To whom it may concern,

It is my absolute pleasure to recommend Michael Fitzgerald for a teaching position at your school.

Michael Fitzgerald has been working here at Maple Bear Songpa as an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher since the end of February 2022. During his time here, Michael has made several changes to the way he runs his classroom which we have implemented for the other 4th and 5th grade classes. As a teacher at Maple Bear, Michael was responsible for teaching a kindergarten ELA class of 12 students three times per week (3 hours), a 2nd grade ELA class of 12 students three times per week (6 hours), a 4th grade ELA class of 12 students three times per week (6 hours), and a computational thinking kindergarten class to all five of the kindergarten classes each once per week (5 hours).

Michael started the computational thinking class in his second year with us. We chose him for this because his students love him, especially his kindergarten students, and because of his background in programming. He is uniquely qualified to teach this class. He is even working on a website that will generate mazes for the little robot they used in class!

Michael’s students love him so much because of his ability to form quality relationships with all of his students, no matter their age. I believe this is because he is so incredibly kind and patient, and also speaks and listens to his students with genuine care. Michael has been complimented on his patience and kindness by at least two colleagues. One kindergarten teacher frequently states how, when they begin to lose patience, they say, “Be like Mike.” This very same teacher commented on Michael’s patience by saying, “Michael, your patience… your patience is f\*\*\*\*\*\* angelic.” A different colleague commented on his patience and kindness when dealing with a kindergarten boy who is believed to have autism spectrum disorder. The following comment was made about how Michael handles this boy’s outbursts. “I think you handle it really well because you see it happen, you deal with it, then you let it go. It doesn’t affect you, the boy, or the class ever again.” He also spends as much time as he can with his students. He is in class at least 10 minutes before it is scheduled to begin and often 15 minutes early. When he’s early, he interacts with his students, either by playing with them or conversing with them.

Michael has had a large effect on our 4th grade and 5th grade programs. He was part of the team that developed the curriculum for 2023 and is the lead teacher for those grades this year. His influence has pushed students in those grades to learn computer skills, such as Google Docs, Google Sheets, and Google Slides. He has taught his students how to use Google Docs to write their essays, how to use Google Sheets to record data for their science experiments, and how to use it to build graphs, and how to use Google Slides for their presentations. His love of technology has also inspired him to create two websites which he uses in his classes every day.

Michael also excels at differentiation. Not only does he make accommodations for his students, but he also makes modifications for his students. One student in his 2nd grade class was struggling with motivation. During the parent-teacher conference with this student’s parents, Michael heard that this student loves all things animals, so he took it upon himself to create separate journal prompts for this student that relate directly to his interests to help develop this student’s fluency in English. This modification requires extra time from Michael to implement and he eagerly created these prompts.

One of Michael’s students has ADHD and as such requires quite a lot of accommodations. Michael kindly provides these accommodations without question to this student and often by his suggestion if he sees that they are struggling. He provides extra time on assessments, quizzes, and homework, and he even has this student work in the teacher’s office so there’s no external stimuli when required.

 I think very highly of Michael and was extremely happy to have him stay for a second year. While we are sad to see him go, I proudly recommend him for any teaching job. As the evidence above supports, he is an excellent teacher, who is adored by students of all ages.

 If you have any further questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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