



Elkton School District 5-3

PO Box 190

508 Buffalo Street

Elkton, SD 57026

Phone: (605)542-2541

Fax: (605)542-4441

Superintendent

Brian Jandahl

Brian.Jandahl@k12.sd.us

K-12 Principal

Kelly Neill

Kelly.Neill@k12.sd.us

Business Manager

Brittany Venekamp

Brittany.Venekamp@k12.sd.us

Elkton School District

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It is with great pride that I write this letter of recommendation for Ms. Tia Hulce in consideration of her application with your school district. I have known Ms. Hulce since the summer of 2018 during which time she was my mentee through the South Dakota Mentoring program. During my time mentoring Ms. Hulce, I was able to see the drive, passion, and commitment that Ms. Hulce had not just for teaching but her willingness and desire to continue to grow for both herself and her students. My respect for Ms. Hulce continued to grow during the two years that I was her mentor during which time I met with her weekly and had opportunities to observe her teaching multiple grades. I was truly astounded by her ability to transition during the day from working with elementary age students to high school students to middle school students with ease. Adjusting to the various developmental needs (including social/emotional development and curriculum development) came (and continues to come) naturally to Miss Hulce.

Collaboration with others is something that Ms. Hulce seeks out and eagerly does with others. Last year, Ms. Hulce worked with one of our middle school science teachers on a lesson where students created cell membranes that included organelles and a nucleus made from clay. By collaborating with the science teacher, Ms. Hulce successfully combined art and science to reinforce science skills taught in a different classroom for the benefit of learners. In addition to collaborating on lessons, Ms. Hulce speaks to each elementary teacher to learn about the guidance strategies used in the general classroom so that she can offer consistency for learners while they are with her during their weekly art class.

During the three years that Ms. Hulce has been with Elkton, she has grown the art program to be more self-reflective and engaging for all grade levels. This past year, she began implementing Teaching Artistic Behavior (TAB) that focuses on process over product. As learners engage in TAB, they explore different materials and self-reflect on how they will use the materials to create art that is reflective of themselves as individuals.

Miss Hulce has also begun school wide art shows during school concerts so that all students could share their passion of art with others. Kindergartners through Seniors in high school have been able to proudly display and discuss their art with others. Ms. Hulce has also provided sought out opportunities for her students to participate in art contests-yet another way for students to be recognized for their artistic abilities.

Ms. Hulce's passion for her students and ensuring that all are successful is something that I both respect and admire. I have personally witnessed how she communicates effectively with students of all ages as well as witnessed how her relationships with students creates a culture of competent, capable, and independent artists.

It is without hesitation that I recommend Ms. Hulce for the position for which she has applied. If you would like to further discuss Ms. Hulce's qualifications or have questions, please contact me via the phone (605-690-4248) or e-mail (Rachel.schaefer@k12.sd.us) at any time.

Sincerely,

Rachel Schaefer

2018 SD State Teacher of the Year

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