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Prairie Middle School  
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Aurora, Colorado 80012  
720.747.3000



January 6, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of Hannah Smith. For the past five years, I have had the pleasure of working and collaborating with Miss Hannah Smith, who serves as the Overland High School Orchestral Director.

Miss Smith came to Overland H.S. after numerous band teachers had been hired to teach both band and orchestra without much success. Prior to Miss Smith's appointment as the orchestra director, both the retention and recruiting numbers at the High School were very low. In a school of approximately 2400 students, they had barely the numbers of orchestra students to support two 30-member orchestra groups. Students' morale was low, and they were frustrated with the quality of the program. Upon Miss Smith's appointment to the position, she immediately contacted me (her counterpart at the feeder middle school level) to get a grasp of the current situation and started planning things that she would like to change immediately. It was evident from the very beginning that Hannah has a high expectation for her students and she was able to quickly turn the program around; during her first year at Overland, the orchestra received their first overall "Superior" rating at CHSAA Large Group Festival, compared to the previous year where they received an overall "Fair" rating. The Orchestra program has since maintained its Superior rating at EVERY Large Group Festival and the program has grown both in its quality and quantity.

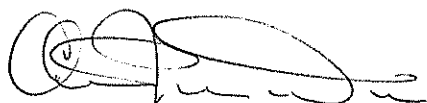
I find Miss Smith to be hard working, energetic, organized, flexible, and willing to help out in whatever capacity, both at Overland H.S. as well as with my middle school groups. She is very proactive in seeking ways to improve and motivate her students' learning. With over 70% of our student population on free or reduced lunch in the community where both Miss Smith and I serve, we have less than 50% of our students who can afford to rent or purchase their own musical instruments; private music lessons are a rarity. To level the playing field and provide a chance of equity, Hannah often works late and comes in during weekends to work with students on their music and playing skills. Her efforts did not go unnoticed among her colleagues, her students, and the community.

Miss Smith is a competitive individual and she has set high yet obtainable goals for both herself and her students. She has shown herself as a great teammate, she supports other staff members, including me at the middle school, in helping out with classroom rehearsals, concert set-ups, and tear-downs. Her students are now excited to be in her orchestra classes and enjoy learning to be better string players and musicians. They know that Miss Smith truly cares for them, and they appreciate her passion for wanting to obtain excellence in daily practices. Hannah is extremely

knowledgeable about string pedagogy and a very accomplished violinist and educator. Her passion for teaching and music, her sense of humor and rapport with students enable her to have a positive effect on her students and colleagues.

It is with my deepest sincerity that I extend my professional recommendation for a colleague whom I hold in great esteem. I am certain of Miss Hannah Smith's ability to be very successful at any institution she decides to pursue. Please feel free to contact me at 720-747-3157 if you shall desire further information.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chen H. Wu', with a stylized, flowing script.

Chen H. Wu  
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