



July 1, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to recommend Dr. Natalie Johnson. Dr. Johnson has been an instructor for Project EXCITE's summer bridge program for incoming freshmen since 2008. Project Excite is a program that serves students from underrepresented backgrounds and was designed to address the achievement gap in advanced math and science courses at Evanston Township High School through providing supplemental programming in grades 3 through 8. Dr. Johnson's dedication to youth is evident in her enthusiastic and motivational teaching style and her willingness to go above and beyond for students. Dr. Johnson would be an invaluable asset to any student or organization with whom she works.

I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Johnson since the summer of 2014. As a new coordinator for Project EXCITE, I first learned of Dr. Johnson as I was gathering information for the summer program for our rising freshmen. Each person with whom I spoke, from teachers to directors, said that Dr. Johnson was a phenomenal mathematics instructor. I learned that Dr. Johnson had a way of motivating students, keeping them engaged, and differentiating instruction to meet each student's needs. I heard that students felt better prepared to tackle geometry or advanced algebra classes due to the time they spent with Dr. Johnson in the summer. I also learned of Dr. Johnson's dedication to our program's mission and many noted the distance she traveled to work with our students each day.

Dr. Johnson truly lived up to her reputation and had continued to do so year after year. Dr. Johnson's vibrant and humorous personality was evident in our first meeting and remained so each time I walked into her classroom. Dr. Johnson could be seen walking students through proofs and theorems with an ease that showed she had accurately assessed student needs and quickly built a rapport with each student. She made teaching students on three different levels of math in one classroom look easy. During check-ins, Dr. Johnson showed great interest in each student's progress and a desire to ensure that they were prepared for their freshman year, not only in mathematics skills, but also in study habits, work ethic, and motivation. Dr. Johnson also called each student's parent to inform them of their child's progress in the class. This was not a requirement of the position and it showed Dr. Johnson's willingness to make herself available to students and their parents.

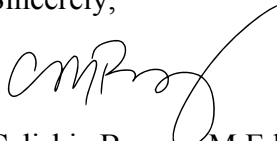
Dr. Johnson's strongest endorsement comes from the students who, year after year, have reported that they felt prepared for Geometry or Algebra II. Countless students have recounted how they were able to call on the knowledge gained in a few days with Dr. Johnson to power them through their first semester of high school. The students truly appreciate their time with her and I believe the feeling is mutual. Dr. Johnson has shown a true investment in our students, asking about past students each summer, noting their college choices, and enjoying working with those who have returned as teaching assistants

for the summer bridge program. Dr. Johnson also made a special effort to engage our teaching assistants- high school and undergraduate students - and learn of their interests, make connections, and support their growth as they take on a what could otherwise be a challenging new role.

Dr. Johnson also went above the call of duty at our 2014 graduation banquet. Dr. Johnson graciously accepted the invitation to speak at our banquet with very little notice. As always, Dr. Johnson's love for education, passion for student success, and encouraging spirit was evident in her interactions with students, families, and staff. Dr. Johnson's speech reminded the students of the importance of preparation, prioritization, and problem solving in their quest for academic success. Students left feeling motivated, inspired, and ready to begin their high school careers.

Dr. Johnson has been an invaluable asset to Project EXCITE. I am certain that any educational organization and each individual student and colleague would benefit from her passion for education and commitment to student achievement. I highly recommend Dr. Johnson and hope that our paths cross again in the future.

Sincerely,



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