

## Cover Letter Basics

Your address or letterhead

Date

Inside Address

Dear Mr. / Ms. / Dr. Last Name:

1) Why you are writing – get right to the point!

**2) What skills and knowledge you have to offer; don't repeat the resume but refer the reader to the resume for details. Here is a good place to write about what you have learned through student or substitute teaching.**

**3) What you know about the school district / curriculum / community – your research into the district** (There are times when you will write a general cover letter – PA-Educator.net requires one, for example. In this case, you will not include information specific to a single school district. Instead you may expand what you write from part 2 above.)

4) Ask for an interview

Sincerely,

***Signature***

Name

Your letter needs to be **individually written**. Address it to the superintendent when in doubt.

If you won't take the time to write an individual letter, how will you convince an administrator that you will take the time to meet the individual needs of your students?

Use a **quote** to support a claim you make:

Through my student teaching, I worked at adjusting my lessons so all students would get the most out of my teaching. In fact, my cooperating teacher, Mrs. Susan Jones, writes in her recommendation letter for me, "Stacey quickly became attuned to the students' needs, differences, behaviors, and personalities, which she addressed accordingly."

Use a **networking name** to personalize a letter:

Dr. Herman Smith, the principal at Slippery Rock Area Elementary School, encouraged me to apply for this position.

From speaking with Ms. Valerie Coyne, I learned about the faculty's commitment to student achievement at Hickory Middle School. I share this same commitment to student achievement as evidenced through my student teaching experiences.

**Keep it to one page. Each sentence must have a purpose. General sentences in your letter are the same as general statements in your resume are worthless!**

Show that you have done research into the school that is pertinent to your job search:

From reading your school's website, I am excited to learn about the district's philosophy of grouping all grade level teachers into teams allowing them to better coordinate their teaching. As a student teacher in fifth grade, I routinely coordinated my teaching with the other fifth-grade teachers.

I recently read about your district's commitment to providing teachers and students with access to technology. I successfully used technology in my fourth-grade classroom in student teaching to educate students about ...

But here is a general statement that is worthless:

I know your district has a great reputation. (What does this mean?)

**BE SPECIFIC IN CITING RESEARCH IN YOUR COVER LETTER!**