



## NAGOYA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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### November 2005 Recommendation for John Gaylord

John Gaylord is an outstanding principal in every respect. An experienced administrator, he possesses finely developed administrative and management skills, is current with educational research and pedagogy, and has recently led our school through curricular alignment and mapping of standards, content and assessment. As headmaster of Nagoya International School I have worked closely with Mr. Gaylord since he arrived in August 2003 to take up his duties as the Preschool through Grade Eight Principal in charge of 230 children and approximately 27 teachers, assistants, and staff. It would be fair to say that Mr. Gaylord has also served as assistant head of school as some of his duties and tasks are school-wide and non-instructional in nature and because he often is fully in charge during my trips away from school and out of the country. Nagoya International School is a private co-educational school located in central Japan serving 330 students from twenty-four different countries. The school offers an American curricular program and most graduates attend college in North America. NIS is fully accredited by Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in the United States and recognized by the Japanese Ministry of Education. Mr. Gaylord is a teachers' principal. That is to say, he understands and supports best instructional practices and, together with his teachers, actively works to implement them to achieve the best learning environment possible. A specific illustration of this would be his weekly meetings with each grade level team to promote and assess program development. Though these meetings take-up a great deal of Mr. Gaylord's time, teachers value them and appreciate the opportunity to collaborate to develop strategies for program improvement and their own professional development. Decisions are generally taken only after consultation with and input from the professional staff, and this, too, further underlines John's respect for the opinions and professional advice of his staff. During his two years here, faculty camaraderie and esprit de corps have risen and along with it, so has morale of the school. This has had a very tangible effect on the quality of the academic program. Additionally, through his close working relationship with the PTA and the several parent information meetings he organizes, community understanding of the school and appreciation for what we achieve have also improved. Two recent projects deserve mention as they illustrate Mr. Gaylord's finely developed organizational and management skills and underline the degree to which I have come to rely on John for school wide leadership. First, I asked Mr. Gaylord to lead the school's accreditation self-study and full-term visit. This long-term, complex task is one that can overwhelm a small school faculty and staff if it is not well organized and

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efficient. However, working together with our curriculum coordinator, he has developed and implemented what he refers to as a "painless WASC" self-study process, one which capitalizes on our current curricular committee structures, achievements, and direction, as well as utilizing efficiencies of data collection currently underway as part of strategic planning. Such effective planning has made this self-study more efficient and, in the end, an extension of the reflective, analytical practice he encourages in the daily professional lives of our teachers. The second project I have tasked John with is leadership of the school's negotiating team that periodically meets with a newly formed labor union. In this capacity Mr. Gaylord is responsible for leading the three-person management team in presenting school positions on a variety of labor issues. John has been cool-headed and methodical in his approach to these emotional and complex issues, and he has maintained the professional distance necessary to articulate an opposing view and its rationale while at the same time convey due respect to the union members and their position. John has been a good school leader and several programs have been started or enhanced due to his vision and tireless work. After School Activities (ASAs) for the elementary did not exist before John arrived; today there two days of ASAs led by teachers and high school volunteers. Our elementary kids love it, and the high schoolers have leadership and service opportunities that were not available before. Principal Gaylord has also manifested educational leadership in organizing periodic parent meetings to discuss programs, curriculum, learning outcomes, and standardized test scores. His easy charm and good humor make him very approachable for many of our shy and reserved Asian parents. This has been a positive development in community relations and helpful as we move our parent community toward a better understanding of our school and its programs. In sum, John Gaylord has had a significant impact on the quality of the academic program and instructional practices at Nagoya International School. He is a consummate professional who holds high standards for himself and his staff. I have found him to be unfailingly intelligent, thoughtful and energetic in his work. He has the respect and deep appreciation of the staff for his support and his leadership. John will be a valued asset to any school he may serve in the future.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Barton', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Charles Barton, Headmaster