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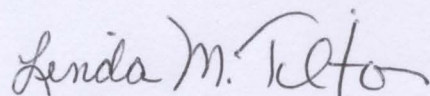
To Whom It May Concern

Merle Branner has been a colleague for the past two years, as a part of our technology department at Woodlands Academy. Merle is the only technology support personnel I have known who truly understands what technology support really should be; assisting and facilitating her clients, the teachers. She never acted like she was doing me a favor or I was interrupting her, but rather assumed an "I am here to help you" demeanor. As a science teacher, I was impressed with Merle's approach in supporting the variety of technology requests made by me and members of our department.

Our technological needs as science teachers often went beyond common computer skills or glitches, and at times included help with biotech and technology based equipment and probe ware. Frankly, it is impossible to keep up with the changing needs of the twenty first century high school classroom and laboratory. Merle never failed to help me with strong trouble shooting skills. If she was not immediately familiar with the specifics of our challenges, she was able to search and find resources to assuage the problems. Not only was she a source of knowledge and support, but she also answered requests in a most timely fashion. Merle's tech support always included a follow-up to make sure the problem was solved and that I was able to function with the updated technology.

Merle Branner has a warm and friendly personality and was always been valued and appreciated by her colleagues and students. She carefully directed students for developing methods to navigate the myriad of available technology information and applications available to students today. To compare her with the "sage on the sage" teacher of the last century would be a mistake. Rather I always admired her ability to encourage students and serve as guide, helping them to identify problems and then support them as they developed and expanded their ability to process, problem solve and navigate the monumental information available to the tech savvy pupils of today.

I heartedly endorse Merle Branner for any support position in technology. As a valued member of our community, I shall be sad to lose her when she moves on to a new position.



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