

Isabella T. Dorr
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April 9, 2015

To Whom It May Concern;

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Susan Weber, storyteller and teaching artist on the roster of the Center for Arts Inspired Learning. I have known Susan for the past 25 years. As a mother I took my daughter to her programs at the local library. As a school administrator at Hathaway Brown Primary School I engaged Susan to help make literature come alive for my students. And most recently I have had the opportunity to observe her work at schools around the city of Cleveland in my role as a member of the Education Committee of the Center for Arts Inspired Learning. What a joy it has been to watch her grow and develop as an outstanding teaching artist.

Susan is a masterful storyteller. Her whole body exudes engagement with the story from the tips of her fingers to her tapping toes. Students are spellbound by her expressive face and respond imaginatively to her guided instruction. Her carefully planned boundaries allow a large group of preschoolers to joyfully interact with the story without getting out of control. Her use of puppets, props, and visual word cards help to communicate curriculum concepts and to hold the attention of her audience. Positive feedback encourages individual student responses to the various elements of the story.

Susan is a collaborator. While she has wonderful offerings listed in the roster of CAL which she has crafted to meet certain common curricular needs, she is at her finest designing workshops and programs to meet the individual curriculum demands of teachers and schools. She enjoys brainstorming with fellow educators to develop programs which will enhance the learning of the students with whom she will be working. Her work is an excellent example of how the arts can support and enrich learning.

Sincerely,

Isabella T. Dorr



SHAKER HEIGHTS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

FERNWAY SCHOOL
17420 Fernway Road
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120
Tel: (216) 295-4040

Annie Haney Whidden, M.Ed.
Whidden_a@shaker.org

April 26, 2012

It has been my pleasure to collaborate with Susan Weber, musical storyteller during this academic year. Together with our students, my fellow Kindergarten teachers and I were inquiring about the many ways people can use literature to express themselves and to learn about others. In search of enriching experiences for our students and well aware of the fine reputation that *Young Audiences* enjoys throughout our community, we selected one of Susan's performances from the extensive *YA* online program directory. After working with her, I am indeed impressed by Susan's talents as an artist; but I am also impressed by her skills as a teacher.

As soon as I contacted Susan to arrange for her to visit, she quickly became my creative and flexible colleague. She readily grasped the "big concepts" of our unit; she also leveraged her storytelling mastery to encompass the several specific literacy skills we'd highlighted to her as important. Susan enchanted our students as she also enriched their vocabulary and their comprehension. Further, Susan's suggestion to include related terms, such as *voice, gesture, tone* and *tempo*, broadened the experience for our students beyond what even we had envisioned for them.

In addition to my M.Ed., I am a licensed Reading Specialist K-12. I've served as 3rd grade teacher in a Catholic school, where I also launched its preschool program and became the K-8 school's Assistant Principal. As an educator at Hathaway Brown, I worked daily with an international community of distinguished practitioners. For the last five years, it has been my privilege and pleasure to be a kindergarten teacher in the Shaker Heights Schools. As a veteran educator, I heartily recommend Susan Weber, musical storyteller.

Sincerely,

Annie Haney Whidden, M.Ed.

Annie Haney Whidden, M.Ed.



July 3, 2012

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To Whom It May Concern:

Working with Susan Weber is a joyous experience. Susan Weber is a consummate teaching artist, storyteller and musician, made young-at-heart through years of experience teaching children. I have enjoyed planning and implementing various artistic residencies and performances with Susan in a variety of schools for more than five years in my position at Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio. Regardless of the students set before her, Susan engages her full self and revels in learning. It's not unusual to see Susan gaze intently, gasp with delight or suspend a poignant moment. She leads with authenticity and conscientiousness but never at the cost of serendipity.

Beyond her work with children, I have long appreciated Susan's ability to connect with teachers, students and parents. She communicates respect and admiration for the difficult work of classroom teachers, who in turn express amazement at how Susan activates students' imaginations and carries them along on journeys to see new places and meet new people, or in many cases, talking animals.

Susan's demeanor is refreshing, especially in situations where tensions run high. Her thoughtful and measured approach to her work has often brought her out on top in circumstances that would cause others to falter. I wish I could capture the magic that makes Susan Weber so effective so I could share it with every teaching artist I know.

Anyone who chooses to partner with Susan may be disappointed *only* in that all good things must come to an end.

Sincerely,

David Schiopota
Associate Director of Education
Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio.



Eastwood Elementary School

198 E. College St.
OBERLIN, OHIO 44074
(440) 775-3473

April 26, 2012

Mr. Bob Rybak, Principal
Eastwood Elementary School
198 East College Street
Oberlin, Ohio 44074

Letter of Recommendation for Susan Weber, Teaching Artist

To Whom It May Concern,

Susan Weber has now been our artist in residence for two consecutive years, working with all of our Kindergarten and First Grade classes in Arts for Learning through Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio. She teaches literacy concepts to Kindergarteners through music and storytelling and to First Graders through storytelling and dance, working with a dancer.

Susan models arts integration with academic standards. She encourages collaboration with Eastwood teachers, who have extended activities from the residencies that focus on long and short vowel sounds, segmenting words and letter-sound correspondence into classroom teaching throughout the year.

Eastwood teachers appreciate that Susan gives clear directions and expectations at the beginning of each day and throughout, encourages children's artistic choices and keeps students involved and interested. The culminating performances at the end of each residency involves parents and families in this arts experience that we plan to make a regular component of our school year.

Sincerely,

Bob Rybak, Principal
Eastwood Elementary School

Young
Audiences
Arts for
Learning

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Jane Horvitz
Michael Horvitz
Sally Menges
Bob Perkins
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Deborah Ratner
Sally Schulze
Thomas C. Stevens



May 7, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to recommend Susan Weber to schools, early education centers and community centers interested in bringing in a professional teaching artist with interactive and engaging arts programs.

Ms. Weber has been a teaching artist with Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio for many years. She is knowledgeable on educational trends and practices, and consistently customizes her arts programming to meet the educational needs of the students.

Through large-group performances, classroom workshops, residencies and professional development, Ms. Weber offers a wide variety of cross-curricular, literacy-based programs. She invites her audience on an imaginative and participatory journey through storytelling and music.

Her solo performance program, "A Buckeye Picnic" introduces students to diverse cultures and histories that shape the state of Ohio. Students travel the Ohio timeline through stories of Native American and European settlers, canal diggers, farmers, entrepreneurs, freedom fighters, immigrants and astronauts. Ms. Weber offers a follow-up classroom workshop, "A Buckeye Campfire" that uses Ohio stories to teach storytelling skills through curricular concepts such as timelines, maps, immigration and factors of production. This is only one example of the programming Ms. Weber offers.

In addition to her solo work, Ms. Weber works collaboratively with other Young Audiences roster artists. These partnerships offer cross-disciplinary programs that introduce students to subject-specific content through multiple art forms including dance, music, theater, and storytelling. Ms. Weber also offers professional development programs that provide educators with alternative and creative ways of teaching early learners, and students in grades K-8th.

When scheduling Ms. Weber, her program options are endless. Ms. Weber strives for excellence in integrated teaching through arts. She coordinates with the teacher and/or administrator to ensure her program will meet the site's educational goals. Her commitment to arts education is reflected in the design, delivery and customization of her programs. It is without reservation that I recommend Susan Weber for any arts programming needs.

Sincerely,

Danielle Kimble
Education Associate
Young Audiences
13110 Shaker Square Suite C203
Cleveland, OH 44120
216-561-5005 x 14
Danielle@yaneo.org



Elyria Kindergarten Village

42101 Griswold Road - Elyria, Ohio 44035

(440) 284-8250 - (440) 284-8162 - Fax

Rita B. Tomsic - Principal

SUSAN WEBER, Artist in Residence

The Elyria Kindergarten Village participated in "Arts for Learning: Between the Lions" - a Literacy based residency offered by Young Audiences of Northeast Ohio. In the course of five residency sessions held over a two week period with each of our Kindergarten classes, artist Susan Weber involved children in activities that reinforced literacy concepts (syllables, directionality, fluency, letter-sound correspondence) by using concepts from music (rhythm, beat, rest, composition, score, conductor) and theater arts (movement, sound effects).

Teachers were active participants in the sessions with Ms. Weber and adapted ideas from the residency to the classroom. The Kindergarten teachers appreciated how well the residency fit with the Kindergarten curriculum. For example, the phonemic extensions each week highlighted what teachers were doing with their students.

Susan welcomed input from teachers, allowed children to feel empowered and provided a variety of activities that kept the children focused and participating.

The culminating performance by each classroom allowed parents to experience what their children had learned throughout the residency.

Parents, students, and staff benefited from this literacy rich educational residency. We are proud to have participated and look forward to a continued connection with Ms. Weber and the Artist in Residence Young Audience of Northeast Ohio program in the future. The combination of time, talent and treasure is a tremendous addition to Elyria Schools Kindergarten experience.

Yours for Kids,

Principal