



Letter of Reference for Desiree Cameron

In 2009, in my role as Assistant Head of School, I came across a resume that appeared too good to be real. A teacher completing her doctoral degree with additional degrees and experience in teaching was applying for a 5th grade position. This teacher, though apparently quite young, appeared to be incredibly accomplished, with educational and professional experiences that spanned grade levels, disciplines, and even the globe. We knew we had to meet her, and once she had interviewed, we knew she would be an amazing teacher at Westside Neighborhood School.

To say that Desi fulfilled all our expectations would be an understatement. During her 15-year tenure at our school, Desi contributed her talents to the 5th grade team, literally transformed our Performing Arts program, and took on a leadership role as a curriculum coordinator, to name just a few of her roles and accomplishments. WNS would not be the school it is today without the commitment and work of Desi. Any school would be fortunate to include Desi on its staff, and she has both the experience and the skills to lead a program, division, or school.

Though the list of positive attributes is a lengthy one, three qualities in particular come to mind when I consider Desi's success in schools. First, Desi believes in the transformative power of relationships. Her ability to connect with students is unparalleled, and it is one of the reasons she took on the role in Alumni Relations. Beyond her work in the classroom, Desi connected to the specialness of every child she knew – and she made sure to let each student know that she recognized their uniqueness and value. By extension Desi connected with adults in a similar way, both colleagues and parents.

Second, Desi is incredibly intelligent and innovative. After just two years as a multiple subject teacher, Desi was tasked with creating a theatre program at our school. She developed a curriculum from scratch that included everything from puppetry to Shakespeare. And in the first year, the entire 8th grade class began the tradition of writing and producing their own show, a legacy that continues today. Desi constantly considered new ideas and reworked old ones. Very soon, Desi began to be in demand with other institutions and was teaching teachers through workshops and credentialing programs.

Good ideas are worthless without hard work. And Desi possesses that third important quality: an indomitable work ethic. She is motivated to do what the job requires, and both the process and the product reflect her commitment to doing the job as well as it can be done. Desi was not content to “just” create a theatre program. She soon became the Performing Arts Director, overseeing the music program and then, eventually, the visual arts department as well. Her advocacy of the arts helped these programs flourish at our school.

Desi Cameron is one of the most talented and inspiring educators I have ever had the pleasure of working with. I enthusiastically recommend her for inclusion in your institution's or organization's mission. You will not regret it!

Sincerely,

Heidi Reimann
Assistant Head of School