EDUCATION COVER LETTERS

In many cases, your cover letter for a job in a school will receive more attention than cover letters in most other industries. Administrators view your cover letter as an indication of your enthusiasm for teaching and of your ability to communicate. The best cover letters convey something of your personality in a way that your resume generally will not. Cover letters present the opportunity for you to:

- Demonstrate that you are interested in applying to that particular school district.
- Highlight your two or three strengths as a teacher and reflect your unique experiences as a teacher.
- Express your enthusiasm for teaching, for working with young people, and/or for the particular grade level or subject you will teach.

HOW TO DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT

Research the district and include snippets of what you find in your cover letter. For example, if you went on a district’s website and you saw that they offer a variety of teacher mentorship programs, you might write a sentence or two about how the mentoring you’ve already received as a clinical practice intern has influenced your teaching style. This could lead into your excitement about the opportunities to be mentored by experienced teachers in the district if this is the case for you. Research is also good practice to prepare for an interview.

HOW TO HIGHLIGHT YOUR STRENGTHS

While your resume presents your background in reverse chronological order, your cover letter offers you the opportunity to draw your readers’ attention to a couple of your main strengths (preferably as they relate to the expressed philosophy or needs of the district, though often it is difficult to make such a direct link).

The best cover letters use specifics to back up general statements. These specifics can reflect your unique experiences in the classroom and the strengths they represent. For example:

- “To my field experiences, I have brought classroom management techniques that were honed in my two camp counseling jobs, which I was frequently in charge of 30 to 40 seven- and eight-year olds, without any assistance.”
- “I believe it is important to understand the different learning styles and strengths that each student brings to the classroom. In my clinical experience at Jane Doe Elementary School, I used movement and dance to encourage the more tactile learners. For the more auditory learners, I incorporated music, rhythms and nature sounds into some of my science lessons.”
- “I strongly believe that every child is teachable. This was made real for me when a first-grader who had been diagnosed with a learning disability, and with whom I had been working one-on-one with for nearly a semester, had a breakthrough in his reading ability that surprised even his classroom teacher.”
PRACTICAL TIPS

1. Keep a record of all correspondence.
2. The letter should be addressed to a specific individual in the district. If that person is not apparent from the website, call the district office for that person’s name and title. You may also choose to address your letter to the specific school district you are writing the letter in application to.
3. Use simple, direct language and correct grammar.
4. If mailing or hand-delivering your materials, use plain bond paper in white, off-white, light beige, or light gray. Use the same paper for your cover letters and resumes, and you can use matching envelopes as well. Strive for a “picture frame effect” with your margins. Business letters are folded in thirds and mailed in long envelopes, about 9.5 inches long.
5. Have the Career Center or a friend carefully proofread your letters for errors.
6. Sign your cover letters. Even if submitting the document digitally, consider printing out your cover letter, signing it, and scanning it to your computer.
7. Make sure your contact information is plainly visible.
8. Ask for an interview and include your phone number and email address in the closing paragraph.
December 10, 2022

Ms. Susan Holiday
Teacher Recruitment
Charleston County School District
75 Calhoun Street
Charleston, SC 29403

Dear Ms. Holiday –

I am a College of Charleston senior graduating in May 2023 with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with a certification in math, grades 7-12. Through friends, family, current teachers, and local job postings, I became aware that the Charleston Charter School for Math & Science will be hiring teachers to fulfill new upper-level mathematics positions. I believe that my education, skills, and teaching experience have prepared me well for a teaching position with CCSMS. I am extremely excited and enthusiastic to submit this letter in application for a position within your school district.

My resume, which has been uploaded to the CERRA online application, notes my experience in teaching mathematics to high school students. High school students need motivation, which I provide through the integration of math concepts into students’ personal interests. During my student teaching at James Island Middle School, I was given a project to create a 21’ by 30’ American Flag with my students. I explained how Pythagorean’s Theorem works to create right angles and the students then used this technique to create the flag. Additionally, I created a lesson that integrated other cultures into mathematics, which demonstrates the interdisciplinary skills that I used in my teaching. During the summers, I am an assistant pool manager and a swim coach. Through these roles, I have had the opportunity to hone my interpersonal skills by listening to the concerns of parents and members of the pool.

In addition to my specific interest in this position, I also am interested in the extracurricular activities that I may be involved in at CCSMS. My solid foundation as a liberal arts student has provided me with the ability to learn quickly, adapt to new situations, and work in a team environment. I believe that these qualities make me a competitive candidate for your program.

Thank you for considering my qualifications for the mathematics teaching position. I will call you the week of January 3rd to further discuss this position. In the meantime, if you would like to contact me to provide you with additional information about my skills and qualifications, please feel free to reach me by email at alicewalker@gmail.com or by phone at 843.555.5555. I look forward to the opportunity to speak with you regarding this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Alice Walker
April 4, 2022

Mr. Jeremy Phillips
Superintendent of Schools
Hanover County Public Schools
200 Berkley Street
Ashland, VA 23005

Dear Mr. Phillips –

I am writing to inquire about a teaching position in elementary education listed in the job postings on the HCPS website. I am excited about the possibility of becoming a teacher within the Hanover County school district because of your reputation as one of the nation’s finest in education. The students who graduate from your schools outperform the national averages by 20% on the SAT and 10% on the ACT. The focus of instruction in HCPS classrooms is in accordance with my own philosophy of teaching – the focus being on what is learned and not what is being taught. I believe that my skill incorporates technology and interactive teaching techniques into the classroom and my desire to work in a diverse environment would be an asset to your already remarkable, award-winning teaching staff.

In May, I will graduate from the University of Virginia with a Master of Education in Administration & Supervision. I attended the College of Charleston where I received my Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education in 2020 with certification to teach grades 1-8. After my combined studies, and long-term goal of becoming a Principal, I feel fully prepared to take on the position of teacher. I have gained an exceptional amount of experience in the classroom, outside the classroom, and in the school system altogether. During my part-time graduate degree experience, I have been serving as a long-term substitute teacher for Charlottesville City Public Schools, in a kindergarten, first-, and fifth-grade class. Through the experience of creating, teaching and assessing lessons, assignments, quizzes and tests at the elementary level, I gained tremendous knowledge in teaching strategies and lesson plan development for elementary-aged students.

In addition, throughout my student teaching experience when I was a student at the College of Charleston, I was able to incorporate adaptive learning dynamics to the classroom setting. I was able to utilize my theater minor to incorporate acting into lesson plans, encouraging the participation of student learners. I have also been involved in various activities and organizations while attending undergraduate school. I was a part of the Big Siblings program, serving as President for one year, where we partnered with local elementary schools to provide tutoring to at-risk students. I have many skills such as being able to work with Microsoft programs, classroom media/technology, and can speak proficient Spanish – a skill that would come in handy with the Spanish-speaking community in your school district.

I look forward to arranging a time to meet should my skills and qualifications match your interest profile for this position. Should you need clarification on any of my experiences, please feel free to contact me via phone at 804.333.4444 or by email at jndame@gmail.com. I will send a credential file within the next five days and will follow-up the week of April 18th. Thank you in advance for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Warm regards,

Jake Nathaniel Dame