



June 1, 2018

Dear Hiring Committee,

It is my distinct pleasure to recommend Tess Liebersohn for a counseling position at your school. I have known Tess for many years as a family friend. This past year, she worked as my counseling intern at Science Leadership Academy (SLA), a public, magnet high school in Philadelphia. In my ten years at SLA, Tess is the hardest-working, most dedicated intern with whom I have had the pleasure of working.

As an employee, I am confident that Tess will go above and beyond to fulfill her duties. I often assigned her a task that she completed in record time, always coming back to me to ask "what's next?" She was never content to just sit around and often designed her own projects. I quickly became confident in allowing her a great deal of independence in these projects, as I knew that I could trust them in her capable hands. Two of the things that she envisioned and executed herself were the translation of our website into multiple languages and her "Failure Board." The Failure Board, especially, was well-received by students and staff alike. She wanted to let them know that failure is a part of life and to consider what we can learn from our failures or, how we can "fail up." One of her other major projects was the rebirth of our peer mediation program. With minimal guidance, Tess developed a training curriculum and recruited, trained and supervised a team of mediators.

Beyond her major projects, Tess was always willing to help with tasks around the school, big or small. She was an integral member of our admissions team, conducting interviews of prospective students, developing a set of interview questions for prospective counseling interns, doing massive amounts of filing and data entry, and contacting school counselors to discuss our applicants. She did any job with a smile, from answering phones to mentoring students in their Senior Capstone Projects to creating an Improv Club. Our school runs on everyone's willingness to do anything and Tess jumped into that mindset head first.

Most notable about Tess was her commitment to our students and school community. She always questioned her practice to ensure that she was providing our students with the most equitable and informed counseling techniques. We often debriefed on sessions and she questioned certain decisions she had made, always seeking feedback so that she could make adjustments, as needed, in subsequent sessions. Additionally, her constant inquiry helped me question my own practices and now allow myself to fall into the slump of someone who has done the job for too long. Most of all, she got along well with the diverse range of students and staff at our school. She was able to effectively communicate with our students and they, more than anyone else, were sad to see her go.

In closing, if you hire Tess, you are getting more than a counselor. You are getting a softball coach, improv/theater teacher and much more. She would be an asset to the counseling department and the entire school community. Your students and staff would be lucky to work with such a caring and kind individual.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions about Tess's qualifications. I recommend her with the utmost enthusiasm.

Sincerely,  
Zoe Siswick, M.Ed  
Counselor  
Softball & Girls Soccer Coach  
Science Leadership Academy