

09-18-14

To whom it may concern,

For the past three years, it has been my pleasure to work with Natalie Dunham at the Early Childhood Center of the American School of The Hague.

An integral part of our Kindergarten team, Natalie is also a vital member of our early childhood community. She regularly attends professional development seminars and remains a tireless and selfless educator who consistently goes the extra mile for her students, her class parents, and her teammates.

Natalie approaches teaching with focus and an open mindedness that is indicative of someone with her experience. Natalie is incredibly hard working and the very definition of a team player. Last year, when a colleague was absent for five months, it was Natalie who took on added committees and responsibilities. This helped the team stay on course and was of a great source of relief to our injured co-worker. Natalie took ownership of the brand-new I-Can-Read library, designing it and organizing it for the benefit of the entire ECC.

Forever looking to refine, reflect, and take risks as an educator, Natalie attended Teacher's College to better understand the nuances of the Writer's and Reader's Workshop. Not surprisingly, this two-week intensive seminar had an immediate impact on her pedagogy. As she is constantly looking through the lens of what is best for the students, Natalie let this experience become a brighter light for her teaching.

As a member of the Language Arts Vertical Articulation Committee, Natalie was responsible for basically rewriting the reading and writing sections of the Kindergarten curriculum and inputting it all on Rubicon Atlas.

A co-leader of the Kindergarten team, Natalie has deftly handled the budget, lead discussions on curriculum and pedagogy, and handled a multitude of "real-time" decisions and crisis.

This year, having expanded our Kindergarten team from three classes to four, it is Natalie who often comes to the aid of our new teammate with calm and concise guidance. Again, her growth and her experience immediately assisted others.

During her three years at ASH, Natalie has been ever growing in her maturity and confidence. Not surprisingly, she has the full and complete trust of students' parents and absolute adoration of her students.

As the other half of the Kindergarten team leadership, I can say, with complete honesty, that Natalie's departure will leave a hole in our community. She is kind, gentle and the consummate educator: always teaching and always learning.

Please contact me directly at mmaloney@ash.nl should you have further questions about Natalie. Again, it would be my pleasure.

I remain,

Michael Maloney