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May 9, 2014

Dr. Randal Braun
School District of Cameron
P.O. Box 378
Cameron, WI 54822

RECEIVED

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SCHOOL DISTRICT
OF CAMERON

Dear Dr. Braun:

Please consider me an applicant for a first or second grade teaching position in the School District of Cameron. Enclosed please find my application, resume, license, transcripts, and letters of recommendation.

I was born and raised in rural Barron and graduated valedictorian from Barron High School. After a successful college career at UW-River Falls, I set off on an adventure to Alaska. I spent seven years teaching in the Bering Strait School District. In 2010, I decided to return home to Wisconsin. I accepted a one-year position teaching third grade in Phillips, WI. For the past three years, I have been teaching first grade in Prairie Farm. I am interested in furthering my career in Cameron due to your outstanding reputation in the area and opportunities to collaborate with a larger staff all while still teaching in a school with a small town "family" atmosphere.

Throughout my teaching career, I have had extensive experience with differentiated instruction as I had to find ways to meet the diverse curriculum and ability needs of my students. By reviewing data from assessments, standards progression, and classroom performance, I continuously look for ways to meet individual learning needs in my classroom and ensure each student is performing at his/her highest potential. In Shaktoolik, AK, I served as a member of our Solutions Team that developed and tracked Tier II and III interventions as part of our school's RtI initiative. At the classroom level, I also included an intervention time within my schedule for students to target their own specific academic needs. In Prairie Farm, I have collaborated with our Title I teacher during our RtI time in order to offer Tier I and Tier II reading and math interventions for my students.

In Phillips, I was given the opportunity to serve as grade level representative on the PBIS team. Working closely with the team and coaches to monitor implementation during the first year of PBIS there allowed me to then take my experiences to Prairie Farm and help them to develop a PBIS program. I worked closely with administration as we developed the PBIS program and served on the committee the first year we implemented PBIS in the elementary. This school year, I was the committee chairperson. I held monthly meetings to analyze our behavioral data, implementation procedures, and plan out our school-wide celebrations. I have enjoyed celebrating all the positive things that students are doing each day in school and helping them to learn the behavior expectations we have of them. Leading the committee has also given me opportunities to further enhance my leadership skills.

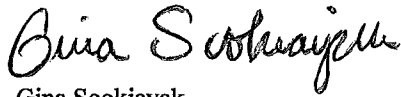
I enjoy collaborating with colleagues to improve my teaching techniques and brainstorm new ideas to engage students in hands-on learning. Due to the vast geographical region and limited travel capabilities in Bering Strait School District, teachers used many technological advances in order to share resources and communicate including Skype, Polycom, wikipedia, and Moodle. I served as our site's technology liaison for two years. During that time, I helped staff members integrate technology into lessons, utilize our district's wikipedia resource and Moodle site called iCommunity, and track student progress through our standards-based online Data Analysis and Recording Toolkit (DART). Back in Wisconsin, I continue to embrace technology and have worked with Schoology, SMART boards, Apple TV, laptops, and iPads in my classroom.

While teaching K/1 in Shaktoolik, I also served as the Success for All (SFA) reading facilitator. Aside from my teaching duties, I spent ninety minutes each day observing and coaching fellow K-12 teachers during our reading block. I offered feedback to improve instruction and held weekly component meetings to train teachers in the SFA program and cooperative learning. Each quarter, I assessed students using the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). After analyzing all relevant data, I placed our K-12 students into appropriate reading level groups. I conferred with

my principal throughout the process and also kept teachers and parents informed of school-wide data and progress. Serving in this role gave me an opportunity to develop leadership, collaboration, and communication skills while learning about best practices in K-12 reading. I am passionate about helping children learn to read and have decided to continue learning more about best practices in reading. I am currently nearly completed with my coursework for a 316 license and will continue working towards my master's degree as well as a reading specialist license.

As a teacher, I find ways to help every child be successful and have a positive school experience in order to develop a life-long passion for learning. I seek to create a supportive yet challenging academic environment with high expectations for all. I believe my teaching experiences in first and second grade, RtI and PBIS knowledge, leadership and collaboration skills, CCSS knowledge, and experience with analyzing data to differentiate instruction would make me an excellent fit for a position in Cameron. If you would like any additional information or to set up an interview, please contact me at 715-418-9024 or gsookiayak@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gina Sookiayak". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gina Sookiayak