

May 11, 2020

Dear Committee Members,

It is with joy and pride that I compose this letter in support of Ms. Laura Jo Clanton's candidacy for *District Teacher of the Year*. I have known Laura Jo for most of her life. I met her when she was a ninth grader in my English I Pre-AP class at Bryan High School. She was a wonderful student--inquisitive, hard-working, and excited about literature and language,

She loved Shakespeare as I do, and she was always willing to go the extra mile to maintain good grades to accomplish her goals. Although she left my class after the first semester due to a scheduling conflict with her athletic class, I have never forgotten her enthusiastic spirit and her unwavering desire to learn all that she could in my classroom.

As fate would have it, Laura Jo and I were destined to meet again. In 2014, she became a neophyte English teacher at my school. I was the lead teacher for the ninth grade team to which she was assigned. Ms. Clanton was excited to begin her journey as a new teacher; again she was inquisitive, hard-working and excited about teaching her ninth graders the magic of learning to read, write and use the English language as a way to express themselves.

After a few years, Laura Jo was assigned to the junior English team, but her true calling is to work with the ninth graders. She is a proponent of the Reading/Writing Workshop which gives students a chance to choose the book they would like to read. Through this workshop model, students discuss the skills needed to master the STAAR test as well as to navigate through life.

As I near the end of my teaching career, I feel confident to leave teachers like Laura Jo at the helm. She will make sure that our students are well-prepared for whatever challenges they face in the future. So it is my great honor to recommend her as the 2020 District Teacher of the Year.

With gratitude and pride,

Janice E. Clark
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