



Hastings Public Elementary Schools

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BRIDGE TO SUCCESS

Tim Collins
SUPERINTENDENT

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter of recommendation for Chris Soentpiet, illustrator of children's books.

A group of educators in Hastings, Minnesota developed a "One Book, One Read" program in the fall of 2006 and decided upon the theme of diversity in choosing books for primary age students, juveniles, and an adult read. When we looked at books to choose for this theme, we were drawn to "My Brother, Martin", illustrated by Chris and written by Christine King Ferris.

I immediately contacted Chris not thinking that we would be able to either book or pay for such a famous illustrator. Chris and his agent, Rosanna, responded the same day and said that they would be more than happy to work with us. They were both helpful and flexible in making the arrangements.

Our expectations were somewhat unusual in that we brought all K-4 students in our district to our High School auditorium for his presentation. We had two sessions with 950 students attending each program. It was amazing how Chris maintained the interest and attention of this large group of students for 45 minute blocks of time. I received nothing but praise from both students and staff. Chris then made a presentation to parents and community members to further promote our reading literacy effort. We promoted this event as the big "Kick-Off" event for Hastings Reads, and could not have been more pleased with the results.

I would highly recommend Chris for work with any project in schools or in communities. Chris is such a great person and it was such an honor for him to share his talents with us. We were truly blessed.

Sincerely,

Allen N. Saunders, Principal
Christa McAuliffe Elementary School