

**Boston University** Wheelock College of Education  
& Human Development



2 Silber Way  
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

June 5, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Ms. Kelly Mertens who has served as a program supervisor of teacher candidates and part-time instructor in the Special Education Program. She has been an exemplary member of our teacher preparation program and serves as a model of an expert practitioner who bridges policy, research, and practice.

We first had the privilege of working with Ms. Mertens when she began as a program supervisor of teacher candidates in the Special Education Program in Spring 2017. Her depth and breadth of knowledge about evidence-based instructional and behavior management strategies for learners with high-incidence disabilities, practical considerations for implementation of interventions, licensure standards and required documentation, intuitive understanding of individual teacher candidate's support needs, etc. made her an outstanding program supervisor. She worked closely with our faculty in charge of clinical placement and became a resource for other program supervisors.

Ms. Mertens was then tapped to serve as a part-time instructor for a pre-service practicum seminar for undergraduate and graduate students for the Spring 2018 semester. During a class observation, it became immediately evident that she capitalized on her wealth of experience and expertise to build upon the students' prior coursework in theoretical framework, evidence-based practices, and policy, and strategically selected instructional strategies to model effective teaching. Her seminar was designed with explicitly articulated goals, readings that align with the objectives, reflection in relation to the fieldwork placements, and discussion. What was most noteworthy was her ability to spontaneously provide numerous classroom examples based on the students' questions and to not only incorporate effective teaching by provide self-commentary to allow the students to recognize them and to use them in their own teaching. As evidenced by her course evaluations as well as the feedback from my own academic advisees, she serves a positive role model that pre-service educators should aspire to emulate.

When we developed a partnership with the Landmark School, an approved private school for learners with specific language disabilities, to offer a graduate degree and endorsement for licensure for their teachers, we asked Ms. Mertens to serve as an instructor of a practicum seminar to be held at the Landmark School starting in Spring 2020. She was able to quickly assess the teacher candidates' strengths and needs to provide a productive practicum experience. The fact that she was asked to serve in this critical role should help to emphasize how much we valued not only her expertise but the trust that we have had in her assessment of the students' needs. While this semester was disrupted by COVID-19, she supported the teacher candidates

and program supervisors with her characteristic positivity, dedication, collegiality, and commitment to her students.

I strongly recommend Ms. Kelly Mertens for roles in educational leadership and educator preparation. She not only possesses the highest level of professionalism, expertise, and experience but a collaborative spirit that will make her a key asset to any program community. If you have any questions regarding her qualifications, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Harayama". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nancy Harayama, Ed.D.  
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*Program Director*  
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