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To Whom It May Concern:

I have had the great fortune of working with Jeff Konigsberg for the past 4 years as he has been the art teacher at the Cambridgeport School where I am the principal. Jeff is an incredibly talented art teacher, bringing inspiration and engagement to all of our children in kindergarten through fifth grade. He sees his role extending far beyond his classroom, and he has been an engaged faculty member as well, collaborating with teachers as well as families. He is a deeply committed teacher.

When I spend time in the art room with Jeff, I am always amazed at the depth of conversation the children have about their artwork. He teaches them a vocabulary for creating, observing, analyzing, and critiquing that goes far deeper than anything I have ever seen in an art classroom in an elementary school. Most recently, I observed Jeff doing a quick lesson launch with a group of fourth graders. He had been teaching them about how to draw with depth, and this particular class started with a short "in-process" critique. Students named pieces of their peers' artwork that demonstrated depth and together they analyzed how the child/artist was able to accomplish this. As students headed off to continue working on their drawings, they clearly had a deeper understanding of how to accomplish this in their own work.

One of Jeff's unique talents is the way he structures his art room to empower students to make choices. Throughout any given unit, there is broad space for students to make choices about how they approach a project. In addition to certain specified units, Jeff creates a unique choice workshop approach. Each grade level gets to spend a certain amount of time each year in choice units. During these units, Jeff introduces new skills, new media, and new approaches, and children self-select into the work that speaks to them. In doing this, Jeff empowers students to see themselves as artists who can make decisions. This builds their sense of agency and ownership, not just in the art room, but also across their entire school day.

I am not an artist myself, so at times I feel at a loss to truly describe the talent that Jeff brings to this work. I recently received an email from a parent who felt compelled to share her praise of Jeff. She wrote, "I am an art professional myself and I really appreciate the depth and breadth of art instruction provided by him. As you know, this is hardly the norm in American public education. What's more, I have heard him speak enthusiastically about his students and their classroom work when attending a

professional museum opening at the Institute of Contemporary Art. Needless to say, this is not a common subject in that environment and to my mind says a lot about his commitment to education.”

Jeff is not just an art teacher in his own classroom; he also sees his role extending beyond. He is always thinking about how to make the school, as a whole, look more welcoming. He creates amazing displays that are truly representative of the diversity of the children in our community. He has also joined our school council as a way of thinking about the bigger picture issues facing our school.

Jeff is an outstanding art teacher who brings a depth of thinking, passion, and dedication to the work. I would be happy to speak further about his qualifications and I can be reached at 857-998-0673.

Sincerely,

Catheryn Charner-Laird

Catheryn (Katie) Charner-Laird