Middleton and provide an excellent education for your students.

I observed Melissa's student teaching in a 5/6 combination class at Highlands Elementary School early in the fall semester. This placement is in a gifted program, and the students sometimes challenge a beginning teacher. She is confident in classroom management; I observed smooth transitions and high expectations for behavior and academic work. Students were highly engaged in a book study when I visited her classroom; Melissa led a whole group discussion, and monitored students as they worked in a small group activity focused on vocabulary and figurative language.

Melissa is well prepared in her content areas. Her lessons are rich in concepts, and she works to build vocabulary appropriate for this student population. Her unit planning demonstrates her ability to build on students' background knowledge and to enhance instruction with technology resources.

Melissa's thesis will explore the use of non-fiction in the classroom, a focus of the Common Core Standards. One of Melissa's strengths is her ability to manage her time well, a skill that will serve her well as she takes on this new assignment. In both her undergraduate and graduate programs, Melissa has demonstrated an incredible work ethic. She is a valued member of her peer group on campus, and she collaborates well with her cooperating teacher at Highlands. I expect her to contribute to her fifth grade team in this position as well.

I highly recommend Melissa for this position. The College of Idaho education department is committed to her success, and our faculty will continue to support her growth through observation and feedback. Please contact me if I can provide additional information about this applicant (459-5233/989-2112).

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patti Copple".

Patti Copple
Education Professor
The College of Idaho