

## Waits River Valley School

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to recommend **Mary Alice Osborne** to you as a candidate for librarian and/or gifted and talented teacher positions in international schools. Mary Alice is the school librarian and talent development coordinator at Waits River Valley School where I have been principal for the last four years. As I have gotten to know her over these four years, I have been impressed not only by her passion for learning but also by her great enthusiasm for finding the talents of all children and nurturing them. In addition, Mary Alice is very creative and committed to what she does. She participates as a leader in teams and serves as an advisor for a small group of middle school students.

Mary Alice is interested in expanding her experiences by working in a school outside of the United States. She will bring an open approach to working and living in a different culture. She will learn from the students and colleagues with whom she works as she shares her knowledge and expertise. She is excited about taking on this challenge at this time in her life and will work hard to be successful in all aspects of working in a new school and culture.

Mary Alice designed and has developed the Talent Development Program, sometimes called the Spark Program, at Waits River. She works with a three-stage talent development model based on the work of Joseph Renzulli and Sally Reis from the University of Connecticut. (Mary Alice has attended Confratute at the University of Connecticut for the past three summers.) Mary Alice looks for opportunities to bring interesting enrichment events to WRVS to spark the interests of large groups of children. For example, she has brought children's authors and performance groups to the school. She also arranges small group opportunities for children either based on interests coming out of the large group events or on-going interests. For example, one of her volunteers works with several groups regularly on Lego Robotics. Finally, she works with teachers, children, and parents to identify individual children's interests. She then arranges experiences for individual children to work either with her or with a volunteer who has expertise related to the child's interests. Any child in the school is eligible to work with Mary Alice in one of her programs.

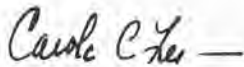
Thanks to Mary Alice, the Talent Development Program is a dynamic and extensive part of the opportunities available to our students. For the program to be as successful as it is, Mary Alice has to be very well organized and dedicated. She puts in long hours after school working side-by-side with volunteers. Two of the most visible programs are the *Waits River Times*, our school newspaper, and Odyssey of the Mind. Our children's lives are richer because of her dedication to them.

The other part of Mary Alice's position at WRVS is the school library. Mary Alice took what was a very traditional school library and transformed it. The school library is warm and inviting. The book selection is extensive with an emphasis on excellent quality children's literature and non-fiction materials. Mary Alice uses a flexible scheduling approach and works with teachers who are required to accompany their classes to the library. She teaches library and research skills in a way that is integrated into the general curriculum. In addition, Mary Alice has developed an extensive technology network in the library.

Mary Alice gives of herself beyond the boundaries of her position to help WRVS become a better school. For example, Mary Alice is the driving force behind our participation in the Foundation for Excellent Schools. She keeps our FES team organized. She schedules meetings, takes minutes and distributes them to the entire school community, and facilitates most meetings. In addition, she takes on responsibility for at least one FES event each year. She has organized a Community Career and College day at the school. She has arranged for community members to come to school to talk with middle school students about their careers, represent the college or university they attended, and talk about the education and training it took for them to learn to do what they do. This was a very important event for our middle school students.

In summary, it is without reservation that I recommend **Mary Alice Osborne** to you for positions either as a gifted and talented educator or librarian in an international school. She is a dedicated and thoughtful professional who shares her passion in a way that is contagious. It is very difficult to imagine WRVS without Mary Alice, but I support her desire to grow professionally and take on new challenges. Please feel free to call me if I can answer specific questions about her performance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carole C. Freeman" followed by a horizontal line.

Carole C. Freeman, Ph.D.  
Principal