

HAZLETON AREA ACADEMY of SCIENCES

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
DR. BRIAN UPLINGER

PRINCIPAL
MARIE ERNST

February 28, 2023

Dear Holocaust Education Initiative selection committee member,

It is my pleasure to recommend an outstanding educator, Mrs. Raffael Billet, as a candidate for this summer's NEH Institute program. I have worked with Mrs. Billet for ten years at the Hazleton Area Academy of Sciences. As a school counselor, I have worked collaboratively with Mrs. Billet in support of students in various educational endeavors. Mrs. Billet is an invaluable member of our faculty, providing individualized Gifted Support services to qualified students as well as providing instruction in Language Arts as outlined in our High School's English curriculum. I have always been impressed with Mrs. Billet's dedication to students and the thorough care she gives in each aspect of her job.

Mrs. Billet provides an incredible array of opportunities for the students in our Gifted program, often going out of her way to encourage students to participate in specialized programs and competitions that relate to their areas of interest. One such example is her yearly promotion of the Holocaust Teen Symposium which she has attended with students for the past two years. Additionally, last year alone, two of her students won Holocaust-related essay contests. If not for her direct supervision and support, students would not have the experience and exposure to such an impactful and important topic of study.

The Holocaust Education Initiative is particularly well suited to Mrs. Billet's area of instruction and interest. Although she is an English teacher, Mrs. Billet makes a great effort to make cross-curricular ties to History throughout her Language Arts classes. Her interest in history provides meaningful educational connections to students throughout two main areas of the humanities. This summer institute will allow a deepening of these connections for Mrs. Billet and her students. I have a great deal of faith that her insight on these topics will bring great value to the other educators taking part in the program as well. It is for all of these reasons, and more, that I enthusiastically recommend Mrs. Raffael Billet for the Holocaust Education Initiative this summer. I think it would be a difficult task to find an educator better suited for such a program and one who would dedicate themselves more fully to the opportunity. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Hopkins

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