

Steve Sisolak
Governor

Jhone M. Ebert
Superintendent of
Public Instruction



Southern Nevada Office
2080 East Flamingo Rd,
Suite 210
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119-0811
(702) 486-6458
Fax: (702) 486-6450

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
700 E. Fifth Street | Carson City, Nevada 89701-5096
Phone: (775) 687-9200 | www.doe.nv.gov | Fax: (775) 687-9101

June 16, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of recommendation in support of Mrs. Laura Penrod's application for the Nevada State Teacher of the Year. I have known Mrs. Penrod for the past sixteen years as one of my former teachers at Eldorado High School and Southwest Career and Technical Academy (SWCTA). In my previous roles in the Clark County School District and at the Nevada Department of Education, I have had the honor of supporting her as a teacher and I have witnessed her growth as a leader. It is with absolute pride that I write this letter of recommendation.

Mrs. Penrod is a highly dedicated professional who knows how to communicate and to motivate fellow colleagues and students to strive for excellence. Over the last 16 years, she has repeatedly demonstrated that she is exceptional in leadership, teamwork, communication, instruction, technology, and organization. Her current responsibilities at SWCTA include teaching English 11 Honors, Regular, AP Literature and Composition. Next year she will teach Dual Credit NSC English 101/102. It is important to note that she has an incredible background in instruction. She has taught Special Education and accelerated student reading through Read 180; Freshman Studies to support student introduction and transition to project-based learning at SWCTA; and during her summer breaks, she has taught ESY programs, Summer Acceleration, and the Dawson College Bound Program.

Beginning her second year of teaching, Mrs. Penrod emerged as a leader. She became a model teacher for Read 180 at Eldorado High School and at SWCTA, she became a coach, mentor, and lead teacher for project-based learning and SEL. In addition, her focus is always on students and building our future leaders. She has been a class advisor; the Key Club advisor; hosted student high school events such as student conferences, prom, grad nite, fundraisers; community service events; and she is currently the NHS advisor. The students and their families love Mrs. Penrod! She never says no, she is always there to support them, and because of her dedication to each of her students in the classroom, she sees 100% of them graduate each year. It is no surprise that her students have nominated her for the Heart of Education Awards and each year, she earns the superlatives of "Most likely to keep in touch with, most inspiring, and most memorable." She is caring, sincere, motivating, and has a big heart. The students see this daily.

Outside of her school day, Mrs. Penrod has stepped into additional leadership roles to focus on education and teacher advocacy. She has been an InspirED 1.0 Nevada Succeeds Fellow, and is currently a Teach Plus Senior Policy Fellow, Teach for America EDx Fellow, Teach Plus National Teacher Cabinet Member, and serves on the Teach Plus National Teacher of Color Alumni and Advisory Network. Most recently, she was invited to the March 2022 Nevada Indy Panel Talks with Clark County School District Leaders and now writes a column for NV Indy. This has led to her hosting a monthly roundtable with the district superintendent and teachers. Her voice is respected and valued by everyone who meets her because she is honest and always tries to find positive alternatives and solutions. Most importantly, never loses sight of why she is an advocate...students.

With all of the responsibilities and activities communicated above, Mrs. Penrod delivers and maintains a high level of support to her colleagues, her administrators, students, parents, the community, and educators across the district and state. Because of her high level of organization and expectations,

everything she participates in is always above standard and she never loses focus of her students.

In closing, it is with sincere conviction that I enthusiastically recommend Mrs. Laura Penrod as the next Nevada State Teacher of the Year. She is absolutely qualified and is the very best candidate for the state of Nevada.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Felicia Gonzales". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Felicia Gonzales

Consultant to the State Superintendent