



MARSAL FAMILY  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

March 25, 2024  
610 E. University Ave.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109  
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Dear Hiring Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Aileen Hurtig. I have worked with Aileen since September of 2023 as both the instructor of several of her key teacher education courses, and as her field instructor. I consider her to be an exceptionally well-prepared and skillful educator, demonstrating unique creativity and skill at designing learning experiences, building relationships with young people, and creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

As part of her Methods course, Aileen created an exquisitely-detailed 100+ page unit plan. Throughout the semester, Aileen grappled intellectually with this task, asking insightful and profound questions about the work, and making many thoughtful revisions throughout the semester. The same dedication continued throughout her student teaching experience. Aileen's lessons are engaging, creative, and extremely thoughtfully designed. Her content area expertise is apparent in the way that she finds authentic and compelling connections to culture in all of her lessons—such as a lesson on daily routines to have students explore how daily routines differ between the U.S. and Germany, and what those differences teach us about the different cultures. Aileen has a deep understanding of language acquisition, and her lessons skillfully scaffold students and allow students to integrate all four language skills, making the language come alive in her classroom.

Something you notice walking into Aileen's classroom is her dedication to caring for her students, building relationships with them, and holding high expectations for them. She knows her students well, knows their specific strengths and challenges, and uses that information to support and push them to excel. Aileen demonstrates a keen wisdom and maturity when it comes to making instructional and other decisions that support her students and meet them where they are at. She is always puzzling over how to engage students, and never gives up on students that challenge her.

Aileen's background as a language learner herself, as a parent, and as a longtime occupational therapist inform her work as an educator in beautiful ways. She is exquisitely attentive to the challenges of learning a new language, and provides a safe and playful environment for her students to practice using German. She is extremely thoughtful about supporting all learners and consistently includes best practices like modeling instructions; providing aural and visual information; giving students sentence stems, word banks, or other language resources; allowing students to fidget; providing strategic/preferential seating based on students' needs, and more.

Furthermore, Aileen is constantly pushing herself to learn more and improve her instruction. She seeks input from her field instructor and MT, as well as from peers, other teachers, and other sources. Her

tremendous professionalism and gifts as an educator would make her an incredible asset to your school. I am pleased to offer my highest recommendation to Aileen Hurtig for a teaching position at your school.

Very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diane Aretz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Diane Aretz  
Lecturer I  
University of Michigan - Marsal School of Education