

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure and honor that I write this letter of recommendation for Ms. Laura Clanton. Ms. Clanton has Bryan ISD in her blood. She was a student/athlete in Bryan and has worked for the district six years. I've had the pleasure of working with her for the last three years. This school year, I've worked very closely with her since she served as the English Department Head. This was her first year to serve in this role, and I'm extremely proud of the awesome job she did to serve the 20 teachers in our department.

Ms. Clanton builds great relationships with our students and parents that transcends outside of the four walls at Rudder High School. She goes above and beyond to make sure her students are successful. She will come early and stay late if that's what it takes for her students to be successful. She's also great at building relationships with the staff. She serves on our PBIS team that keeps the morale and climate positive at Rudder High School. She is also a Mentor Coordinator at Rudder High School and helps guide our first-year teachers in the right direction.

You will not find a better person who is more deserving of this award. I'm thankful to work alongside such a passionate and caring educator like Ms. Clanton, and I look forward to seeing what the future holds for her.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at derronrobinson@aol.com or call me at 979.739.8434. I look forward to hearing the good news that Ms. Clanton is the district teacher of the year.

Thanks,

Derron H. Robinson
Assistant Principal, Rudder High School

May 9, 2020

Heather N. Kasper
Science Department Head
James Earl Rudder High School
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To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to introduce to you, Ms. Laura Clanton, the Rudder High School nominee for Secondary Teacher of the Year. Laura is and has been a highly valued teaching member of our staff for the past six years. She teaches English I On-Level and Pre-AP. Ms. Clanton is, in my opinion, a truly gifted educator. She quickly develops good rapport with her students, establishes solid routines and employs consistent and fair practices in her classroom.

Ms. Clanton takes an active interest in the well-being of her students, through close and consistent contact with the parents in a very thorough and meaningful way. Her students respond well to her engaging approach to her subject and genuine interest in them, personally. She truly embodies the Essential 8-character traits on a daily basis, and her students have consistently made measurable gains.

As a colleague, Ms. Clanton is pleasant and cooperative. She has a delightful sense of humor and contributes innovative ideas to much of the staff, both professionally and socially. She is currently serving as the English Department Head, a member of the campus PBIS team, and a Mentor Coordinator for Rudder. She has the ability to wear and transition through all of these many "hats" with grace and ease. Ms. Clanton has helped to develop several phenomenal first year teachers within her Department, one of which who has been nominated as Rudder's Rookie Teacher of the Year.

It has been my pleasure to have worked with Ms. Clanton. She is a hardworking, well organized, committed teacher who has poured so much into our students. She truly has earned the respect of her students, their parents, her fellow colleagues, and the school administration.

As a former student, athlete, and graduate of Bryan ISD, Laura Clanton, is committed to the district's vision, mission and goal of "Children First. Always." She truly believes that a K-12 education will allow a child to unlock unlimited potential for success and will pay it forward for giving back to the community.

It is without hesitation that I recommend Ms. Laura Clanton, as the 2019-2020 Bryan ISD Secondary Teacher of the Year. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Heather N. Kasper, M.Ed.
Science Department Head

Kimberly A. Fox
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May 11, 2020

Dear Selection Committee,

I am pleased to offer my recommendation of Laura Jo Clanton as the Bryan ISD Secondary Teacher of the Year. Laura Jo is finishing her 6th year as a teacher with Bryan ISD and Rudder High. She has also served as the ELA Department Head, a Mentor Coordinator and a member of the campus PBIS Committee. I have had the pleasure to know Laura Jo for almost 5 years through our experiences at Rudder High School as well as through volleyball refereeing and club volleyball.

My daughter first met Coach Clanton her sophomore year in 2015. Although Coach Clanton wasn't her team's direct coach, she always contributed to helping the girls be better players whenever she could. According to my daughter, "She was strong and firm in a helpful and caring way". This was a tough year for my daughter as she was new to the team and was recovering from spinal fusion surgery the December prior. Coach Clanton was a source of comfort and support that helped her find her passion and love of volleyball and has even motivated her to be a volunteer/assistant coach for Rudder and Brazos Valley Juniors in 2018 and 2019. Even though she never had a class with Coach Clanton, she always knew she was a person she could go to if she had trouble with anything. Just knowing there are teachers like that at your child's high school makes a parent feel more secure in their educational experience.

Not only does Laura Jo have this type of commitment to her students at Rudder High, but she also gives her time in the community through volleyball refereeing and coaching with Brazos Valley Juniors. She has served as a referee with the Brazos Valley Chapter of the Texas Association of Sports Officials (TASO) for 5 years now. Two years ago, when I joined the organization, Laura Jo was a support system and mentor to me as I was learning the rules and skills. I saw this on the court with the youth competitors as well as she enforced rules and took the time to explain it in a way that wasn't demeaning or harsh, again helping them to play safely while developing their love of the sport.

Coach Clanton is also a fixture at the club volleyball level with Brazos Valley Juniors where she has coached for six years. She typically works with the younger age teams as she helps them develop their skills, but also teaching them to work with your teammates and to motivate them to always give their best. This job is not easy and takes a significant amount of time with practices and weekend tournaments, but it highlights Coach Clanton's commitment to youth and being a role model for them in whatever capacity she can.

Laura Jo Clanton's compassion for students extends outside of the classroom and the school she loves. She is a positive influence to all of the kids who cross her path whether its in her English class or the volleyball court. I firmly believe that Laura Jo Clanton is the ideal candidate for Bryan ISD Secondary Teacher of the Year. Thank you for your full consideration.

Sincerely,

Kim Fox

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
English II
Rudder High School

To whom it may concern,

I have known Laura Jo Clanton for nearly four years. She was my freshman year English teacher, and she has truly made an impact on me, even as I now prepare to attend Texas A&M University. There are certain teachers who make a profound difference in your life, ones you will never forget after leaving high school; Miss Clanton is certainly one who I will never forget. Every time I see her, she always asks me how I am, and I know that she truly does care. In addition to inspiring me in the way of reading and writing, she has inspired me to be the best leader that I can be. She has shown me what it means to not only be a good teacher, but to be a mentor as well.

In the classroom, Miss Clanton is always patient and kind, as well as enthusiastic about what she teaches. She cares about the subject matter as well as her students. She impacts not only the students in her own class, but also her former students, and even those she just sees in the hallway. In my opinion, a good teacher is someone who is willing to take on the challenge of difficult students. She is certainly willing to do so, considering the fact that before she taught me, she taught my brother Liam, who was less than easy to deal with. She is no stranger to the difficulties of teaching, but instead of breaking under pressure, she uses these difficulties as an opportunity to show how much she cares by investing in other's lives.

Miss Clanton is dedicated to her students on a different level than most teachers. I am a member of my school's FFA chapter, and with that comes competing in multiple speaking events. I can remember many times she has allowed me to come to her and recite the FFA creed or a presentation so that she can give me some feedback, usually early in the morning or after school. But more important than any feedback, she has given me words of encouragement to help me take on the challenges I face. The thoughtful feedback and the encouragement that she has given me has helped instill confidence in my abilities and the desire to be able to help others in the same way. Every time she listens to me say the FFA creed or give a speech she demonstrates to me that she not only cares about my education but about the things that are dear to my heart. Her commitment to me as a person extends far beyond the five days a week I spent in her classroom three years ago, and I know that if ever I need her in the future, I can count on her.

When I was younger, I wanted to be a veterinarian, but through high school I have realized that my true passion lies in becoming a teacher. There are a few teachers who made a mark on me and who inspired me to become a teacher, and Miss Clanton is definitely one of them. I want to be able to make a difference in teens just like she has for me. She is greatly deserving of the title "Teacher of the Year," and I give her my utmost recommendation.

Sincerely,
Emily Adams