II. Educational History and Professional Development Activities

A. Beginning with the most recent, list colleges/universitites including post-graduate studies. Indicate degrees earned and dates of attendance.
B. Beginning with the most recent, list teaching employment history indicating time period, grade level and subject area.
C. Beginning with the most recent, list professional association memberships including information regarding offices held and other relevant activities.
D. Beginning with the most recent, list staff development activity and leadership in the training of future teachers.
E. Beginning with the most recent, list awards and other recognition of your teaching.

(Maximum two double-spaced pages)
Font: Arial or Times New Roman, 10- or 12-point
Margins: Cannot be less than one inch
Format: PDF

A. Beginning with most recent, list colleges and universities attended, including post–graduate studies. Indicate degrees earned and dates of attendance.

- AP Calculus BC Summer Institute – University of North Carolina – Charlotte, July 2017
- AP Calculus AB Summer Institute – University of North Carolina – Asheville, June 2016
- AP Statistics Summer Institute – Clemson University, July 2015
- EDUC 633: Adolescent Brain Development and Implications for Teaching – University of South Carolina, Columbia, Spring 2014
- SMED 591: Data Analysis for Teachers - University of South Carolina, Columbia, Fall 2012
- EDUC 609: Introduction to Curriculum and Instruction for the Gifted and Talented Student– Coastal Carolina University, Summer 2012
- EDUC 608: Nature and Needs of the Gifted and Talented Student – Coastal Carolina University, Summer 2012
- University of South Carolina, Columbia – May 2009-May 2010 – Masters in Teaching, Secondary Mathematics
- University of South Carolina, Columbia – August 2005-May 2009 – Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, Minor in Dance, Graduated with Honors from the South Carolina Honors College

B. Beginning with most recent, list teaching employment history, indicating time period, grade level and subject area.

- Dreher High School – August 2010-present – Mathematics – Grades 9-12 (Algebra 1, Algebra 1B, Geometry Concepts, Algebra 2 CP, Algebra 2 Honors, Algebra 3 Trigonometry, PreCalculus Honors, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC)

C. Beginning with most recent, list professional association memberships, including information regarding offices held and other relevant activities.

- Palmetto State Teachers Association
- National Council of Teachers in Mathematics
- South Carolina Council of Teachers in Mathematics

D. Beginning with the most recent, list staff development activity and leadership in the training of future teachers.

- Assistant Director of the Dreher Dance Company – Fall 2015-present
- Movement Specialist for Dreher High School Marching Band – Fall 2013-present
- Math Team Co-Sponsor – Fall 2013-present
- Cooperating Teacher for University of South Carolina Student Interns (Internship A and Internship B) – Fall 2013-Spring 2017
- Cooperating Teacher for University of South Carolina EDSE 402 Practicum Students – Spring 2011-Spring 2013, Spring 2016

- Dreher Bobsled Team Sponsor – Fall 2015-Spring 2017
- Career Club Sponsor – Fall 2013-Spring 2014
- Collaborated with Dreher colleague, administrator, USC Liason to present on "The Social Media Generation of Teacher Candidates" at the Professional Development Schools National Conference, Orlando, FL, April 2016
- Richland One Summer Curriculum Work (Summer 2016) – wrote pacing guides for Algebra 2 Honors, Algebra 3 Trig, and PreCalculus and benchmark assessments for Algebra 2.
- Co-Presenter – TI-Nspire Richland One Professional Development, Olympia Learning Center, September 8, 2016
- Presenter – TI-Nspire Basics – Richland One Secondary Mathematics Professional Development, Keenan HS, August 11, 2016
- Presenter - TI-Nspire Navigator 101 - Richland One Secondary Mathematics Professional Development, Keenan HS, February 16, 2015
- USC STEM Teacher Ambassador for USC 2014-present
  http://www.teachscienceandmath.org/courtney-holden
- Presenter - Dreher/AC Flora District Professional Development, for Algebra 1 Common Core Probability and Statistics Drop-in Unit – Spring 2012
- USC Secondary Mathematics Alumni Representative for NCATE Accreditation Panel, Spring 2011

III. Professional Biography

What factors influenced you to become a teacher? Describe your greatest contributions and accomplishments in education?

(Maximum two double-spaced pages)
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While many will question someone who spends her entire life in school surrounded by teachers and teenagers, I know it has been the wisest and best decision I have ever made.

I grew up in the hallways and classrooms of my mother's school where she worked as a speech-language pathologist and at an early age I valued, respected, and enjoyed the camaraderie between the teachers, faculty, staff, and my mother. I absorbed how they always encouraged one another to be the best at their work and how their students' successes were theirs as well. When I wasn't in school or at my mother's school, I assisted ballet, jazz, and tap classes for younger students at Columbia City Jazz Dance Studio and eventually, as a senior in high school, taught the junior tap class. Also as a senior in high school I participated in Teacher Cadets and instantly fell in love with the field and current topics of education, particularly the inequalities seen in education. My placement was to observe and teach in my 7th grade math teacher's class--an incredible experience for me because I got to share my love and understanding of math with students who sat in the exact same seats in which I once sat. In that moment I saw the full circle of education: I had learned in this classroom, I now taught in this room, and soon I would also mentor students to be teachers. All of these combined experiences and observations helped me realize I had a talent for leadership and a passion to work with young people and that I, like my mother, wanted to encourage others to be their best at what they did; therefore, I made a decision to pursue secondary mathematics education.

As a student at USC I changed my focus to Actuarial Mathematics because I questioned my original plans. For two years I took numerous math, statistics, accounting, finance, and economics classes, and intended to take the actuarial exams and pursue a career in the corporate world as an actuary. After a final business class at the end of my junior year, I felt bored, unfulfilled, and dreaded a future sitting behind a desk in an impersonal office building. Everything I loved--interacting with people, planning classes, helping children and teenagers--was missing from my career plan. After several honest conversations with my parents and close friends, I stopped questioning myself and made the decision to return to my original focus and applied to the Masters in Teaching program for secondary mathematics. Again, it was the wisest and best decision I have ever made.

My greatest contributions and accomplishments will always be about my students. My first year teaching, when I was drowning in the work load and made many mistakes, I taught an Algebra 1 CP class that met every day for 90 minutes. What propelled this newbie through to the end of the school year was learning that my efforts had not only planted seeds – they had produced a 100% passage rate for my Algebra 1 students on the end-of-course test.

Everything I had worked for during the 180 days had paid off and it was worth all the efforts of one very tired rookie teacher. But this success wasn't about me--it was just as my mother had taught me through her career--it was about guiding and teaching my students to be the best they could be and helping them achieve and succeed. They didn't think they could pass the EOC but through a lot of encouragement, continuous high expectations, a refusal to allow them to fail, and a realization that they could meet this standard, they succeeded. Their success was my success. It was a highlight of my year and I will always cherish celebrating that accomplishment with that class.

That same passion I had that first year is with me every year, with every student, and in everything I do, even eight years later. Whether I'm teaching Algebra 1 CP or AP Calculus or choreographing a dance or rehearsing with the color guard or practicing with the math team for a competition, I have high expectations and an attainable standard that challenges students and encourages and empowers them to hold themselves to their own high standards and discover and evolve into the best version of themselves. It is a constant struggle to help students engage and take responsibility for their learning; students often find my high expectations difficult at times, but they always find a way to meet the standard. It is my hope that they will take the work ethic developed in my class and be successful in future endeavors pursued after graduation.

While the academics of teaching are seemingly most important, the non-academic side of teaching and the personal connections with students, colleagues, and student teachers both during school and through extracurricular activities are by far the greatest accomplishments I experience. Similar to my colleagues, I work to understand the disliked troubled student and his difficult home life, to help the transgender student transition into a new individual, and coach student teachers who become the Teacher of the Year at their own school. I know it is the personal connections with trusted adults and colleagues that help students and adults grow and succeed both academically and personally. It is a privilege to be a part of that growth.

People ask why we teach and why we spend our years in school. Teaching is the most selfless career and we tirelessly give of ourselves day after day. It is exhausting and time consuming. However, I am reminded every morning when I walk into room 120, feeling a bit overwhelmed but also excited about the day ahead, that there is a huge reward for this career and they sit in the 32 chairs in my classroom. Every day I get to help them become the best version of themselves. Becoming a teacher was definitely the wisest and best decision I've ever made.