

Hello, Annie! I'm Minnie P., and I look forward to working with you today. I have written comments about your submission in the form below and embedded comments directly into your work.

Thank you for choosing us to help you improve your employment materials. Let's begin!

**What's Working:**

*The reviewer highlights a strength of the writer's work.*

You effectively close the letter by highlighting your strengths as a teacher, like your ability to partner with parents as well as other teachers. In this way, you leave the hiring committee with a memorable impression. Well done!

**What Needs Work:**

*The reviewer provides personalized advice to guide job seekers to a more polished final product.*

I've chosen three priorities to focus on as you revise.

**Content Development**

Right now, you present your qualifications in a somewhat one-sided way without showing that you have researched a specific school culture and are committed to fulfilling their stated teaching requirements. To focus better on school district requirements, read the job requirements and responsibilities for the specific open position. Then, you can use keywords from the job posting in your cover letter (and resume) to show how you can meet these requirements based on your previous professional experience.

For instance, based on a specific job posting for a customer service position, an applicant might discuss *listening to customers and assessing their needs, problem-solving, handling complaints, updating account details, selling financial services, meeting targets and goals, etc.*

What represents a similar assessment of teaching functions? How do teachers analyze their necessary skillsets? Organize your work experience based on the professional qualifications you've been asked to use. When you revise, focus on the school's stated needs and the specific responsibilities and keywords from the job listing.

**Introduction/Conclusion**

Next, Annie, you need to open your letter by more clearly identifying how your skills fit with the specific open teaching position. Right now, some of the information you include in paragraph one might be better incorporated later on. For instance, you note that you were employed at a parochial school, but it's best to open by focusing on the job you're applying for and how your skills make you a great fit for that position. Early in the letter, focus on skills or character strengths that are at the core of teaching. Use these questions to help guide you:

- What makes you the best fit for this special education position?
- How do your interests with special education line up with this prospective school's objectives?

When you revise, work on streamlining and organizing paragraph one to introduce yourself with a focus that is linked to the ideals of this school.

### Grammar & Mechanics

Finally, a few compound sentences in this draft are missing commas. A compound sentence is when you combine two sentences with a coordinating conjunction—a word like “for,” “and,” “nor,” “but,” “or,” “yet,” and “so.” (You can use FANBOYS to remember these words.) If there is not a comma before the coordinating conjunction, readers cannot see where one idea ends and the new idea begins. Here is an example of a compound sentence from your cover letter:

I also feel communication is important and I ensure that all parents and teachers know that I am available to talk to them whenever needed.

The underlined clauses could stand alone as complete sentences. In this example, the coordinating conjunction “and” combines them. By adding a comma before the conjunction, you signal to your reader that there is a second sentence.

To fix this problem in your writing, search your draft for each place you use a coordinating conjunction. (Look for the FANBOYS words.) Then imagine separating the information on both sides of the conjunction into complete sentences. If both sentences stand alone, add a comma before the conjunction. Check out this lesson on [Conjunctions](#) for more tips.

#### Revision Checklist:

- Focus your letter on a specific open teaching position.
- Streamline and organize paragraph one.
- Punctuate compound sentences correctly.

*The reviewer reminds the writer of the most important revision needs.*

Thank you for your submission! I enjoyed reading it, Annie, and I wish you the best of luck with your job search. -Minnie P.

You can find more information about writing, grammar, and usage in our [Writer’s Handbook](#). Please look for comments **[in bold and in brackets]** in your submission below. We hope to work with you again soon!

**[If possible, find the name(s) of the particular hiring personnel responsible for reviewing your application, and address your letter to them, adding their contact information at the top of your letter.]**

It is with considerable interest that I apply for your teaching position. I have a degree in Early Childhood Education from Minnesota State University Moorhead, and am licensed in the states of Minnesota and North Dakota. Currently, I am a student at the University of North Dakota completing my Master’s degree in Special Education, with certifications in both LD and ID/DCD. I am scheduled to graduate in May, 2017 and will be licensed in both MN and ND. Currently, I am completing an internship at L.E.Berger Elementary in West Fargo, ND in a resource room. I student taught in kindergarten and third grade; and completed two secondary special education placements. I am currently employed as a substitute teacher in the West Fargo, ND school district. Before that I was employed at a parochial school as a teacher in an all-day, every day pre-kindergarten class. I have very strong organizational skills and am very good at multitasking. I believe in teamwork and enjoy working on projects with other teachers.

During my student teaching I had the opportunity to work with students of diverse abilities. **[The previous phrase is a comma splice, which happens when a comma is used to combine two sentences into one sentence. It’s unclear what you mean here because of this inappropriate use of the comma. You can revise it by replacing the comma with a period.]** The third grade classroom had gifted students and students who were struggling academically. When creating lesson plans for that class, I developed activities that allowed each student to succeed and yet be challenged. I prepared extended activities for the gifted students, so if they completed

assignments early, they would have supplemental activities while I assisted any students needing help. In the kindergarten class, I created additional activities to help reinforce information the students were learning and to teach them in new ways. In both classes, I utilized learning centers to allow students the opportunity to work one-on-one with adults, individually and with other students in small or large groups. **[Make sure that you focus on key work experience. This letter seems a bit lengthy. What are the skills that fit best with the job you're applying for?]**

Before I was a pre-kindergarten teacher, I was a lead infant teacher at a daycare center. I spent 6 years caring for children and building relationships with parents. I was responsible for lesson planning, overseeing the other classroom teachers, assessing the students and referring children for Early Intervention Services as needed.

In my pre-kindergarten classroom I not only used the curriculum provided, but also found and created additional materials and activities in order to enhance student learning and best prepare them for kindergarten. It was a very structured environment; in which students had hands-on learning as well as lots of practice with numbers and phonics.

As a substitute teacher, I have been in a variety of classrooms, especially special education classrooms. I have worked with a mixture of grade levels. I carried out the lesson plans provided for me and improvised when necessary. I have discovered a love for special education classrooms and am currently in graduate school to get my learning disabilities credentials.

Throughout my three special education placements, I have worked with elementary, middle and high school students with a variety of disabilities. I have carried out all of the duties the classroom teacher carries out, including implementing curriculum, lesson planning, assessments, modifications, and conducting IEP meetings.

As an early childhood educator, I have experience performing assessments on children and communicating my concerns with their parents. I have initiated the referral process for children who need early intervention services. I enjoy working with the early intervention specialists and feel they are an important asset to my classroom. I have also developed assessments and curriculum materials for my classroom to best serve the children in my care. I created a weekly individualized lesson plan which addresses each child's developmental needs within my classroom. **[You've included quite a bit of information, Annie. What are the most important skills you would bring to this job? You might consider reorganizing the body of your letter so that you focus each paragraph on a separate necessary skill and use brief examples to demonstrate how you've developed that skill for teaching special education.]**

My greatest ability is enlisting parents as partners and working hand-in-hand with other teachers to help students learn. I find the best ideas to come when people work together. I also feel communication is important and I ensure that all parents and teachers know that I am available to talk to them whenever needed. I communicate with parents and co-workers frequently and have utilized many different forms of communication with parents including e-mail, phone calls, texts, paper newsletters and blogs. I am aware of available community resources and I utilize them as needed.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Annie Bunton