



Dear Colorado Department of Education:

As principal of Denver East High School, I am delighted to write a letter for Carliss Binder, the teacher librarian here at East High School, in order to support her application for the Colorado Highly Effective School Library Program. I have had the pleasure of working with Carliss for the eleven years she has been here at East and I have watched our library grow and witness our students engage in positive experiences.

The East High School library is truly a space where students and staff "congregate" to take advantage of an inviting learning environment in order to utilize resources that meet their diverse needs. Carliss maintains a well-organized library. She works on everything from ongoing clerical tasks to literacy promotion, collaborative teaching, and student management.

Carliss has a management style that is "quiet" but effective. Students feel welcome and know that she will make every effort to help them achieve their goals. She makes sure that both students and staff members have access to appropriate resources that meet the needs of the 21st century learner.

Her prior experience as a Special Education Teacher has provided her with an awareness and sensitivity to the needs of teachers and students, a quality that I believe is essential to being an effective teacher librarian. She is highly respected among our staff for her strong sense of moral purpose and innate kindness. She combines excellent listening skills with intellectual curiosity and these qualities make her a natural collaborator and facilitator.

She has been instrumental in improving our school climate and supporting the curriculum by serving on Instructional Council for ten years, participating in AVID training and coordinating extracurricular student activities for our AVID students, teaching in our ninth grade academy for five years, and sponsoring our Key Club for the past three years.

I would highly recommend Carliss for the Colorado Highly Effective School Library Program. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andy R. Mendelsberg".

Andy Mendelsberg

Denver East High School, Principal

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Dear Department of Education Staff,

I am in my twelfth school year as a Spanish teacher at East High School in Denver, in my fourteenth year as a teacher with Denver Public Schools, and in my eighteenth year as a professional teacher. I have worked closely in several different areas with our teacher-librarian Carliss Binder, and I consider it a privilege to provide a recommendation for the school library program she administers at our East High School. In my twelve years of collaboration with it, I can testify to that program's high effectiveness in the following areas:

- **21st century skills for college and career; involvement in community, cultural and global initiatives; lifelong learning opportunities:** Two years ago, one of our French teachers and I collaborated with Ms. Binder in a tremendously challenging 21st century skills research and presentation project for our 4 Honors students, largely conducted in their target languages. Designed to meet key Colorado Academic Standards, it was centered around the United Nations Millennial Goals. Working with Denver Public Schools Department of Technology Services, Ms. Binder designed a series of lessons that taught our students to use the latest internet technologies and programs to create a website with which they coordinated their research, posted and centralized for sharing their on-line discussion of their research data, publishing and commenting on results and hypotheses as to causes, effects, problems and/or progress with implementing a particular millennial goal in a Spanish or French-speaking country chosen for study by each student team. Different presentation softwares were taught, to equip students with the latest engaging softwares with which to highlight and present the results of their study. As students and teachers we thus became acquainted with the latest technologically-supported study and presentation methods our students will encounter in college and beyond.

Furthermore, each team was required to identify at least one do-able task to contribute in a modest way to furthering their chosen U.N. Millennial Goal either locally or globally. To that end, Ms. Binder arranged for a series of appropriate non-profit and/or NGO organization leaders to present options to the students for involvement. The overall project, tremendously rigorous and demanding for students and teacher alike, appeared to me to have an effect on our students likely to carry on ahead into college and work careers. In fact, one of my students who researched progress on implementation of the goal for women's equality in Argentina subsequently spent an extremely challenging summer that year with a service-and-development youth volunteer NGO in Nicaragua. She came back to school for her senior year firmly determined to major in international studies in college in order to begin a career of major international travel, work and service.

- **Differentiation for learning needs of all students:** Again and again Ms. Binder and I have collaborated to increase and diversify by challenge level our library's collection of Spanish language children's and young people's literature. Self-chosen reading in the target language, differentiated both by interest area and reading level, is a key part of my instructional program, and our library affords that for my entire cohort of 160 students in five different classes ranging from Spanish 2 to Spanish 4 Honors instructional levels.
- **Direct evidence of impacting student achievement:** Aided by this set of resources and collaboration (in the previous paragraph), my Spanish 2 students last year placed fourth in the District in their Spanish proficiency skills as demonstrated by the year end baseline test, designed around Colorado State Academic World Language Standards.

Our high school, one of the first assembled in Colorado not long after it became a state, has a long, proud tradition of turning out leaders in culture, politics, education, science and public service—both locally and internationally. The distinguished alumni wall of fame is displayed in two long dark wood cases suspended on the hall side of our library's east wall. One of those alumni, Maurice Pate, was called upon by President Harry Truman in the late 1940's to found the United Nations International Children's Emergency Foundation. Mr. Pate succeeded in doing so and then served as UNICEF's founding director for fourteen years. In his photograph, puffing on his meerschaum pipe, Mr. Pate still smiles warmly at us. For good reason, I might--humbly--add.

Sincerely,



David Engelken
Spanish Teacher
East High School