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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of Melissa Johnson, an oboist and Music Education Major at Hope College. I have had the pleasure of working with Melissa over the last four years, from 2011-2015, as her private lesson teacher and have seen her grow tremendously as a performer, educator, and leader among her peers. I have found her to be an extremely dedicated and gifted individual that I am more than happy to give my recommendation.

As an oboist, Melissa is a hardworking and talented individual. From her first lesson I found her to always come in prepared musically with insightful questions about the pieces we were working on. Because of this preparation we were able to explore a wide variety of music that culminated in two solo recitals, only one of which was required for her major. Melissa plays with a clear, sweet sound and is comfortable in all of the ranges of the instrument.

Not only have I had the pleasure of working with Melissa in lessons, but I have also coached a woodwind quintet for three out of the four years that that she has been a member (2012-2015). In this group Melissa has been a clear leader not only musically, but also in terms of logistics. She has been instrumental in organizing rehearsals, performances, and leading music-making decisions within the group. Sometimes working with ones peers to make such decisions can be difficult, but Melissa suggests changes and opinions with tact and confidence. I can see her strong education background at work.

On a personal note, I have found Melissa to be an extremely trustworthy individual. So much so that I have had her baby-sit on numerous occasions. I am more than comfortable leaving my daughter in her care and feel that this speaks to Melissa's character.

Melissa has an enthusiasm for music that shows in the commitment and dedication she has given to her time at Hope College. In addition to her demanding class load as a music education major, she has been a stellar example as a performer both as a soloist and in multiple ensembles. She has also made time to learn the art of reed-making and to offer her musical talents within the community playing at churches and most recently being asked to perform a concert with the Holland Symphony Orchestra. On the whole I feel Melissa is a talented and motivated individual who would make a wonderful candidate for any music program.

Sincerely,



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