



Leading for Equity: The UMD School Improvement Leadership Academy

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September 30, 2025

Dear NABSE Scholarship Selection Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter of recommendation for Mrs. Erin Cribbs, an exceptional school principal and educational leader, in support of her application for the NABSE Scholarship. I have had the privilege of working with Erin in multiple capacities: as the Director of the School Improvement Leadership Academy (SILA), where she was a distinguished Fellow, and previously in my role as Senior Project Manager in the Office of Professional Learning and Leadership within Prince George's County Public Schools. In both contexts, I witnessed firsthand her steadfast commitment to effective leadership, instructional excellence, and the success of all students.

As a participant in SILA, Erin distinguished herself as a reflective practitioner and a bold, focused leader. She engaged deeply with improvement science and equity frameworks, consistently seeking innovative strategies to strengthen teaching and learning in her school. Her contributions to collaborative inquiry were insightful and action-oriented, and she quickly emerged as a thought leader among her peers. Her ability to connect improvement efforts to the lived experiences of her staff and students is a hallmark of her leadership.

As principal, Erin has demonstrated the vision, resilience, and courage required of future superintendents. Her leadership reflects not only her technical skills but also her moral imperative to advance educational justice for historically marginalized communities. She is particularly effective at fostering strong partnerships with families and community stakeholders, ensuring that her school serves as a hub of opportunity, hope, and excellence.

The NABSE Scholarship is an ideal match for Erin. She embodies the qualities that NABSE seeks to uplift and expand: commitment to equity, courage to lead in complex systems, and a deep belief in children's brilliance and potential. Her pursuit of advanced studies in educational leadership will strengthen her capacity and contribute meaningfully to the pipeline of Black superintendents who will shape the future of public education.

I strongly recommend Erin for this scholarship opportunity. She is a leader of exceptional character, intellect, and promise. I do not doubt that she will honor the legacy of NABSE's founders as she continues to rise in the ranks of educational leadership.

Please feel free to contact me at damaries@umd.edu if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

Damaris Blondonville
Damaris Blondonville-Ford