

Cover Letter Writing for Certified Teachers



The CEL guide to writing cover letters includes detailed information about writing a convincing cover letter. Check out www.stolaf.edu/services/cel for guidelines and sample cover letters.

Importance

Your cover letter is the first of your marketing tools that a school district official sees, and consequently, carries great impact. It's a first-hand demonstration of your writing abilities, an important professional skill for educators. A well-written cover letter adds interest to you as a unique individual, focuses the reader's attention on your experiences with youth, and encourages the reader to offer you an interview.

Guidelines

Although your cover letter will remain largely the same for each position to which you apply, tailor your cover letter as much as possible for each application or inquiry.

- ✓ Address each cover letter to the district contact; include title and address.
- ✓ Highlight the specific aspects of your background that will be most important for each position.
- ✓ Personalize each cover letter by including something specific about the school, the district or the community.
- ✓ Use the format for a business letter: one page in length, blocked to the left margin, composed of three to four single-spaced paragraphs with double spacing between paragraphs.
- ✓ Print the cover letter on the same quality 20# bond paper as your resume.
- ✓ Sign the cover letter.
- ✓ If you are submitting your resume to a district via email, you should either attach a cover letter or make the email your cover letter. Either way, craft your cover letter as carefully to submit electronically as you would if submitting on paper.

Content

Letter of Application

Written in response to an announcement of a specific teaching vacancy, the letter of application expresses your interest in the position and outlines your qualifications for that particular position. Always enclose a credential file when applying for a posted teaching vacancy.

Letter of Inquiry

Used to determine if any vacancies exist or are anticipated in a district, the letter of inquiry does not focus on specific openings and is more general than a letter of application. In a letter of inquiry, present your qualifications as broadly as your competencies and interests allow and let the enclosed resume identify particular skills or specialized training. Ask that your resume be kept on file for possible future openings. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope and request that a district application be mailed to you if the district anticipates openings in your field. Do not send a credential file with a letter of inquiry. Though letters of inquiry are not always acknowledged, it is to your advantage to make the effort to contact potential employers if you are hoping to locate in a specific geographical area.

The model of a cover letter, on the back of this sheet, provides specific content ideas for your cover letter.

Model of a Cover Letter for Certified Teachers



This model outlines the basic elements that should be included in a cover letter.

Date

Name of Contact Person

Title

School District

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Mr. or Ms. _____ ,

Opening Paragraph

Specify the position you are seeking, how you learned of the opening, and why you are interested in this position and/or the school district in particular. Briefly summarize the qualifications that you have for the position you are seeking.

Body Paragraph(s)

Elaborate on your background, specifically highlighting how your academic background and experience (student teaching, volunteer, extra-curricular, etc.) have prepared you for the position you are seeking. Be specific about how your abilities and achievements relate to the responsibilities of the available position. Mention preparation for and willingness to assume extra-curricular responsibilities. Cite specific examples to illustrate your skills and qualifications.

Closing Paragraph

Refer the reader to the resume and letters of recommendation you have enclosed. Mention that you will call within a designated time frame to verify that all of your application materials have been received and to check on the steps in the hiring process. Express interest in discussing your qualifications further and indicate your availability for an interview.

Sincerely,

(Sign above your typed name)

Your Name Typed

Your Street Address

City, State, Zip

Phone number

Enclosure: Resume, letters of recommendation

(Denotes resume, application, writing sample, etc., that are enclosed.)

March 20, 2008

Dr. Michael J. Fox
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
District Service Center
5000 Country Road
Janesville, IL 60699

Dear Dr. Fox,

I am writing in response to the opening listed on Minnetonka school district website. Please consider me an applicant for the math teaching position at Minnetonka High School.

This May, I will graduate from St. Olaf College with a degree in mathematics and teaching. My background includes several unique experiences that would make me an asset to the Minnetonka Public Schools. During my sophomore year, I spent the month of January assisting in two schools in Hawaii. This incredible cultural experience exposed me to the tremendous benefits of diversity in the classroom and reinforced my passion for education. Working as a camp counselor for the past two summers has provided me with the opportunity to interact with children and youth of all ages. As a result, I am very comfortable relating to students while still maintaining a leadership position. Finally, I have gained a wide range of perspectives on student learning and development by assisting in second grade, sixth grade, and high school classrooms, advising first-year college students, and working for both the math and education departments at St. Olaf College.

Student teaching at Northfield High School during the fall of 2007 was another constructive experience for me. I taught two sections of Honors Geometry, a section of Honors Algebra II, and a Consumer Mathematics course. Working with students ranging from the most advanced ninth graders to remedial juniors and seniors challenged me to draw upon my creativity and flexibility. I used a variety of instructional strategies and took any opportunity to create new learning activities that my students would find relevant and inspiring. With the guidance of my host teacher, I developed effective teaching techniques and strong rapport with students, rooted in one-on-one relationships. I also served the NHS community by supervising concerts and assemblies and coaching the math team and I am currently employed as a private tutor for two Northfield High School students.

I have submitted my resume and recommendation letters with my online application. I will apply for my Minnesota teaching license as soon as possible and will send a transcript and my license once they have been processed after graduation. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how I might contribute to Minnetonka High School and am available for an interview at your convenience. I can be reached at (507) 786-0000 or via email at lorettamath@gmail.com; I anticipate hearing from you! Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Loretta Math
1500 St. Olaf Avenue
Northfield, MN 55057
(507) 786-0000