



NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL  
HOME OF THE VIKINGS

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To whom it may concern,

January 30, 2017

I would like to take this opportunity to write a letter of recommendation for Elizabeth Gurney. I am the Principal at Northside High School and worked with Mrs. Gurney as an Assistant Principal at Northside High School. During this time Mrs. Gurney taught German 1 and German 3 at Northside High School and German 1 at Northside Middle School. From my initial meeting with Mrs. Gurney, and throughout the time I worked with her, I have been impressed with her initiative, determination, creativity, and ability to connect with all of her students.

Mrs. Gurney was a phenomenal teacher for Northside High School. She had great classroom management, excellent organization skills, and creativity within her classroom. I have been in education for over 10 years and throughout the years I have observed and worked with many 1<sup>st</sup> year teachers. During the 2012-2013 school year, it was her first year of teaching in Virginia, and in a split position of two schools. Most first year teachers in this position, it takes a while to find their niche in both schools, and struggle with classroom management. This wasn't the case for Mrs. Gurney. Due to her previous teaching experiences for 4.5 years in Pennsylvania this also contributed to her success. She joined the best German program in Roanoke County Public Schools. Other German programs in Roanoke County were dwindling in numbers but Mrs. Gurney helped to continue the success of the best German program in Roanoke County. That type of accomplishment is a testament to her dedication, hard work, attention to detail, and ability to provide the leadership and dynamic instruction to her students.

Mrs. Gurney is very creative within her classroom. For her German I and German III classes she set up multiple hands on activities for her students. She has high expectations of her students. Her students not only met those expectations but exceeded them in most cases. In the classroom she worked with 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. Through all of these roles she exhibited an uncanny way to reach every student that crossed her path. These students have various educational backgrounds, learning styles, and socioeconomic statuses. The ability that she possesses to not only relate to these students but to educate these students speaks volumes to her character and the ability to build great rapport with these students so that they will work hard for her both inside and outside of the classroom.

As a teacher, her biggest strength is her ability to think outside of the box to find solutions to students' academic achievement abilities, motivational challenges, and various other challenges that students face in today's educational world. She is a passionate teacher that will always be student driven, student oriented, and will see the positive attributes in every student that walks into her classroom. She is solution focused in all problems that arise. She is detail oriented, organized, and always willing to go above and beyond the call of duty to make every student succeed.

Sincerely,

*Dominick McKee*

Dominick McKee  
Principal  
Northside High School