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To Whom it May Concern:

I have been working in the educational sector in some form for ten years. From teaching in an open to the air classroom in Thailand to a small room in a reading clinic to a traditional classroom, I have watched students grow, laugh, and engage in a productive struggle. For many years, I have been working with students one-on-one, helping students' read when it was hardest for them or helping them finally grasp a math or science concept through practice and visualization. For so many years, my passion has been the teaching of reading and comprehension to students who have somehow fallen through the cracks. Now, after almost two more years of grad school at DePaul University, I am happy to say that I am finally ready to step into my own classroom to so that I can help as many students as possible. So much of my career thus far has been slowly informing my identity as a teacher.

I have learned many lessons along my teaching path. Surprisingly, some of the most important lessons came to me as the Office Manager of the Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes center in Oak Park. There, I learned to juggle almost three jobs at once: communicating with families, maintaining order and safety within the clinic, and organizing payroll, schedules, and any other issues that would arise. It was here that I first had a to-do list that never ended; a fact that helped me build one of the most important skill sets for classroom teachers: prioritization. Teachers are essentially the office managers of a classroom, designing a schedule of lessons while maintaining safety and staying in constant communication with students and families. Knowing what items to focus on and which to let go for the moment plays a huge role in teaching and classroom management. Not only is it important for lesson

planning and pivoting, but also for knowing how to pick your battles. Prioritization and organization are two skills that have served me well.

From my time both as a Consultant at Lindamood-Bell and as a director of tutoring at Harmony Community Cares, I have also learned the importance of developing relationships my both students and families. As a consultant, I met with each student's family once a week to discuss their ongoing progress. I learned the importance of honesty and managing expectations so that everyone stayed on the same page; something that lessens disappointments greatly. I also learned about the power of collaboration, as I was able to ask often for parental input on behavior modifications for students. As the director of tutoring at Harmony Community Cares, I was also able to see the absolute necessity of staying in constant contact with parents to ensure the attendance and behavior of students. Parents should always be called immediately should a problem arise, and relationships need to be cultivated so that communication is easy. Without a good relationship with families, it is unlikely to hear information about what went on at home that could impact a students' day. These relationships are paramount to moving instruction forward seamlessly.

Lastly, as a student teacher, I have learned how to go with the flow. There are countless things that can impact a lesson or unit from so many levels: students might have just suffered a huge disappointment in another class and need time to process the loss; and IEP meeting might have been rescheduled at the last minute; you might realize halfway through a lesson on fractions that your seventh graders have forgotten long division. A myriad of obstacles could cause a pivot, so it is so important to be able to roll with the punches and continue on the next day.

All of these lessons have shaped me into the educator that I am today—a teacher that hopes to bring understanding and laughter to any classroom she enters. I am hoping to begin teaching in the fall of 2022 at any school in the Chicagoland area. I am eager to step foot into any classroom and start building relationships and encouraging growth in the students I find there.

