



Hollis Innovation Academy
225 James P. Brawley Drive NW • Atlanta, GA 30314

May 25, 2019

Dear EL Education's Silverberg Leadership Nominations Committee,

It is with no reservation that I write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Diamond Ford. I first met Dr. Ford in 2009 when I was hired as a brand new 7th grade Math Teacher with Atlanta Public Schools. Dr. Ford was serving as an Atlanta Public Schools Model Teacher Leader, and was assigned to coach and mentor me as a new teacher. It was in that very moment that I immediately realized her passion and commitment to the field of education. Dr. Ford continues to model her commitment to growing leaders, not only in students, but also in adults through her beliefs in shared leadership. In 2011, I was hired by Dr. Ford to serve as the Instructional Math Coach at Venetian Hills Elementary, where she was the new Principal. In her new role as Principal, Dr. Ford continued to demonstrate herself as a dedicated and professional role model to students and teachers, a true leader within our district.

Due to her tenacity as an effective leader, Dr. Ford was later given the charge to open a brand new K-8 school, Michael R. Hollis Innovation Academy, under our district's school turnaround initiative. Remaining true to her passion for growing leaders, Dr. Ford offered me the opportunity to join her new leadership team, continuing in the role as a Mathematics Instructional Coach at Hollis. I was very encouraged about the opportunity to continue under her leadership based on my prior experiences with her as a mentor and Principal. In my role as an instructional coach, Dr. Ford has guided me in building my skills in leadership and teacher development. From her mentorship, I have gained a stronger sense of how to lead and guide teachers and students through instructional leadership.

Dr. Ford shows sincere interest in all aspects of her position, and is constantly seeking ways to cultivate and enhance her passion for student learning and achievement. She takes pride in all that she does, and consistently demonstrates strong leadership that is truly innovative. In her role as Principal at Michael R. Hollis Innovation Academy, Dr. Ford continues to exemplify the characteristics of a leader vested in building a culture for learning where students are valued and challenged to be their best selves.

I have known Dr. Ford for the past ten years, and in all modes of her work, I find her to be caring, compassionate, and above all else, highly competent in her understanding of fostering a learning environment for children that teaches to the whole child. I have had the opportunity to observe her committedly and enthusiastically serve within the Atlanta Public Schools as someone who leads as a change agent, and who truly advocates for the best for her students. Dr. Ford is unwavering in her educational philosophy, and it impacts every interaction she has with students and teachers.

Educationally Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danika Woods', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Danika Woods
Math Instructional Coach