

School District of South Orange and Maplewood

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LETTER OF REFERENCE LINDA LANIER-KEOSAIAN

I am pleased to write this letter of reference for Linda Lanier-Keosaian. I had the professional pleasure to supervise Ms. Lanier-Keosaian during my tenure as Department Chairperson at Arts High School in Newark, New Jersey from 1986-1998. During that time, the vocal program at Arts High School thrived, in no small part due to the extraordinary work done by Ms. Lanier-Keosaian with the freshmen and sophomore vocalists.

When Ms. Lanier-Keosaian arrived at Arts High School, the underclassmen were scheduled into random vocal classes called Mass Chorus. To offer the best experience for the students, Ms. Lanier-Keosaian took these classes and transformed them into separate 9th and 10th grade Women's Choruses. In a short amount of time, these choirs were invited to sing at the MENC Eastern Division Conference in Springfield, Massachusetts and the New Jersey Music Educators Conference. She also had the choirs participate in choral festivals sponsored by the American Choral Director's Association (ACDA) where they consistently received the highest ratings. As the program progressed, Ms. Lanier-Keosaian created a Madrigal group which also received the highest rating at the ACDA Festival.

Always an advocate for the children at Arts High School and in other districts, Ms. Lanier-Keosaian extended herself to create performance opportunities in the area. She started a Women's Choral Festival at Essex County College, which allowed the students to hear other Women's Choirs from the area and work with guest clinicians. Ms. Lanier-Keosaian also assisted in the founding of a choral festival in Essex County to assist in remedying the low participation of urban students in Regional festivals.

In my 37 years in music education and 25 years in music administration, I have never worked with a more professional, student-centered, talented educator than Linda Lanier-Keosaian. She is the benchmark by which I compare all other choral directors and music educators. I consider myself fortunate to have worked with her and cannot recommend her more highly for any position.

I would be more than happy to comment further on her extraordinary talents.

Sincerely,



Nicholas Santoro
Supervisor of Fine Arts