



# Kettering Elementary School

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WAYNE-WESTLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS  
GREGORY J. BARACY, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

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Principal

May 26, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

Christina Stowe has been a teacher at Kettering Elementary School for the past two years. Prior to that time, Christina was enrolled in the Master's and Certification program at the University of Michigan's School of Education. As part of that program, she spent a year as a student teacher in the Wayne-Westland Schools. Her record as a student teacher was so outstanding that the district hired her to teach a fourth grade class for the last part of a year. The following year, Kettering was fortunate to have Christina placed here.

In her first year at Kettering, Christina taught a third grade class. She made a very rapid adjustment to the changes that the district was making in aligning the curriculum to the state standards and benchmarks. Her lessons were always on-target and they incorporated best practices. She did an especially good job at instruction that emphasized higher level thinking skills. She also did a commendable job of differentiating the instruction to meet the needs of the wide variety of students at different learning levels within her class.

Due to a shift in student enrollment at the end of last year, our building no longer needed three classes for third graders, and because Christina was the low senior teacher in the building, she was considered "displaced" from her third grade assignment. At the beginning of the current school year, Christina was transferred to an open position in our building in which she taught a group of "Young Fives" in the morning and a kindergarten in the afternoon. Christina did an excellent job with these two challenging groups of young children.

The 18 students in the Young Fives program were enrolled in that class by their parents' choice. Although these children met the age eligibility requirements for school attendance in Michigan (age five by December 1st), many of the parents felt that their children were not ready to begin kindergarten because of late birthdays and other factors which pointed to a younger developmental profile. Christina offered these children the same curriculum as the kindergarten class, but adjusted the pace and the instructional strategies. This entire group made excellent progress, and although it was the parents' expectations that their children would attend kindergarten the following year, five of the children made enough progress to move to first grade next year.

Christina did an equally good job with the kindergarten class that she taught each afternoon. She has an unobtrusive, supportive style of teaching that motivates her students to try new things. She has great respect for her students and provides a model of care and compassion that is reflected in everything that she does. She also understands how crucial it is to provide active, hands-on activities for young children's learning.

Christina has very good communication skills. She is direct without being confrontational and also has the ability to listen carefully and to reflect on what she has heard. She has maintained good communication with the parents of her students and also with her colleagues. She has done an especially good job of coordinating and communicating with the Reading Recovery teacher, who is also our building's Literacy Leader.

I have written this reference at Christina's request because she is planning to move to California. Her departure will be a great loss to our school and a great gain for any school which hires her in the future! We all wish her the very best in her search for a new position.

Sincerely,

*Paula Hotaling*  
Paula Hotaling, Ph.D.  
Principal, Kettering Elementary