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To Whom It May Concern,

I enjoyed working with Joseph Wright for five years together at Merit Preparatory Academy from 2016-2021. I highly recommend him for any academic position, whether teaching or administrative, for which he applies.

I am Alisse Shiles. I served ten years as the Distance Education Facilitator for Merit Academy until June 2022. During that time, I worked with 10th -12th-grade students, helping them take 21 different college classes from UVU and Snow College. I have worked with many different teachers over the years, and Joe is among the best teachers I have worked with.

As a secondary school teacher (he taught grades 7-12 here at our school), Joe was very effective in reaching students with little to no interest in subjects and getting them involved in project-based learning (PBL), so they are excited to participate. I know this is true because he taught one of my own children who, specifically in 7th grade, refused to do work that he did not see had any impact on his future. However, in Mr. Wright's class, my son actually enjoyed doing the projects he was assigned and did well on them while he chose not to do other classwork. Joe's ability to reach students is reflected in the fact that years after taking his classes, students will stop by his room to talk to him about what is going on in their worlds, and they are willing to learn life lessons that he can teach outside the classroom setting.

As a part-time administrator for two of the last years he was here, Joe was instrumental in teaching Canvas LMS to faculty and staff. His leadership in this area still impacts teachers working in Canvas at Merit. He helped with PBL training and was a voice of encouragement when COVID-19 thrust the entire school into online schooling, and people had to get Canvas up and running immediately. He is calm and can de-escalate situations with even the most challenging students. He works well with his colleagues as well as students of all ages.

Joe's work ethic is extraordinary. For example, he created original scopes and sequences for a variety of classes, such as U.S. History, ESL, Game Design, and Speech & Debate. Not only did his classes meet state curriculum guidelines, but also, through his lesson designs, he demonstrated sincere compassion for his students (and obviously keeps their varying abilities in mind). For instance, during his open office hours (both before and after school), I frequently saw his students – current and former – coming by his classroom to get help or sometimes just to



chat. He also was instrumental in forming an after-school game club that has consistently met weekly for several years, which still meets now. Many students have had a fun, safe environment after school to play card and board games, and they have even met virtually (due to closures brought on by Covid19). That dedication is again characteristic of his desire to sincerely serve and connect with his students.

I have been very impressed with his dedication to his own schooling and his hard work toward achieving his master's degree, which he finished in the Spring of 2020. As part of that effort, he also completed various internships that further helped him develop a love for school administration and better learning for students of all ages. I believe Joseph Wright is a force for good in the education world and will be a tremendous asset wherever he goes. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any other questions or more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alisse Shiles".

Administrative Assistant,
Department of Occupational Therapy
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