



Dr. Benjamin J
Department of Educational Theory, Policy,
and Administration
Graduate School of Education
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
10 Seminary Place
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

www.gse.rutgers.edu
bjust@rci.rutgers.edu

(732) 932-7496 ext. 8110
Fax: (732) 932-6803

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of recommendation in support of Hannah Greenspan for employment as a high or middle school social studies teacher. I know Ms. Greenspan from three courses I have taught in the Social Studies Education Program in the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University. I also know her in my capacity as Coordinator of that program. Ms. Greenspan is one of the most intelligent students I have encountered in my six years at Rutgers University. Adding to this her outstanding work as a student teacher and her ongoing commitment to excellence in and out of the classroom, I think she is one of the top candidates we have graduated in the last several years. I recommend her very enthusiastically.

Let me start by describing her academic work. Ms. Greenspan graduated *summa cum laude*, with a perfect 4.0 average, from Rutgers College, with a BA in Sociology. She has maintained that 4.0 through her graduate school work, and looks to keep it as she graduates in a few months. She has won major university honors for her academic achievements, but what impresses me most about her is that, given her unlimited options for the future, she chooses to be a public school teacher. She will be an outstanding one.

In my courses she has emerged as a leader. The first course she took with me, Introduction to Social Studies Education, is a demanding one, in no small part because I wish to expose our students to the rigors of effective teaching practice—reading and mastering large amounts of text, presenting information in engaging and effective ways, and synthesizing extensive bodies of knowledge. Ms. Greenspan's work demonstrated that she could do all three. Although I have no doubt that she worked very hard in my class, she made it look easy. Her weekly essays were among the best, generally 50% longer than what other students did and indicative of a deep understanding of the ideas and their applicability to classroom teaching. Moreover, they were impressive for their intellectual independence. She did not get sucked into the poles of debate, but generally found other ways to understand ideas and fit them into broader intellectual frameworks. Needless to say, her final, integrative essay was a delight for me to read. She pulled together many disparate themes into a coherent and challenging whole. She earned an A, and if I gave them, an A+.

In a second course, Workshop in Social Studies Education, Ms. Greenspan wrote a curriculum resource guide for her student-teaching, including an annotated bibliography of books relevant to the subject matter, a collection of primary documents for use in her classroom, and a guide to local resources that her students could draw on or that would make exciting venues for field trips. Her work was, as usual, outstanding. She understood the content at a very high level and pieced together a wonderful guide for her student-teaching placement.

In her current course, Analysis of Social Studies Curriculum, Ms. Greenspan continues to shine. In class discussions, small group conversations and activities, and written assignments, she continues to excel, and to show an infectious enthusiasm for the field of social studies education. I anticipate her earning an A in the course.



Beyond her work in the School of Education, Ms. Greenspan has taught diverse students in a variety of contexts. She has experience as a Hebrew school teacher and has completed a one-month stint teaching English in Costa Rica. These experiences demonstrate her adaptability and creativity, as well as her commitment to teaching as a profession.

I think Ms. Greenspan is among the top graduates of the Rutgers GSE this (or any) year and has a future as a leader in the field of education. She will make an outstanding teacher and will quickly establish herself as an invaluable member of your school community.

Yours,

Dr. Benjamin J
GSE-Rutgers