October 10, 2017

Mr. Jon Lindsay

Human Resources Director

Bend-La Pine School District

Education Center

520 NW Wall Street

Bend, OR 97703

Dear Mr. Lindsay:

Ms. Laura Swales (formerly Wolff), completed her Master in Teaching degree program of 96 quarter credits at The Evergreen State College in June 2005 and received her Washington State teaching certification in elementary education. We are pleased to hear you district has hired her, and are seeking to appropriately place her on your salary schedule.

As the certification officer for Evergreen since fall 2002, I am charged with understanding all the rules and policies regarding teacher recruitment and training. In Washington State, WAC 250-61-100 on Academic Program Requirements states:

“Master’s degree programs shall require at least thirty-six quarter credits, twenty-four semester credits or one full academic year of postgraduate study, specialization in an academic or professional area, and a demonstration of mastery”.

Thus, you can see we far exceed this minimum requirement.

In 1987 the Washington State legislature directed all state public colleges to create master’s degree programs for certification, valuing certification should be part of a graduate, professional degree. Evergreen’s Master in Teaching (MiT) program was designed in response to this call, to take the time to appropriately develop candidates’ knowledge, skills and dispositions to be effective teachers through both coursework and intensive field experiences. Our program format includes two and a half days a week of study and one day a week of field practicum in K-12 schools in year 1. In year 2 there is 10 weeks of full-time student teaching in fall, three days of coursework in winter quarter including a master’s project, and a second student teaching quarter of 10 weeks full-time in spring in a different school to gain experience at a different grade level and different social-economic environment/community. We are the only program in the state with two full time quarters of student teaching.

Given our program length and format which provides experience opening up a school year and building community with students in a fall student teaching, and a winter reflective quarter to strengthen skills, and a second student teaching quarter, our graduates are highly desired by regional principals for their competence and how quickly they become teacher-leaders. In contrast, most of the state’s master in teaching programs are only 45-60 credits and are generally four quarters in length with only a spring quarter student teaching experience (there are few that are as long as our program for those seeking additional endorsement in special education or ELL). Many post-baccalaureate certificate programs morphed into master’s programs without also incorporating additional field time or a master’s project/thesis.

Recognizing the length and quality of our MiT program beyond the typical MiT degree in the state, many regional school districts have had a policy to place our graduates on a pay scale starting at the MA+45 range, although we always stress to graduates that it is the district’s human resources office which makes the final determination about salary.

We hope you find this information useful as you determine Ms. Swale’s appropriate compensation.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information or have further questions.

Sincerely,

Maggie Foran, M.A.

Associate Director Teacher Education Programs

Certification Officer

Cc: Carrie Hulbert