

May 26, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a recommendation for my colleague at Monaco Elementary School, Laura Backman. I have been fortunate to have worked with Ms. Backman as a primary teacher for the last two years. She has been professional and has contributed an immense amount to our school's professional development and planning for our students. It is my opinion that Laura Backman has what it takes to be an outstanding teacher for your school.

Laura Backman demonstrates to her students a variety of strategies teachers should be using to help our students with learning to read or comprehend reading, writing, science, and math. Ms. Backman is trained in Linda-Mood, Bell: a sensory imagery reading program that helps students learn English reading patterns and rules, and a visualization and verbalization program that helps our students with comprehension. She has used this program at our school as an intervention since she first came. She is also trained in helping students with phonemic awareness, and is great with using centers from a variety of professional resources.

Laura Backman uses the SIOP language model and has had two years of this training for her ELA learners. It is very important to note that when this school year started, many students were non-English speaking-or very limited. To best meet their needs she has worked closely with our bilingual literacy coach and their former teacher. With persistence and perseverance, her students are now either limited or fluent English speakers. Also, she has had two years of professional development with the National Literacy Coalition for teaching reading, demonstrated reading, writing, and assessment of both reading and writing. Her classroom is very visual and organized nicely.

Laura Backman's interpersonal skills are friendliness and respect for all she works with (both children and adults). She provides differentiated lesson plans to take her students to the next level, or re-teaches skills that haven't been met. She has sat on a vertical team for English Language Learners. She bonds with the students in all grades, pre-school through fifth grade. The students adore her, as she is kind, and always smiles and motivates each and every student.

Please feel free to contact me if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

Susan K. Amador  
Bilingual 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher

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