Jefferson Hills Intermediate School
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JEFFERSON HILLS, PA 15025
PHONE: 412-655-4163
FAX: 412-655-4973
www.wjhsd.net

WEST ELIZABETH - JEFFERSON HILLS - PLEASANT HILLS

DR. MELISSA McCAULEY
Principal

ANTHONY SENDRO
Assistant Principal

October 20, 2026

To Whom it May Concern:

Ava Zenobi has served as my Long Term Substitute for the past 9 weeks, and during that time she consistently impressed me with her sense of professionalism, responsibility, and passion for education. She was a member of an eleven-teacher 5th grade team, in a (1:1) district, and was responsible for teaching English Language Arts to three classes of 5th grade students. Ms. Zenobi began her work in August by opening my classroom for the 2026-2027 school year. She fulfilled the duties of starting the school year by creating classroom rosters and schedules, arranging classroom seating charts, attending GIEP, IEP, and 504 plan meetings, planning lessons, and establishing her own classroom procedures and expectations.

Ava worked with a diverse student population inclusive of students with GIEPs, IEPs, 504s, and English Language Learners. The classroom environment created by Ms. Zenobi has been supportive and conducive to high student achievement. Classroom procedures and behavior expectations are well-established and consistently enforced. Similarly, assignment expectations are clearly stated, allowing students to focus on specific standards and outcomes.

While fulfilling the role as a 5th grade English Language Arts teacher, Ms. Zenobi has been responsible for teaching reading, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and writing lessons from the Core Knowledge Language Arts curriculum; furthermore, she designed many of her own supplemental resources to boost student engagement. Technology was a part of her daily routine. She utilized our district learning platform, Canvas, to post assignments, due dates, interactive components, and parent communication. In addition, Ms. Zenobi has kept accurate and organized student records and grades through our district gradebook, Skyward.

Ava took advantage of all professional development opportunities to continue in her growth as a teacher and to provide students with the most up-to-date materials, ideas, and techniques. Additionally, communicating with families was another strength of her teaching. She maintained open lines of communication with families and, upon my return, spent time updating me on pertinent student information and concerns shared by families.

Ava's transition to Jefferson Hills Intermediate School has been natural and she has excelled during her time as my substitute. Perhaps of most significance, is how much her students miss her – a true testament to the relationships she built during her time in fifth grade. She has my highest recommendation and I am confident that she will continue to exhibit excellence in any educational setting. If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me at ahuss@wjhsd.net or 412-655-4163 ext 4207.

Most sincerely,

Alexis Huss, 5th Grade Teacher
Jefferson Hills Intermediate School

It is the policy of the West Jefferson Hills School District to not discriminate on the basis of sex, handicap, age, race, color, and national origin in its educational and vocational programs, activities, or employment as required by Title IX, Section 504 and Title VI. For information regarding services, activities, programs, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons or about your rights or grievance procedures, contact the West Jefferson Hills Superintendent at 412-655-8450, ext. 2226.

Mrs. Amanda Fazekas
5th Grade Teacher
West Jefferson Hills School District
Jefferson Hills Intermediate School
November 3, 2026

Dear Canon-McMillan School District Hiring Committee,

It is truly my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Ms. Ava Zenobi. I had the opportunity to meet Ava at the start of the 2026 school year at Jefferson Hills Intermediate School in the West Jefferson Hills School District, where she joined our fifth-grade team as a long-term substitute for one of my teaching partners who was on maternity leave. Hired just days before the start of the school year, Ava was immediately faced with the challenge of stepping into a new classroom, a new school, and an entirely new routine. She handled every part of that transition with grace, patience, and a level of professionalism that impressed me from the very beginning. It did not take long for me to realize that Ava was someone who brought something special to our school and our team. Her genuine passion for education, enthusiasm for working with children, and positive outlook were evident from the moment we began working together.

Even before the first day of school, Ava took it upon herself to make sure her classroom was ready to welcome its new group of learners. She thoughtfully organized the space with the understanding that a classroom should be more than just a place where students complete assignments. It should be a place where children feel safe, welcomed, encouraged, and excited to learn. Her attention to detail and willingness to put in the extra time before students even walked through the door spoke volumes about the kind of educator she wanted to be. She understood that creating a positive learning environment begins long before the first lesson is taught.

One of the things that has impressed me most about Ava is the genuine connection she has built with her students. For an early-career educator, she has developed an exceptionally strong rapport with children. She has a wonderful way of making students feel comfortable approaching her, sharing their thoughts, and asking for help, while still maintaining the respect and authority necessary to lead a classroom. She meets students where they are, recognizes that every child brings different strengths and needs to the classroom, and makes an intentional effort to ensure that each student feels seen and valued. One of my favorite examples of this is her "Weekend News" routine, where students have the opportunity to share highlights from their weekends first thing on Monday mornings. While it may seem like a simple activity, it speaks volumes about Ava's priorities as an educator. She wants to know her students as people, not just as learners. She understands that the relationships we build with children are often what allow the greatest learning to happen. I truly admire the care and intention she puts into making those connections.

Ava is also someone who brings an incredible amount of positivity to the people around her. She truly stands out as a ray of sunshine in the world of education. Throughout our time working together, she has consistently demonstrated professionalism, dependability, and a willingness to go above and beyond. She is punctual, prepared, and always approaches her responsibilities with a positive attitude. What I find particularly admirable is that Ava never seemed content with simply meeting the expectations of her role.

She took the initiative to attend extracurricular events within the district, even when she was not required to do so, because she genuinely wanted to become more involved and learn about the school community. She recognizes that being an educator means being a lifelong learner and approaches the ever-changing world of education with curiosity, enthusiasm, and an eagerness to grow. Those qualities are not only impressive in an early-career teacher; they are qualities I believe will serve her throughout her entire teaching career.

Although I am genuinely saddened that my time working alongside Ava has come to an end, I am incredibly excited for what lies ahead for her. I wholeheartedly encourage you to consider her for your open sixth-grade teaching position. I hope you recognize what a special opportunity it would be to welcome someone like Ava into your school community. She has so much to offer, not only as an educator but also as a colleague, friend, and positive presence in the lives of the people around her. I have no doubt that she will continue to grow into an exceptional teacher, and I would be thrilled to see her given the opportunity to do so. Any school would be fortunate to have her, and I know she would absolutely dazzle you. I recommend Ava without hesitation and with my fullest confidence.

With my highest recommendation,

Mrs. Amanda Fazekas

Mrs. Amanda Fazekas

West Jefferson Hills School District

Jefferson Hills Intermediate School

afazekas@wjhsd.net

Mrs. Lori Gephart
Grade 5 Math Teacher
Jefferson Hills Intermediate School
West Jefferson Hills School District

To whom it may concern,

It is my pleasure to write a letter of recommendation for Miss Ava Zenobi, who served as a substitute teacher for the first nine weeks of the 2026-2027 school year. Miss Zenobi taught fifth grade during her time in the West Jefferson Hills School District, and she was my partner teacher.

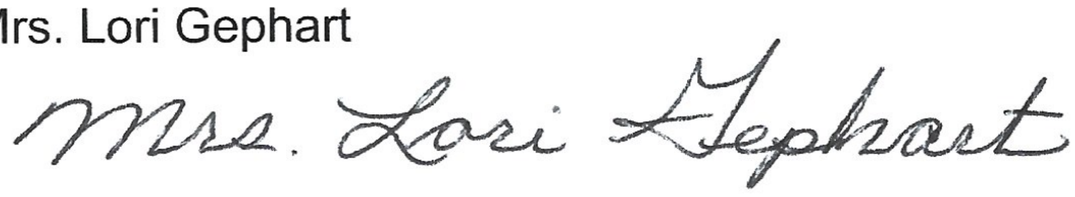
Miss Zenobi proved herself to be extremely qualified for the position immediately. As she started the school year, she quickly developed classroom rules and expectations that her students responded to positively. After 33 years of teaching myself, I was incredibly impressed with her natural ability to create a positive learning environment while utilizing classroom management skills that few new teachers possess. Miss Zenobi had all the skills and knowledge to be successful in her new role: patience, flexibility, professionalism, and dedication.

Beyond the classroom, Miss Zenobi was an active member of the staff. She attended community events that the district provided and signed up for any opportunities that came her way. She consistently engaged with other staff members, as well. Finally, Miss Zenobi was always willing to share her creative ideas for lessons/activities. She quickly became a part of the teaching staff and was well liked in our building. Her positive attitude was contagious and appreciated.

For all of the above reasons, I believe Miss Zenobi will be a great addition to any school. She is a team player and working with her was an absolute pleasure.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Lori Gephart



BELLE VERNON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Marion Elementary School

500 Perry Avenue, Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania 15012
Phone 724/808-2500 ext. 4500/Fax 724-929-3764

Dr. Eric Knorr, Principal ***Mr. Brendon Green, Assistant Principal***

May 13, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of Ava Zenobi, who served as a long-term substitute within our grade level during the entire second semester of the 2025-2026 school year.

Ava Zenobi demonstrated professionalism from day one. Throughout her time serving as a member of our third grade team, Ava proved herself to be reliable, consistent, and highly dedicated to her students and colleagues. She exemplified commitment to the profession by willingly putting in extra time before and after school hours to ensure communication with families was up-to-date, students were supported, and lessons were well-prepared.

Ava also demonstrated a genuine desire to use this opportunity as a way to grow professionally, consistently reflecting on her experiences, seeking guidance, welcoming feedback, and applying new strategies to strengthen her teaching. Her willingness to learn and improve was evident throughout the school year.

She engaged students through a variety of thoughtful and meaningful instructional activities while maintaining a welcoming and positive classroom atmosphere. Ava also demonstrated strong organizational skills and preparedness in all aspects of her work. In addition, she showed an impressive ability to adapt quickly to challenges and changing circumstances, integrating seamlessly into our grade-level team despite stepping into a long-term substitute role. She quickly became a valued and dependable member of our team.

Beyond her work with students, Ava proved to be a collaborative and supportive colleague who consistently offered assistance, shared ideas, and contributed positively to our team environment. She is truly a team player who goes above and beyond for both students and fellow staff members alike. I have sincerely enjoyed working alongside her and would highly recommend her for a future teaching position within the district.

Sincerely,

William J. Lofink, Jr.

Mr. William J. Lofink, Jr.
3rd Grade Reading Teacher

BELLE VERNON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

ROSTRAVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

300 Crest Avenue, Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania 15012
Phone 724/808-2500 ext. 5500
Fax 724-929-5785

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for Ms. Zenobi, who completed her student teaching placement in my third-grade Language Arts classroom. Throughout her placement, Ms. Zenobi demonstrated dedication, professionalism, and a strong instructional skill set that reflects her readiness to lead her own classroom.

Ms. Zenobi planned and delivered well-structured Language Arts lessons aligned to grade-level standards. She taught key skills such as descriptive writing, punctuation of book titles, future tense verbs, and identifying text structures. Her lessons were engaging, thoughtfully scaffolded, and responsive to student needs. One notable lesson included a creative descriptive writing activity centered around a seasonal theme, which motivated students and supported strong written responses.

In addition to instruction, Ms. Zenobi successfully helped pilot the Wonders Reading Curriculum for 5 weeks where she effectively facilitated and monitored a reading progress monitoring assessment through their online platform. She administered the assessment with accuracy and professionalism, maintained a calm testing environment, and used the data to reflect on student performance and instructional next steps. Her ability to balance assessment responsibilities with instructional planning highlights her strong understanding of data-informed teaching.

Ms. Zenobi fostered a positive, respectful classroom environment where students felt supported and encouraged to participate. She built meaningful relationships with students, established clear expectations, and managed classroom routines with confidence. Her calm demeanor and consistency contributed to a productive learning atmosphere.

Professionally, Ms. Zenobi was reflective, receptive to feedback, and eager to grow. She collaborated effectively with colleagues, maintained thorough preparation, and consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic. Her commitment to students and willingness to refine her practice make her an excellent candidate for an elementary teaching position.

I highly recommend Ms. Zenobi for a teaching position. She would be a valuable asset to any school community, and I am confident she will continue to grow and succeed as an educator.

Please feel free to contact me if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

Jamie Damico
3rd Grade Language Arts Teacher
Rostraver Elementary
724-808-2500 ext. 5116

BELLE VERNON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

ROSTRAVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

300 Crest Avenue, Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania 15012
Phone 724/808-2500 ext. 5500
Fax 724-929-5785

Darren Vaccaro
Principal
Darren.vaccaro@bvasd.net

February 20, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Ms. Ava Zenobi. Ava has recently completed a student teaching assignment in my third grade classroom. During this assignment, she proved herself to be an outstanding young teacher.

During Ava's tenure with me, she demonstrated many outstanding qualities of an effective educator. Ava was well organized. Her lessons were well-thought out and planned carefully. She was flexible and quickly adapted to change. Ava was eager to learn and had the ability to accept and incorporate constructive criticism. This acceptance allowed for rapid growth and an easy transition from theory to practice. Ava took every opportunity to accompany me in a professional capacity, and her friendly personality promoted positive relationships with other staff members in the building.

Ava was faced with a multitude of educational and behavioral challenges within our classroom setting. This diverse classroom population of 25 third graders included a student with a classroom aide as well as 5 students requiring the push-in learning support model. Ava worked tirelessly to diversify all instruction to ensure that she met each learner's needs as well as maintain the respect each child deserved. Her ability to manage this diverse and challenging classroom was noteworthy. The students respected and admired her.

I feel that Ava possesses the skills necessary to meet the challenges facing our educational system in the future. She would be an asset to any teaching staff, bringing to it a strong work ethic, excellent classroom management skills, and an evident devotion to the profession. I am highly endorsing Ava Zenobi for employment.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Winslow

Mrs. Lindsay Winslow, M.Ed.
Third Grade Teacher
Rostraver Elementary School

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

201 Wood Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

Dr. Richard Garris, Assistant Professor School of Education
Richard.Garris@PointPark.Edu, 412-392-3413

To Whom It May Concern,

Ava Zenobi has asked me to write her a letter of recommendation, and I do so with no reservations. Ms. Zenobi is an outstanding educator whose professionalism, instructional expertise, and ability to connect with students make her an exceptional candidate for your elementary school.

I was Ava's University Supervisor for her student teaching experience through Point Park University. Point Park University is known throughout the state of Pennsylvania as one of the top teacher education colleges, and we certify some of the most exceptional teachers and administrators in the state. Even so, throughout my time working with Ava, she stood out to me distinctly as a strong addition to the profession who will make a wonderful addition to your building and district.

Ava possesses a strong foundation in early childhood education and skillfully delivers engaging, developmentally appropriate instruction that supports student growth. Her lessons are impeccably structured and have great flow from beginning to end. She knows the content she is teaching and knows how to make it accessible to her students. In addition, she maintains a well-structured and positive classroom environment, effectively managing student behavior while fostering a culture of respect and student-focused collaboration. She strikes that perfect balance between supporting her students and holding them to high standards.

Additionally, Ava's ability to build meaningful relationships with students and colleagues is exceptional. Ava truly cares about education and the people she works with and alongside. Her students know she cares about them, and her colleagues know Ava will always "roll up her sleeves" and help with new initiatives or programming. Ava had two cooperating teachers during her student teaching experience at Belle Vernon Area School District, and both spoke highly of her work ethic and commitment to the school.

Ms. Zenobi has my highest recommendation for any teaching position which she is certified for. She will be a great addition to your team and will set a new standard for what you look for in your educators. If you have any questions about Ava or wish to discuss her credentials or my experiences working with her, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Richard Garris

Richard Garris, Ph.D.

Education Department

Point Park University