

Department of English (MC 162)  
2027 University Hall  
601 South Morgan Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7120

April 24, 2026

Dear Hiring Team:

I write in support of Grisel Miranda Sotelo's application for an English teaching position. I worked with Grisel as both her methods course instructor and her university supervisor for student teaching, and I recommend her without reservation.

From my first visit to Grisel's classroom, early in her student teaching semester, it was clear I was observing someone who is a natural—at teaching, in general, and at working with adolescents, in particular. Indeed, over many years of working with student teachers, I have encountered very few with the innate sense of lesson structure, pacing, or facilitation that Grisel has. She designs approachable bellringers that activate and assess prior knowledge, as well as central learning activities that are modeled, varied (gallery walk, jigsaw, etc.), and efficiently managed. Whether circulating during independent work or leading whole-class discussion, she is quick with questions that draw out and sharpen students' thinking. *All* activities align with summative assessments—assessments that engage students in both meaningful practice of disciplinary skills and exploration of issues that matter to them.

To be sure, Grisel's deep commitment to students' feeling seen and respected has been apparent since my first visit, too. She stands in the hallway to greet students, taking advantage of before-class time to check in on individuals and build relationships. During instruction, she approaches any disengaged student with curiosity and care, not condemnation. And her lesson design itself consistently connects new learning to students' experiences, even when the literary texts under study are far away in time or place. Perhaps most importantly, she shows faith in students' abilities to reach her high expectations—for example, teaching students to apply critical frameworks often offered only to “advanced” students or setting them up as “experts” on assigned chapters—and she works closely with a co-teacher to make sure students with IEPs and 504 plans meet expectations, too. With a deft hand, she invites varied voices into discussion, modeling and requiring thoughtful treatment of sensitive topics and each other. Throughout, she responds warmly to students' contributions, giving snaps for keen insights.

A strong advocate for students and a bright mind, Grisel will no doubt make a most valuable contribution to your school community.

Sincerely,



Kate Sjostrom

Senior Lecturer and Associate Director of English Education