



April 29, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter of commendation for John Boyer and his work as Professor of Geography. Because of his positive reputation among Governor's School alums, his nontraditional and engaging media presentations, and his willingness to appear as a guest lecturer at our school earlier this winter, I have had the extreme pleasure of personally witnessing his strong appeal among my own students of history.

After hearing so many great reviews of his World Regions course at Virginia Tech from my former students, and accessing his online, abbreviated lecture series on Japan, I decided to gauge student reaction to using his materials in my Global Studies classes. My students are largely gifted and talented, are high school freshmen and sophomores, and expect high caliber teaching. They did not expect to see in a University professor a combination of high caliber and high energy teaching, spoken in their vernacular ... which seems to be why they were so overwhelmingly enthusiastic about incorporating some of his material into our semester-long study of Asia.

Professor John Boyer elicited reactions from my students that I've not often witnessed. A handful of them have purchased his textbook online and read it for pleasure, many of them hang his posters in their bedrooms and discuss his comic books with their parents, and I regularly receive updates in class about his most recent website posts on world events. They deeply resonate with his style and value his insights as they attempt to understand current events.

I am aware that there is some controversy surrounding Professor Boyer's use of language and the informality of his teaching style. My own administration was hesitant to endorse his lecture before he came, due to an online-accessible news story from a Roanoke paper. However, his lectures were delivered to a packed house, my students noted his every word with rapt attention, and my supervisor told me to welcome him back to the Governor's School anytime.

Please accept this letter of commendation with assurances that I don't write them often. This is a gesture of my appreciation for the willingness of Professor Boyer to share his expertise with my students and help me in my goal of equipping them to be thoughtful, inquisitive, and informed citizens of the 21st century.

Sincerely,

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