



## Earl Warren Middle School

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## San Dieguito

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May 20, 2019

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To Whom It May Concern:

As a teacher with over 18 years of experience and the current Visual and Performing Arts Department Chair at Earl Warren Middle School in the San Dieguito Union High School District (SDUHSD) for the last five years, I write this letter of recommendation in support of my colleague, Nathan Richards, and his desire to seek a teaching position at the middle or high school level. A decrease in student enrollment coupled with a tenured teacher returning from sabbatical has unfortunately forced Nathan to pursue employment outside our district where he has been employed as a visual arts teacher for the past six and a half years.

I first met Nathan in the spring of 2013 when he was hired to be my maternity leave substitute, a position that required him to oversee my yearbook and studio art classes. That went very well, and in the fall, he was hired to teach digital art classes for another colleague on leave in addition to my classes when I chose to extend my maternity leave. When that digital arts teacher ultimately resigned to stay home with her young family, Nathan was hired as Earl Warren's digital art teacher, fulfilling a part-time staffing need. It was during this time he filled additional part-time needs in digital art, fashion design, and studio art at neighboring high schools and another middle school in the district.

Most currently, he has served as the digital art/cartooning and video/film teacher at Earl Warren, growing those courses to capacity, and adding an additional section for digital art/cartooning. Beyond teaching, Nathan has become an integral part of the Earl Warren staff. His skill set has lent itself to creating promotional materials for the school (videos for incoming perspective students/families, and posters and programs for our arts festivals), building a backdrop for our guitar class performances, advising and co-advising the Art Club which meets weekly and is primarily responsible for creating backdrops for the drama performances, as well as be the advisor for the Computer Club, which also meets weekly. Earl Warren hosts two arts festivals each year, and Nathan has played an integral role in the success of each festival since his arrival in 2013. Beyond Earl Warren's VAPA needs, he assisted with Homework Hour, a time either before school or during lunch when students can access additional help in all subjects. In the spring of 2018, he represented the district's middle school VAPA programs when he participated in the SDUHSD's VAPA standards task force which created district-wide department goals and pathways for VAPA students 7th grade through high school graduation.

With his digital and artistic talent, his ability to work with young people, and his willingness to be a team player on any given situation, Nathan will be an outstanding addition to any middle or high school staff. If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Tami Austin