

February 28, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Marisa Ferraro and I am a Grade 3 teacher at Greene-Hills School. I believe that I would be an effective and enthusiastic TEAM Mentor/Cooperating Teacher. My goals as an educator go beyond the classroom. I hope to be part of the movement to create a more equitable education system that works to break down barriers that students face in order to ensure that all students have the tools they need to access their fullest potential. One way that I believe I can achieve this goal is through helping to shape new and aspiring teachers by inspiring them to learn their students by name, strength, story, and need. I believe that all students deserve access to a high quality education. I feel that I can support new generations of teachers as they develop the skills to provide this for their students. I am constantly searching for ways to reflect on my practice and grow as a teacher, and I feel that I am equipped to support new teachers to do the same.

If I am selected to be a TEAM Mentor/Cooperating Teacher, my mentees can expect a supportive partnership. I am willing to provide feedback to new teachers in support of their growth and development. I will help them through the process of intentional planning. I will also help beginning teachers to refine and implement new ideas in the classroom. I am prepared to guide them through the process of reflecting on their practice and am willing to challenge them to think in new ways. I understand the importance of looking at student outcomes and misconceptions to guide future instruction and I am committed to helping new teachers reflect on their data to improve their practice.

One of my qualifications is that I have experience relating effectively to adult learners. During the 2022-2023 school year, I was a volunteer with Literacy Volunteers of Greater Waterbury. Through this program, I provided weekly English lessons to a group of three new American adults with limited English language proficiency. I also helped to facilitate a North Star 3 Professional Learning Session in the fall of 2022 and a session on engaging multilingual learners in whole-group lessons in the spring of 2023. Both sessions were presented to the entire GHS teaching staff. Throughout these presentations, I was sure to model various engagement strategies while also drawing from participants' experiences and expertise.

Additionally, I eagerly opt to become involved in professional activities that are not required by the school or district. These professional activities helped me to reflect on my teaching practice and gain a deeper understanding of best practices to support students' academic and social-emotional growth. Throughout my time at GHS, I have participated in

numerous book clubs that have helped me as an individual teacher and guided whole-school growth. During the 2019-2020 school year, I participated in a Response to Intervention book study. As a member of this book study team, I read *Taking Action: A Handbook for RTI at Work™ (How to Implement Response to Intervention in Your School)* by Austin Buffum, Mike Mattos, and Janet Malone and *Simplifying Response to Intervention: Four Essential Guiding Principles* by Austin Buffum and Mike Mattos. I was involved in a series of meetings to discuss how to strengthen our WINN, REACH, and SRBI practices across grade levels at GHS. These discussions also helped me to reflect on and strengthen my own WINN and SRBI practices. During the 2020-2021 school year, I was a participant in a book study around the book *Reading, Writing, and Rigor: Helping Students Achieve Greater Depth of Knowledge in Literacy* by Nancy Boyles. We used this text to guide conversations surrounding the use of rigorous, grade-level texts for all students. This text also supported our learning about effective scaffolds to ensure that all students are able to access complex texts. During the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years, respectively, I engaged in book studies surrounding Gholdy Muhammad's texts *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy* and *Unearthing Joy: A Guide to Culturally and Historically Responsive Teaching and Learning*. These book studies helped to support conversations about honoring student identity in the classroom. As a member of this book study team, I worked to plan monthly SQUAD lessons for each grade level that helped students to reflect on their own identities and guided teachers towards understanding and valuing students' individual stories. In addition to all of these professional book studies, I was a member of the Bristol cohort of ARCTEL students during the 2022-2023 school year. This experience helped me to understand how to scaffold for multilingual learners so that they have access to our grade-level curriculum. It also helped me learn how to support the English language development of students at varying levels of English proficiency. This has carried over into this school year as I work with my team to ensure that all of our lessons have scaffolds for our English learners.

I have also served on school-based and district committees. I have been a member of the Greene-Hills Climate School Leadership Team for three years. As a member of this team, I have helped to guide our school's commitment to students' social-emotional growth. I have helped to implement PBIS structures across grade levels and reflected on Panorama survey data to improve the social-emotional outcomes of our students. Throughout my time on the Climate SLT, I have embodied the belief that we as a school are collectively responsible for our student outcomes. Additionally, I attended the district's Climate Camp in the summer of 2021 to help guide our work as a climate team. I also served on the district Climate Committee during the 2021-2022 school year. I was also a member of the district CIIC Champions group during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years. This experience helped me to implement new teaching practices and reflect on how these practices impacted my students. I continued to embody

collective responsibility by bringing back what I learned from this group to my grade-level team to help support all learners.

Overall, I feel that I have the commitment, knowledge, and skill set to be a successful and supportive TEAM Mentor/Cooperating Teacher. I have committed myself to continuous learning to grow as a teacher. I believe that I can support new and aspiring teachers to take on the same reflective attitude and belief in collective efficacy.

Thank you for your consideration,
Marisa Ferraro