

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

February 27, 2016

To Whom It May Concern,

I am honored to write this letter of recommendation for Ms. Kristen Dantonio. In the fall semester of her yearlong teaching internship, Ms. Dantonio was a student in my course, *Reflection and Inquiry in Teaching Practice I: Literacy*. As the capstone literacy methods course in Michigan State University's Elementary Teacher Preparation Program, it requires the interns to synthesize all they have learned about literacy thus far and apply it to their assessment, planning, and instruction. Additionally, the interns continue learning about literacy instruction through reading professional texts and engaging in online discussion groups.

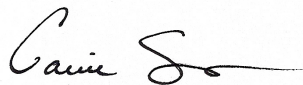
As her course instructor, I had the privilege of witnessing Ms. Dantonio's grace under pressure as she balanced the demands of coursework alongside the demands of the classroom. The internship year is particularly challenging due to the fact that the interns are transitioning from being a college student to becoming an elementary classroom teacher. For four days a week, Ms. Dantonio was in her Mentor Teacher's classroom in Lansing Public Schools. One day a week, she returned to MSU's campus for classes. Despite the exhaustion and stress inherent in this internship year, Ms. Dantonio maintained a positive, professional attitude throughout the semester.

The capstone assignment for this course is the planning and enactment of a two-week literacy unit. This assignment requires the interns to use several different types of assessment methods (e.g., anecdotal notes, reading interest surveys) to get to know their students as readers and writers before planning their unit. Ms. Dantonio chose reading comprehension as her area of focus. She designed a unit for her fourth-grade students to experiment with using different reading comprehension strategies in the context of reading various texts in the fantasy genre. As she taught and reflected upon her teaching, Ms. Dantonio noted students' responses to the lessons she had designed. She employed the gradual release of responsibility model to scaffold students' pursuit of the learning goals, noticed which students appeared to need further support, and reflected upon what she would do differently in future lessons.

Ms. Dantonio's level of engagement in the work of teaching, attention to students' learning, and ability to reflect upon her craft demonstrate the qualities of a teacher who possesses a solid sense of instructional design and a commitment to furthering her professional growth in the years to come.

If you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



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