

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 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, and that you are excited about the opportunities to be mentored by experienced teachers in the district if this is the truth for you. Research is also good practice to prepare for an interview.

HOW TO HIGHLIGHT STRENGTHS

While your resume presents your background in chronological form, 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, where I was frequently in charge of 30 to 40 seven- and eight-year-olds, without any assistance."

"I believe it's important to understand the different learning styles and strengths that students bring to the classroom. In my clinical practice 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 for nearly a semester, had a breakthrough in his reading ability that surprised even his classroom teacher."

See additional tips on the next page.

PRACTICAL TIPS:

1. Keep a record of all correspondence.
2. The letter should be addressed to a particular individual in the district. If that person is not apparent from the website, call the district office for that person's name and title.
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 your closing paragraph.

COVER LETTER SAMPLE

(Include the same name and contact header as that used on your resume.)

December 3, 2020

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

Dear Ms. Holiday,

I am a College of Charleston senior graduating in May with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with a certification in Math, grades 7-12. Through friends, family, current teachers, and local newspapers, I have heard 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.

My resume, which has been uploaded on 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' x 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 use in my teaching. During the summers, I am an assistant pool manager and a swim coach. Through those jobs 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 extra-curricular activities that I may be involved with 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 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 December 17th to further discuss this position. In the meantime, if you would like to contact me, please feel welcome to reach me via phone at (843) 555-5555 or email at name@g.cofc.edu.

Sincerely,

Alice Walker

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Name

Number | Email | Charleston, SC 29407

March 5, 2021

Ms. Linda Huff
Personnel Director
Danville County School District
123 River Blvd.
Danville, SC 12345

Dear Ms. Huff:

I am writing to inquire about a teaching position in elementary education listed in the job postings on the CERRA website. I am excited about the possibility of becoming a teacher within the Danville 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 DCSD is in accordance with my own philosophy of teaching—the focus is on what is learned and not what is taught. I believe that my skill incorporating 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 College of Charleston with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and will be certified to teach grades 1—8. After studying at College of Charleston, I feel I am 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 schools. Although I was told I would be teaching certain units to the students at Flowertown Elementary School, my cooperating teacher allowed me great freedom in developing and implementing my self-created lessons and assignments in the classroom. Through the experience of creating, teaching and assessing lessons, assignments, quizzes and tests at my elementary school placement, I gained tremendous knowledge in teaching strategies and lesson plan development for elementary school students.

In addition, I have been involved in various organizations and activities while attending College of Charleston. I was part of the Emerging Leader program, President of my fraternity, and participated in numerous community service projects. I have many skills such as being able to work with Microsoft programs, classroom media/technology, and can speak basic Spanish. While attending school, I held several part-time jobs. My ability to multi-task and successfully manage multiple priorities is evident through maintaining my strong GPA while balancing my extracurricular involvement and part-time jobs.

Thank you for considering my qualifications for a teaching position in the Danville County School District. I will send a credential file within the next five days and will follow-up with you the week of March 27th. If you would like to contact me, I am available by phone at 843-555-5555 or via email at name@g.cofc.edu.

Sincerely,

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