



Bellevue Elementary
2301 E Grace Street
Richmond, VA 23223
804-921-5043
hsmith@rvaschools.net

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter of recommendation in support of Abigail Brown's application to your program. I have known Ms. Brown for two years as a colleague at the school in which we both teach, Bellevue Elementary in Richmond, Virginia. I am continually impressed by Ms. Brown's desire to learn and to grow as a young educator. She exhibits a maturity equal to that of veteran teachers in the field. In just her fourth year as a 5th-grade teacher, Ms Brown is a leader in our faculty as the Lead Science teacher and is well respected by our full faculty.

This year I have had the pleasure of working alongside her as her Literacy Coach as we have navigated a new reading curriculum in our district. She has not only embraced the rigor of the new curriculum, but also continues to find ways to make learning more meaningful and engaging for her students. I was particularly impressed with an entire culminating unit of study she planned and executed on monologues. When many 5th-grade teachers in the district decided to forgo the end-of-unit performance task of having the students write a monologue as a character in the book *Esperranza Rising*, by Pam Munoz, Ms. Brown's students not only wrote their character monologues, but she also embedded their written monologues into an entire virtual screen performance, complete with written program guides that mimicked programs we receive when attending live performances on stage. Every part of the virtual performance was thoroughly planned, and included cooperative learning, integration of technology skills, keyboarding and typing practice, and video-recording of their monologues on flipgrids. It was truly a grand finale performance to a long unit of study the students were proud of as they watched their peers and themselves onscreen. This sort of precise planning is evident in her daily and weekly lesson planning as well. She is thoughtful of students' learning styles and makes necessary scaffolds and adjustments to her lessons to ensure their success and learning process.

Most recently, Ms. Brown spent our "snow day" off teaching herself a new assessment tool that our district has not even fully trained us all on. She made a reading assessment on recent state objectives taught to ensure that her students are exposed to a variety of assessments that reflect their learning and knowledge. She also knows that inevitably, high stakes state assessments are a reality for her students, and that teaching her students strategies as well as the content to succeed are essential for their middle school success and beyond. This is just one example of how Ms. Brown goes above and beyond in all her teaching duties.

V. Tanaia Hines, Principal
Bellevue Elementary School | 2103 E. Grace Street | Richmond, VA 23223

As educators we try to instill in our students the desire to become lifelong learners and readers. Ms. Brown exemplifies these admirable qualities. Her love of linguistics has given her a passion for learning languages and cultures as she taught herself Spanish and French during her college years without formally taking courses in them. A prime example is how she taught herself the Korean Hangul alphabet during the pandemic period between March of 2020 to summer of 2020. She is able to read and write the Korean language and is learning the vocabulary and meanings of the words of a whole new culture, history, language and country. I have seen her enthusiasm for this new insight into a new culture, and I'm delighted beyond measure as a Korean-American at her new passion and dedication. Her desire to explore a new adventure in her life is admirable as she wants to embark upon teaching non-native English speakers in Korea. I'm confident that she'll carry forth her strengths as an American teacher to her teaching of students in a foreign country. Her diligence, intellect, motivation, and curiosity are attributes that can only benefit others so lucky to have her as a colleague and teacher in their school.

Yours sincerely,

Hwayoung Heather Smith, NBCT, MEd.
Literacy Coach
Bellevue Elementary
Richmond Public Schools
Richmond, Virginia