



552 Main Street, Watertown MA 02472 ♦ Telephone: 617-923-4156

Fax: 617-923-1061 ♦ Email: admin@atrium.org

www.atrium.org

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Letter of Recommendation for Maryann Thompson, principal of Maryann Thompson Architects

I am delighted to introduce you to Maryann Thompson and her firm. We are a small progressive school which had the misfortune to be asked to leave our rented home, the Browne School, in Watertown, in order for the city to build a new police station. We thus found ourselves with the daunting task of having to secure a new home and build a team for the ensuing design and construction which would inevitably follow in an extremely tight time frame. We interviewed 8 architectural firms and chose five as finalists. All were prestigious firms with experience in both school design and tight budgets, which schools always need. We selected Maryann Thompson Architects unanimously—her firm seemed such a perfect fit with our school as a result of their dazzling presentation.

Now that we have been working with Maryann and her colleagues since September 2005, we feel the fit is indeed perfect. Maryann has done so much more than design and lead the pre-construction team for our \$2.6 million project. She has appeared at parent meetings and faculty meetings, attended fund raising cultivation dinners, assisted us directly in the development of our struggling after-school program and its design needs...she really has become a part of our school's close, vibrant community. She is creative and gifted, especially at combining this dazzling creativity with a cool sense of the possible and the affordable. We are not a typically well-endowed independent school, and so our vision must be tempered with what is possible with our limited resources. What is most important for us was her ability to listen to our community's needs and build into the design tangible and visible elements that fit like puzzle pieces into our school's ethos and mission: there will be design elements in our multi-purpose room which will make it a true atrium; she has placed my office at the crossroads of the main floors traffic routes, so I can easily feel the pulse of the school from my workplace. The hallways will have areas of discovery and surprise which will blend perfectly with our experiential philosophy. Most importantly, she has adapted our wants and needs to what we can afford, without compromise or disappointment, while attending to the very diverse wants and hopes of our whole community.

I recommend Maryann and her firm with out qualification. I moved, helped to design and renovate an international school near Berlin, Germany in 2000-2001, and this experience is so much smoother and productive. Please call on me should you wish further information.

Best regards,

Stephen Middlebrook, Director