



Bellefonte Area
School District

Pleasant Gap Elementary School

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Pleasant Gap, PA 16823
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Dr. Joseph Eckenroth, Principal

April 13, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

Miss Sophie Krueger completed a portion of her student teaching in my fourth-grade departmentalized classroom at *Pleasant Gap Elementary School* in the *Bellefonte Area School District* during the spring 2026 semester. This placement was part of a partnership with The Pennsylvania State University. During this time, Sophie taught science and mathematics to two fourth-grade classes representing a wide range of academic abilities and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Sophie's daily responsibilities included teaching a 45-minute science block, a 30-minute math intervention period, and a 60-minute core math block. Within these heterogeneously grouped classrooms, she effectively supported students with varying needs, including those receiving learning support, life skills support, speech services, and emotional support. She demonstrated a strong ability to differentiate instruction and ensure meaningful access to learning for all students.

Over the course of her placement, Sophie gradually assumed full responsibility for classroom instruction. Her lesson planning was thorough, intentional, and aligned with state standards, Common Core expectations, and the Standards for Mathematical Practice. She consistently crafted lessons with clearly defined objectives, thoughtful structure, and purposeful engagement strategies. Her instruction reflected a strong understanding of both content and pedagogy, and she skillfully adjusted her teaching to meet the diverse needs of her students.

In mathematics instruction, Miss Krueger effectively implemented research-based practices aligned with *Illustrative Mathematics* (IM). She consistently designed problem-based lessons that began with meaningful tasks to activate prior knowledge and promote conceptual understanding, rather than relying solely on direct instruction. She established predictable classroom routines that fostered a safe and structured environment, allowing students to focus on deeper mathematical thinking. Sophie regularly facilitated collaborative discussions in which students shared strategies, explained their reasoning, and learned from one another. She skillfully guided these conversations to synthesize student thinking and connect their approaches to formal mathematical concepts.

Additionally, Sophie emphasized the importance of the problem-solving process over simply arriving at correct answers. She encouraged students to explore multiple solution methods and helped them make connections between strategies. She incorporated manipulatives and visual supports, such as anchor charts and math vocabulary displays, to reinforce understanding and support retention. She also utilized formative assessments, including brief end-of-lesson check-ins, to monitor student progress and inform her instructional decisions. Math centers were another effective component of her instruction, providing opportunities for students to practice and apply skills in a meaningful way.

Miss Krueger's classroom management is notably strong and reflects a level of professionalism beyond that of a typical student teacher. She establishes clear expectations, fosters mutual respect, and creates a positive, supportive learning environment where students feel safe to take risks and grow. She is reflective in her practice, consistently analyzing student performance and adjusting her instruction to better meet their needs. Her commitment to student growth is further demonstrated through her emphasis on building confidence and promoting a growth mindset. She recognizes that students learn at different rates and sets realistic, individualized goals that encourage progress and success.

Additionally, Sophie effectively integrates technology to enhance instruction and student learning. She regularly utilized tools such as Canva Slides, Google Forms, and Google Classroom to deliver engaging lessons and assess student understanding. She also used platforms like *Mastery Connect* and *Imagine Math* to analyze student data and inform her instruction. Her ability to use data to guide both enrichment and remediation demonstrates a strong understanding of responsive teaching practices.

In my professional opinion, Miss Krueger will be an outstanding addition to any elementary faculty. She possesses the content knowledge, instructional skill, reflective mindset, and genuine care for students that define an effective educator. I would welcome the opportunity to hire her within our district, and I am confident that she will make a meaningful and lasting impact wherever she teaches.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like any additional information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stacey N. Miller".

Stacey N. Miller

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