

Shaw Middle School
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Spokane Public Schools
excellence for everyone
120 North Garry Dr.
Liberty Lake, WA 99019
August 21, 2007

University of Phoenix
Secondary Education Department
8721 E. Mission St.
Spokane Valley, WA 99212

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter is a letter of reference for Ms. Jessica Haight who worked in my class at Shaw Middle School from February to June 2007. Ms. Haight completed her class observations in a two-hour Language Arts and Social Studies block to twenty-six seventh grade students.

Shaw Middle School has a diverse student population with 75-80% free and reduced lunch students. Ms. Haight worked at enhancing the learning of diverse students. The mainstreamed classroom contained B.I., D.I., and other special education students, as well as regular students whose ability levels ranged from high to below average.

Indubitably, Jessica Haight progressed through sixteen weeks, three days a week with the willingness to develop a positive learning relationship and atmosphere for all students. She created an interest in most of her students by encouraging them to do their best performance and believing in themselves. One of her goals was to connect with their background experiences and learning to carefully bridge the gap to apply to new learning.

Ms. Haight worked with students in a variety of ways. She had experience with both individuals and small groups. Through her observations and assessments, she was able to work with students who needed individual assistance. There were challenges with the "high risk" students; however, Ms. Haight sought out assistance and patiently worked on building their confidence in reading, writing, and study skills so they could succeed with their academic workload.

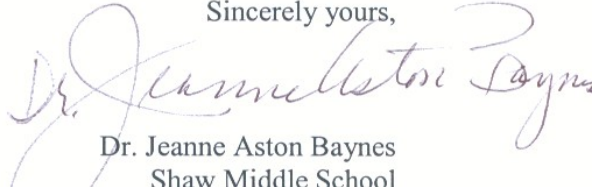
Gradually, her observations developed into creating a Power Point for one of our most challenging units in Social Studies. The unit covered social changes in America from the Great Depression to the Civil Rights movement. Ms. Haight presented the Power Point to students, and infused their learning by engaging them in a discussion and sometimes debate on the various topics. In addition, she shared a template that included a book with the description, causes and effects of each event. During the final weeks, Ms. Haight was still working on the variety of ways to make learning interesting and appropriate.

Personally, Ms. Haight had a positive attitude in working with a racially and economically diverse group of students. Also, strategies that worked for some students did not work for others. She learned that teachers have to create an atmosphere conducive to learning by establishing clear parameters for student behavior and assisting students toward self-discipline. Ms. Haight will be best-known for her laughter and her ability to share herself and personal stories with the students. The students looked forward to Ms. Haight's visits into the classroom, as many of the girls gravitated to her for individual attention and assistance.

Shaw Middle School had staff meetings, assessments as well as content collaboration meetings at 7:45 a.m. On occasion, Ms. Haight attended some of the staff meetings, one assessment action team and a content collaboration. Her exposure was to the personalities of students, the challenging daily hours of teaching, discipline and professional development that are continuous and rewarding.

It has been a pleasure working with Ms. Haight during this past year. My experiences range from elementary to middle school, and college professor. Ms. Haight will do a fine job in middle and high school.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Dr. Jeanne Aston Baynes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Dr. Jeanne Aston Baynes
Shaw Middle School