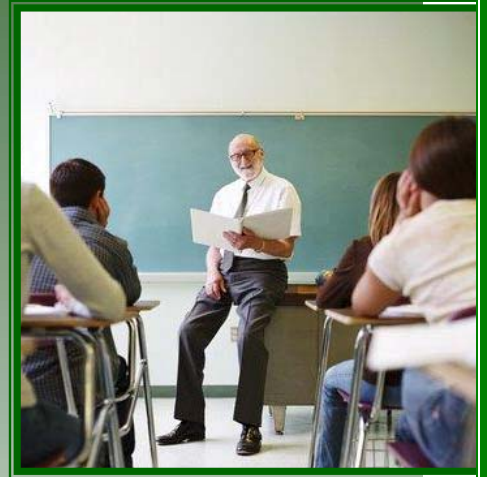


Cover Letter Guide for Teachers



Office of Career Services
Westfield State College
413.572.5206
www.wsc.ma.edu/careerservices
careers@wsc.ma.edu

WHAT IS A COVER LETTER?

Whenever you apply for a job, you will need both a resume and a cover letter. The cover letter serves as your introduction to the employer. It expresses your interest in being considered for a position and provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate how your skills and qualifications match those necessary to perform the job. An effective cover letter makes you stand out and makes the reader want to look at your resume.

BASIC RULES FOR THE COVER LETTER

- **Address the letter to a specific person.** If you do not have a name, call the organization and ask for the name and title of the person who should receive your letter.
- **Limit the letter to one page.** Keep it simple and to the point. NOTE: Spelling and grammar must be perfect. Have someone who is knowledgeable review your letter and provide feedback.
- **Do not simply restate what is on your resume.** Instead provide examples of how your skills and background directly match the requirements of the position.
- **Research the school carefully.** Demonstrate in your cover letter that you appreciate and understand the school's mission and student population.
- **Think about the skills necessary to do the job for which you are applying.** Think about some of the key issues discussed in your courses: parental involvement, classroom management, state standards, diverse learning styles, etc. Highlight how your experiences and skills will prepare you for handling with these issues.
- **Avoid starting sentences with "I".**
- **Make each cover letter unique to each school.** What do you know about their school and their students? Have you had any experiences working with their students or in a similar environment?
- **Be confident about your skills and what you can offer a school.** If you don't believe in yourself that insecurity will show.
- **Follow through.** In the concluding paragraph, tell the reader what your next course of action will be (ex.: you will follow up with a phone call within one week). By mentioning that you will call, shows that you are serious about the position and forces you to follow through.
- **Express what you can offer to the school, not what the school will offer you if you are hired.**

WHY SEND A THANK YOU LETTER?

A thank-you letter is an essential follow-up step to an interview. It is your chance to present yourself again and to answer or address specific concerns raised during the interview about whether or not you have the qualifications the organization is seeking. For example, if an interviewer had doubts about your supervisory experience, you can emphasize that you have, indeed, demonstrated leadership abilities in much of your volunteer work. You may also use your letter to mention a specific area of related expertise that you did not have an opportunity to discuss in the interview. The thank you letter is a courtesy that is expected and noticed by interviewers. You may fax or e-mail your letter if you know that the hiring time line is drawing to a close.

Career Services Library Resources for Cover and Thank-You Letter Writing

If you would like more information on cover and thank-you letter writing, visit the Career Services Resource Library. You will find helpful books that provide sample letters as well as great advice on how to write cover and thank-you letters.

COVER LETTER OUTLINE

Name
Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
E-Mail (optional)

Date

(2 lines)

Contact Person's Name
Title
School Name
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

(1 line)

Dear (Ms., Dr., or Mr.) Last Name: **(Use Title if name is not available)**

(1 line)

Paragraph 1: State why you are writing and why you are interested in working for that school. Identify the position that you would like to be considered for and how you learned of the opportunity. If you are writing at the suggestion of someone who knows the addressee, this is a good place to say so.

Paragraph 2: Briefly state the specific work that interests you and detail the relevant qualifications you offer. Spell out exactly how your experiences, skills, and education fit the position and can benefit the company.

Paragraph 3: Close the letter by thanking the reader for the attention or consideration given you and stating the next course of action. Indicate that you will follow up and then do it! Refer the reader to any documents you have enclosed (resume, references, writing samples, etc.). Provide the employer with your phone number so that they can reach you.

(1 line)

Sincerely,

(3 lines) - *Your Signature*

Type Your Name

Enclosure(s)

LETTER OF INTENT FORMAT

Your Name
Street Address
City, State Zip Code
Phone Number
E-Mail
(1 line)
Today's Date
(2 lines)

Contact Name
Title
School System/Organization
Street Address
City, State Zip Code
(1 line)

Dear Mr./Mrs./Dr. Last Name: **(Use Title if name is not available)**

State the purpose of the letter (to be considered for any positions that may become available, or for a specific position that has been advertised).

Tell them what your status is now and why you feel you would be especially well qualified for this position. This paragraph should include one or two brief sentences that emphasize your passion for teaching and your commitment to the field of education. If possible, it is always nice to personalize your letter by saying something positive about the community or school district and why you would like to work there.

Let them know that you have arranged to have a copy of your transcript and letters of reference forwarded to them. Thank them for their time and consideration.

(2 lines)
Sincerely,

(3 lines) - *Your Signature*

Type Your Name

Enclosure(s)

COVER LETTER/LETTER OF INTENT

Christina C. Mitchell
25 Apple Orchard Way
Albany, New York 10091

June 18, 2008

Ms. Chelsea A. King, Human Resources Director
Westfield Public Schools
Westfield, MA 01085

Dear Ms. King:

I am interested in joining Westfield Public Schools as an Elementary Teacher (Grades 1-6). I earned my Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Social Work on May 17, 2006. I will receive an Advanced Provisional Licensure from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

I have been a substitute teacher in the Holyoke Public School System since December of 2003. Some of the qualifications I can offer your school system are:

- Worked closely with grade level teachers to enhance grade level (K-3) curriculum in Language Arts and Math.
- Taught students through active learning and appreciation; communicated with parents through school visits; prepared report cards; administered citywide tests.
- My passion to make a difference in students' lives by showing and teaching respect and building their self-esteem.

My teaching experiences have prepared me to work in a wide variety of multicultural classrooms and to enhance the experience for all children. I am able to utilize my solid foundation in Education to assist students on an individual basis. As you can see from the enclosed resume, I have demonstrated a strong interest in teaching through academic and classroom experience.

I have held short-term and long-term teaching positions that have helped me develop my professional skills. I look forward to sharing my enthusiasm, training and experience in the Westfield Public School System.

Please send application materials and any additional information you might think appropriate. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my unique qualifications and can be reached at (413) 572-3478. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Christina C. Mitchell

Christina C. Mitchell

COVER LETTER/LETTER OF INQUIRY

Randy J. Watson
10 Magnolia Terrace
Pittsfield, MA 01028
(413) 578-2458
rjwatson@aol.com

April 18, 2008

Dr. Suzanne Smith, Superintendent
Brockton Independent School District
22 Boulder Way
Brockton, MA 03099

Dear Dr. Smith:

William Thomas, a former instructor in your district and currently my cooperating practitioner, suggested I contact you about anticipated openings for elementary educators for the coming academic year. I will receive my Bachelor of Science in Education in May and will be applying for certification in Massachusetts shortly thereafter.

Mr. Thomas told me you are a growing district with a strong commitment to team teaching and open classroom environments. My student teaching experience in the Springfield Public Schools incorporated this exciting approach. I participated with three other teachers to target students' needs in Math and English. We developed small group instruction and individualized centers to reach our objectives. I was able to utilize my solid foundation in computers in our classrooms to assist students on an individual basis.

As you can see from the enclosed resume, I have demonstrated a strong interest in teaching through academic and classroom experience. I have held a number of part-time and summer positions in the educational/recreational field that have helped me develop my professional skills. I look forward to sharing my enthusiasm, training and experience in the Brockton Independent School District.

If there are any positions for which I might be considered, please send application materials and any additional information you might think appropriate. I would also welcome the opportunity to talk with you and can be reached at (413) 572-8888. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Randy Watson

Randy J. Watson

COVER LETTER/LETTER OF APPLICATION

1000 Bay Side Road
Westfield, MA 01085
ayannarivera@hotmail.com

July 30, 2008

Mr. Walter Sawyer
Director of Special Education
Westfield Public Schools
28 Ashley Street
Westfield, MA 01085

Dear Mr. Sawyer:

The Westfield State College Career Office notified me of a current vacancy in your system for a Special Education Teacher. I am very interested in the position and would like to be considered for your opening.

I graduated from Westfield State College with a Bachelor of Science in Education and a dual major in Psychology and Special Education. My certification in Special Education is complete, along with several courses at the graduate level. As you will note on the enclosed resume, I have enjoyed the challenge of working with educationally handicapped students who were mainstreamed into my fourth grade classroom.

During my student teaching, I had the opportunity to incorporate a learning center environment based on student needs, and utilized activity centers for individualized and small group instruction. These efforts helped to improve student achievement and stimulated interest in learning.

With your large multicultural student population, you may also be interested in the fact that I have worked with students of varied ethnic, social and economic background. My experience includes both inner city and rural teaching environments. I have also worked closely with the YMCA's after school program and enjoyed the challenge of designing recreational and social activities that stimulate out-of-classroom learning and enjoyment.

I am enclosing my resume, a completed application and a copy of my certification. I would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss this position in greater detail. Please feel free to contact me at (413) 568-3311. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ayanna E. Rivera

Ayanna E. Rivera

THANK YOU LETTER

503 Broadway Street
Uxbridge, MA 01020
M22040@comcast.net
(413) 572-9921

May 28, 2008

Mr. Richard Masciarelli, Principal
Fitchburg High School
140 Arn-How Farm Rd
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Dear Mr. Masciarelli:

I would like to express my appreciation for the courtesy and consideration extended to me during my interview yesterday. The information and insights you shared with me heightened my interest in joining the faculty of Fitchburg High School.

Fitchburg's student centered approach to Science Education through exploration, fieldwork and laboratory activities is very exciting and challenging. My teaching experiences and summer work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have afforded me the opportunity to become involved with science curricula and classrooms at all levels. I am confident that your program would provide the ongoing challenge and teaching environment that I am seeking.

I firmly believe that I would be a strong asset to Fitchburg High School. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you regarding your decision.

Sincerely,

Timothy Taylor

Timothy J. Taylor