



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Cover Letter & Letter of Inquiry Guide



Career Connections | Office of Teacher Education
WW Wright Building, Suite 1000
<https://edcareers.indiana.edu>

For an appointment with a Job Search Advisor, call 812-856-8506 or email
edcareer@indiana.edu

Writing A Cover Letter

General Guidelines

- Use block or modified block business letter format; keep the wording professional.
- Send each letter to a specific person - make it personal.
- Individualize the letter by incorporating information about the school or school corporation. Don't use a form letter for all schools.
- Laser print the letter on high quality paper that matches your resume.

Parts of A Cover Letter

Introductory Paragraph

- State the intent of your letter. Name the position or type of position you are seeking.
- Capture the reader's interest in the first few sentences.
- Mention how you heard about the job opening, if applicable.
- Indicate your knowledge of and interest in the organization

Body Paragraph(s)

- Explain how your career plans, skills, education and/or experiences are relevant to the position and how they coincide with the organization's needs.
- Highlight your strengths and qualifications. Use specific examples to provide evidence of skills, experiences and accomplishments.
- Avoid restating your resume.

Concluding Paragraph

- Indicate what actions you would like to have happen next.
- State your desire for a personal interview, if that is your intention.
- Express your appreciation for the employer's time and consideration.

Be sure to follow up by contacting the organization personally within 2-3 weeks. This is to ensure they have received your materials and it will remind them of your interest in their organization.

Office of Career Connections ■ Indiana University ■ School of Education
For an appointment with a Career Advisor, call (812) 856-8500
<http://education.indiana.edu/undergraduate/career-connections/index.html>

Action Words

For Resumes and Cover Letters

Achieved	Designed	Launched	Reviewed
Acquired	Detected	Maintained	Revised
Adapted	Developed	Managed	Scheduled
Addressed	Devised	Marketed	Selected
Administered	Discovered	Minimized	Separated
Advised	Doubled	Motivated	Setup
Analyzed	Drafted	Navigated	Simplified
Anticipated	Edited	Negotiated	Sold
Approved	Eliminated	Observed	Solicited
Arbitrated	Endorsed	Obtained	Solved
Assembled	Enforced	Operated	Sorted
Assisted	Entertained	Organized	Staffed
Audited	Established	Originated	Streamlined
Balanced	Evaluated	Oversaw	Structured
Budgeted	Executed	Participated	Supervise
Calculated	Expanded	Performed	Supervised
Centralized	Expedited	Persuaded	Supplied
Changed	Explained	Pinpointed	Supported
Coached	Facilitated	Planned	Surveyed
Collaborated	Finished	Prescribed	Synthesized
Collected	Forecasted	Prevented	Systematized
Communicated	Formed	Processed	Taught
Compared	Formulated	Produced	Tested
Compiled	Fostered	Programmed	Trained
Completed	Founded	Promoted	Translated
Composed	Generated	Proposed	Transmitted
Conceived	Guided	Protected	Transported
Condensed	Handled	Proved	Traveled
Conducted	Hired	Provided	Treated
Conserved	Implemented	Publicized	Used
Constructed	Improved	Published	
Consulted	Increased	Purchased	
Contracted	Influenced	Reacted	
Controlled	Informed	Recommended	
Converted	Inspected	Recorded	
Coordinated	Instituted	Recruited	
Created	Instructed	Reorganized	
Cultivated	Insured	Reported	
Defined	Interpreted	Researched	
Delegated	Interviewed	Resolved	
Delivered	Invented	Restored	
Demonstrated	Investigated	Revamped	

Cover Letter Format for Teachers

Your Name

Your present street address

City, State Zip Code

Telephone

Email

Date

Contact Person's Name

Title

School or District

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Administrator (or Mr., Ms., or Dr. if you know the person's name):

First sentence/paragraph: State why you are writing: specify the position for which you are applying and whether you saw an advertisement or heard about the position or school through a referral or by reputation.

Second paragraph: Begin with a sentence that immediately grabs the reader's attention. Briefly summarize why you are qualified for the position – use examples and specific accomplishments to show how your skills and experience, strengths and accomplishments will address the school's and the students' needs. Do not reiterate what is on your resume. However, you can elaborate on something in your resume and how it impacted the students. Highlight any special skills that make you a more valuable candidate, i.e. your desire to coach a sport, your theater/drama experience, your interest in music or art, etc. If you are a graduate of the school, student taught or was a TA at the school, mention it in the first sentence of this paragraph.

Third paragraph (optional): Use this paragraph to reveal more of yourself. If you are a career changer, tell how skills developed during your previous experience will be an asset to you as a teacher (i.e. communication, management, follow through, organization). You can also state why you decided to teach.

Last paragraph: Express your sincere commitment to education and teaching children. Close the letter with a request for an interview and include your telephone number if you do not use your resume heading. Conclude by thanking the reader.

Sincerely,
(Signature)

Your full name, typed

Source:

School Leader Internship: Developing, Mentoring and Evaluating Your Leadership Experiences (Martin, Wright, Danzig, Flanary & Brown, 2005)

Sample Cover Letter for Recent Graduate

STEPHANIE ROBINSON
2900 Purchase Street
Purchase, NY 10577
914-323-0000 robinsons@mville.edu

April 20, 2009

Ms. Sara Jones
Director of Human Resources
Summerville School District
Summerville, NY 11111

Dear Ms. Jones:

I am interested in applying for the elementary teaching position posted on the OLAS website.

In addition to completing an undergraduate degree this year, I served as a tutor in an after-school program at a local homeless shelter, where I helped students complete homework assignments and broaden their understanding by connecting to the world outside their community. As a student teacher, I created lessons that engaged all learners by applying a variety of teaching methods and utilizing SMARTboard technology. I formed cooperative learning groups, organized individualized projects, created learning centers and implemented learning style research in every lesson. Alternative assessment methods, such as portfolios, rubrics and performance assessments, in combination with traditional tests, enabled me to evaluate the students individually and comprehensively. In both my student teaching and tutoring experiences, I met with parents to keep them apprised of their child's accomplishments and areas needing extra attention.

Classroom computers present unique opportunities to help each child achieve success. In a staff development workshop I attended called *Problem-Based Learning*, I learned to pose open-ended questions that children could research over the internet. In addition, I have studied and continue to monitor educational software and websites that address the diverse abilities and interests of children.

I am passionate about teaching children and forge relationships with them that help build a sense of confidence and enable them to grow as learners. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how my skills and experience can meet the needs of your students. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Robinson

Source:

School Leader Internship: Developing, Mentoring and Evaluating Your Leadership Experiences (Martin, Wright, Danzig, Flanary & Brown, 2005)

Sample Cover Letter for a Career Changer

Thomas Nelson
1111 Purchase Street, Purchase, NY 10577
914-323-0000 nelsont@mville.edu
July 29, 2009

Dr. Rosalie Collins
Human Resources Director
Hamburg High School
2233 Division Street
Hamburg, NY 12456

Dear Dr. Collins:

I am interested in the secondary English teaching position for the 2009-2010 academic year. I am well qualified for this position, possessing New York State certification for English Language Arts (5-12), a B.A. in English, and a Master of Arts in Teaching, Literacy (5-12).

My experiences as a substitute, tutor, and student teacher have afforded me the opportunity to interact with diverse student populations and engage them in learning. Using teaching methods that coincide with the Universal Design for Learning, including providing high-interest learning material, multiple means of assessment and instruction, as well as the careful modeling and scaffolding of new skills, I strive to ensure that every student achieves excellence.

In addition to believing that every student deserves and is capable of achieving success, I am passionate about preparing students for the globalized world that they will undoubtedly face as they grow to be adults. My lessons utilize any and all technology that is available, giving my students an education in common technological uses including professional writing and presentations, internet research, web design, and proper communication. Students are also encouraged to use and create podcasts, web quests, and other similar activities as part of their authentic learning experience, which engages them in the subject matter and teaches valuable real world skills.

Through my previous experience in retail sales and management, I understand the importance of motivation and possess excellent listening and time management skills. In training my sales staff, I created a cohesive team of people from very different backgrounds, modifying my training style to suit the needs of each individual. I participated as a tutor through a program at my company, volunteering each week as a teacher's assistant in a local public school. It was this experience that inspired me to re-evaluate my career and return to school to become a teacher.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience to further discuss my qualifications as a secondary English teacher in your district. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas Nelson

Cover Letter Guidelines for Ed Leadership Students

Your cover letter should

- Be one to one-and-a-half pages in length with short, clear paragraphs
- Single space within paragraphs; double space between paragraphs
- Describe you, not your previous employer
- Outline the realization of the district's goals
- Show that you have done your homework (know district/school and its needs)
- Be error free – spelling, punctuation, and grammar must be perfect
- Be positive, void of anything negative (districts want positive leadership)
- Clearly describe YOU and give the district the opportunity to assess the match between you and the position
- Highlight (but not repeat) information in resume that is germane to the position and the district's needs

In drafting the cover letter, you must assess your knowledge, disposition, skill and match to the position and district. The letter will be the first impression the district has of you and should bring out the highlights of your resume and your knowledge of the district and position. It is an opportunity to explain and expand your resume with a sample of your writing, philosophy and vision, and to establish how these conform to the needs and expectations of the district/school. The cover letter should contain the following four sections.

Paragraph One

- Begin by stating the position for which you are applying
- Include that you are aware of the duties and responsibilities of the position
- State whether you meet all of the qualifications – if you do not, specify which qualifications you do not meet or indicate when they will be met

Paragraph Two

- Highlight the knowledge, skill and experience that you will bring to the district
- Intent should be to inform the district about what you can offer them for the future as opposed to what you have accomplished for someone else in the past. Example: state that you bring two years of experience in administering a primary reading program, instead of stating that you ran the Distar Program for the XYZ District
- Summarize your resume – might include the highest degree attained, total number of years in education, relevant training or experience, etc.
- Can include further explanation and/or additional information not included in your resume – information about your background, the types of students with whom you have worked, evaluations, successes with particular students, other relevant information.

Paragraph Three – Your Match with the District

- Show how your knowledge, skills and experience meet the current and future needs of the school/district
- Become knowledgeable about the history, current issues and future demands of the district
- Analyze the needs of the district and position in light of your experience and abilities – this is the opportunity to show that you are the right match

Paragraph Four – Thankful and Bold Conclusion

- Offer a thank you for the time and effort the district took to review your application materials
- Request an opportunity to meet to further discuss your qualifications

Source:

School Leader Internship: Developing, Mentoring and Evaluating Your Leadership Experiences (Martin, Wright, Danzig, Flanary & Brown, 2005)

Sample Letter of Inquiry

Maxine Gerard 42 Read Hall
Bloomington, IN 47405
May 17, 2009

Dr. Ed U. Cation
Superintendent of Schools
County School Corporation
2549 Oak Street
Pleasant Valley, IN 47123

Dear Dr. Cation:

I am writing to inquire into the availability of an elementary teaching position in your corporation. As a new teacher, I am excited about the opportunity to begin my career in a school system such as yours. I particularly like what the system is doing with curriculum revision and "Teachers Teaching Teachers." The type of challenge and support provided by these programs creates a positive school environment. For these reasons, I would like to be considered for the elementary opening in County School Corporation.

My Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education was conferred this May by Indiana University. I also have a reading specialist certificate and anticipate my Initial Practitioner License for Elementary Primary and Intermediate in June 2008. I would like to be able to organize my classroom much like the high energy environment I created in my student teaching experience with Mrs. Planner at Cherry Elementary School. The satisfaction I received from facilitating the growth and development of those young people reaffirmed my desire to be a classroom teacher. A most valuable part of this experience was the opportunity to be involved in the "TESA" (Teacher Expectation Student Achievement) training that took place at Cherry during (and after) my time there.

Through these and other experience in which I participated throughout my college career, I have gained valuable knowledge that will assist me in becoming an effective educator. Included is my resume which provides additional information regarding my professional preparation and experiences. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Maxine Gerard

Enclosure