

October 17, 2018

To whom it may concern:

I am writing a letter of recommendation for Justine Skillman, who is the 3rd grade general studies teacher at the Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis and the 2nd grade math teacher. Our son, Harris, who is currently in 5th grade, had Mrs. Skillman in 3rd grade. Our son, Jared, is currently in 2nd grade and has Mrs. Skillman now for math.

Mrs. Skillman's classroom environment promotes learning while offering a soothing, peaceful space. The vibe created by Mrs. Skillman herself and the elements of her classroom enhanced Harris' experience in 3rd grade. As a result of having Mrs. Skillman as a teacher and his experience in her classroom, Harris made tremendous academic and personal growth during the school year. Although it is still quite early in the school year, I anticipate Jared having a similar opportunity for personal advancement.

The quality of Mrs. Skillman's classroom is elevated by her use of flexible seating options, the class pet (Mrs. Smokey Rabbitson), calming décor such as succulent plants, shared school supplies and a class puzzle. The community feeling created within Mrs. Skillman's classroom develops as a result of all these elements.

Harris "won" the puzzle which he and another boy diligently collaborated on by inserting the last piece. The puzzle is now laminated and two years later, Harris still has it proudly hanging on the wall in his bedroom. Another example of the sense of community Mrs. Skillman's develops each year is the business she creates annually with her 3rd grade class. Under Mrs. Skillman's leadership, each 3rd grade class creates its own business that correlates with a theme they are learning or a larger goal. When Harris was in 3rd grade, the class business created bracelets and sold them to pay for the class pet being neutered. The class even wrote a business proposal and made a sales pitch to the school PTO, requesting a loan to cover their business start-up costs. Of course, the students were successful in their appeal, the business made a profit, and the students repaid the loan.

Based upon our experience having both our boys in Justine Skillman's class, we highly recommend her for the scholarship award being offered through the Kohelet Foundation for Jewish Education.

Sincerely,

Sandy and Brian Nachlis

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