



JESSICA LEVENSTEIN  
HEAD OF UPPER  
DIVISION

718-432-3967  
Fax 718-548-2089  
jessica\_levenstein@horacemann.org

31 January, 2023

### Letter of Recommendation for Deborah Kassel

Dr. Deborah Kassel is an English Teacher in the Upper Division at Horace Mann School. This is Deborah's twenty-seventh year at the school, and not only has Deborah made a lifetime of contributions to the English Department and the school at large, but she continues to actively develop her skills and understanding each year. Deborah's interest in growing as a thinker and educator keep her classes relevant and significant and allows her to form relationships with her students borne out of the depth of her knowledge and the extent of her curiosity about the world around her. Deborah has made a serious, positive impact on Horace Mann School over close to three decades and it is my pleasure to write her recommendation.

In addition to teaching ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade classes that feature an ambitious range of literary texts, Deborah has developed electives that reflect her ongoing intellectual exploration, particularly into Holocaust Studies and the History of the Middle East. For the past several years, Deborah has taught an upper-level English class titled "Man's Search for Meaning," and she has also constructed and taught a twelfth grade senior elective titled "Literature and Film of the Levant." Deborah would embrace any opportunity for enriching her curriculum, further cultivating interdisciplinary projects with other departments, and continuing to diversify the texts and perspectives she teaches.

Deborah's intellectual voracity has enhanced the experience of generations of Horace Mann students, both in and out of the classroom. For close to twenty years, Deborah has advised our school's film publication, *Cinemann*, sharing her passion for film with countless young *cinéastes* (in addition to a PhD in Comparative Literature, Deborah holds a Master's in Cinema Studies, along with a second Master's in Journalism). Deborah seems to take no time off, either, spending her summers engaging in her lifelong passion for knowledge, studying Hebrew and Arabic, among other topics. Through her many connections to academia, she has brought noteworthy guest speakers both to her classes and to the wider school.

Deborah's talent, wisdom, and kind heart make her a much-valued member of the Horace Mann faculty. Her interest in expanding her field of knowledge speaks both to her caring character and to her indefatigable work ethic. I'm delighted to recommend Deborah without reservation.

Sincerely,

Jessica Levenstein, PhD