

Valerie Carlisle
83 Mountain Road Pleasant Valley,
NY 12569 March 30, 2000

Dr. Lois Jamieson, Supt. of Poughkeepsie City Schools The Board of
Education of Poughkeepsie City Schools 11 College Avenue
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Dear Dr. Jamieson and Members of the Board:

I am writing to you as a teacher who has taught 4th and 5th grade in the Poughkeepsie City School District for about 27 years. Because I have heard rumors that he may soon be seeking employment elsewhere, I would like to share with you my experience of working for these past two years with Bram Moreinis, Director of Technology. I would now like to not only "speak up" about how Bram Moreinis has helped the school district and me, but also to say thank you for the attention, support, and education he has afforded me.

I am not a technology wizard, actually far from it. As computers arrived on the scene many years ago, I first avoided them, then took an interest and tried to learn little by little about them through the opportunities given by the school district. But, to be honest, however much computers, the so-called "the wave of the future", piqued my curiosity, I usually was overwhelmed by all that a classroom teacher has to do and I can't say I mastered all that much.

Then I met Bram. I well remember our first meeting because he took my small idea of having pen pals with a school in Mexico and blew me away with his projections. Bram ALWAYS thinks big. I remember sitting there listening to him organize, plan, project, and offer options that I thought were magnificent, although rather farfetched. Finally, I had to agree that he had some great ideas, but I really didn't think they were possible.

Bram doesn't think that way. Bram doesn't believe in the word "impossible". He believes that you can get what you want if you are willing to try hard enough.

Bram secured a grant through IBM to get myself, another teacher and a computer to Mexico, our Oaxaca Project. But, it was more than a grant that Bram gave me. He gave me an opportunity that turned out to be the most exciting experience I've had as a teacher. He gave me never-ending technical support without ever making me feel dumb, and if you are a novice to technology you know how important that is. He gave a town and a school in Mexico a computer. He gave me a real belief in the premise that there are not problems, only solutions that take hard work and time.

Bram also put out Technology workshops with a plan and a goal. He provided incentives to work on a project and provided an in-service course to teach us how to implement them. Little by little, I have become more proficient in using technology. I have also enjoyed the opportunities to learn about the projects done by other teachers in our district, projects in which Bram supported the teachers with advice, equipment, and technological know-how. Because of these opportunities, I have been motivated to get donations and have provided my classroom with much equipment and software, and not at the school district's expense. My students have greatly benefited from this, as we have now been able to use technology in many areas of our classroom curriculum. We have done things that I never even knew existed a year or two ago.

A few weeks ago I worked with Bram and Irene Yozzo, our school computer teacher, and Ingrid Sanchez, a woman who works for our district and is a Hispanic advocate. It was a Sunday afternoon that we chose to come together at Bram's suggestion to prepare grants for a Hispanic Center in Poughkeepsie that would encompass technology, ESL classes, and job training. Although the project would affect our schools, it was not a "school project". It was an opportunity to extend what we as a team have learned and enjoyed working toward. Bram's knowledge and ability to organize quickly and efficiently amazed me. We were able to cover an incredible amount of business in those 3 hours. Again, please note that this was not done during "school hours", but on time readily given on a weekend. I have found that Bram has often given freely of his own time, and that he can accomplish twice as much as most people can.

I use these examples try to show what kind of person Bram is. He is extremely hardworking and energetic, and he has high expectations of himself and others who work with him. He will give all he can, if you are willing to do your share. He is an intelligent, creative thinker, and he believes problems can be solved. I believe that Bram gives the Poughkeepsie City Schools more than 100%. He's a man that has vision, energy, and drive. I think he deserves recognition for all that he's done for us, and the children of our schools, in a job that is extremely difficult. And for all this, I want to personally thank him.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valerie Carlisle". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and legible.

Valerie Carlisle