

Polishing your Cover Letter

- ❑ Share resumes for **highlights**
- ❑ Focus cover letter on desired qualifications
- ❑ Keep it clean
- ❑ **Don't just restate your resume**
- ❑ **Customize it** (mission, goals, community)
- ❑ Format of cover letter (1-2 pages)
 1. Intro
 2. Qualification 1
 3. Qualification 2
 4. Qualification 3
 5. Closing



Activity: 2-4 highlights from resume



Good
practice

As my resume states, **I have extensive experience in school finance.** As the superintendent, I am responsible for developing the district certified budget. Working with the business manager we refined the district's line item budget. Working with the Clear Lake board we were able to reduce our spending by making some mid-year reductions. Through the utilization of a line item budget and the 5Cast projection tool, we were able to reduce our expenditures at Clear Lake by \$600,000 in my second year. We did this without cutting any programs or terminating any teachers, but by the use of early retirement and some restructuring of responsibilities of our staff. We also increased the open enrollment in Clear Lake by 50 students over the last two years. The combination of these things led to the district making an \$850,000 change in our unspent balance (UAB) in one year. Serving as the chief negotiator, we were able to turn negotiations into a positive process for both the district and the education associations. We were able to successfully remove all language from the master contract except the base wage and move it to an employee handbook. We also restructured our teaching salary schedule. This process has led to even more trust between the district and the teachers and support staff. While at ADM, I was a member of the master planning committee charged with the development of a plan to accommodate our district's growth through building improvements and additional facilities. (I also have the unique opportunity to talk through several parts of school finance with my wife, who has been a School Business Official for over 21 years).

Good communication is key to fostering strong relationships between the superintendent and school board. I communicate with the school board members through a weekly Friday update and monthly superintendent report for the board meetings. Together with the Clear Lake board, we developed long range district goals in July. We talk about the progress towards these goals at our monthly board meetings. We have worked collaboratively as an administrative team to identify our strengths and develop a professional development plan that is tied to student achievement and that meets the needs of all staff.



Good
practice

Building relationships and trust has always been a priority of mine. I am a very visible school administrator in school buildings and in the community, which I believe is very important. I truly believe a superintendent needs to be at events and involved in the community. Because of the relationships built with the community we have been able to start a new Computer Science program (grades 6-12), a PLTW Launch Program (grades PK-5) and will be starting a new AG/FFA program in the fall of 2019. Most of this has been through the donations from the community. We have secured over \$250,000 in donations and grants over the last two years at Clear Lake. This will be the second AG/FFA program I have started. Both were started by working with local businesses to start AG/FFA advisory committee or foundation. My philosophy is if there is a program that is needed for our students, we will find a way to make it happen. I was able to work with both Boyer Valley and Woodbine school boards to negotiate the shared superintendent position. This is after both boards had decided a year ago they did not want to share a superintendent.

I look forward to moving to the Waukee Community and getting involved with the patrons in the school district. Together, with the Waukee School Board, parents, staff and community we will take the Waukee school district to the next level. If you have any questions, please call me at (319) 239-1433. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Polishing your Resume

- Headers are first perception (same one on cover letter)
- The order of sections (education or district leadership experience first)
- Review examples
- **Dates and data**
- **Community involvement** noted
- Share best practices
 - Length
 - How long back
 - Job details
 - What not to include?



Header Samples

Steve Thune



516 Wilshire Avenue ✂ Waterloo, Iowa 50701 ✂ Phone: 319-231-8267 ✂ E-Mail: steve.twoknee@gmail.com

ED RATHJEN
BOEE Folder # 1024872
Assistant Principal

Phone (563)940-0707	Address Bettendorf, Iowa	LinkedIn linkedin.com/in/EdRathjen	Email 4edsemail@gmail.com
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Travis P. Popken

travispopken@gmail.com

Cell: 712.330.4339

Work: 712.832.3809

1109 Lakeside Ave

Lake Park, IA 51347

Sherri L. Walker

801 4th Avenue • Parkersburg, Iowa 50665 • Phone: (515) 681-0725 • sherriwalker5@gmail.com

Dane Barner

912 First Street Webster City, Iowa 50595
danebarner@gmail.com • 319-504-3569
Twitter: @danebarner • danebarner.com

SHERYL D. ROGERS
960 21ST STREET SW, NAPLES, FL 34117
239-687-8129
SHERYLDROGERS@GMAIL.COM

Connie Lou Halfpop

907 8th Ave. N.E.
Belmond, Iowa 50421

phone: 641-860-1127

email: clou3@yahoo.com

Brett Comegys

303 1st Avenue ♦ Collins, Iowa 50055 ♦ (515) 681-3999 ♦ Brett.M.Comegys@gmail.com

Matthew M. Townsley

212 4th St. SW ♦ Mt. Vernon, IA 52314 ♦ (319) 721-5879
matt.townsley@gmail.com

Kevin L. Henrichs

2110 Palean St Keokuk, IA 52632
(515) 851-2006 | kevin.henrichs1095@gmail.com

Sample resume that improved!

EDDIE A. RATHJEN

Bettendorf, Iowa | 563-940-0707 | 4edsemail@gmail.com | [linkedin.com/in/EdRathjen](https://www.linkedin.com/in/EdRathjen)

COMPETENCIES

Curriculum Design

Utilized universal design to meet the needs of a broad range of students
Redesigned complete curriculum to align daily objectives with lessons, and assessments

Developed new curriculum and implemented Standards-Based Assessments and Reporting (SBAR) into the classroom

Employed backward design in developing curriculum

Implemented the 5E instructional model of learning

Adept at utilizing phenomena based learning teaching model

Implemented and taught using prescriptive design curriculum

Action Research in the Classroom

Four years of in-depth research into the science and theories of learning, from a biological, psychological, and educational perspective

Designed and implemented my own learning model into the classroom while utilizing data analytics, to determine the most effective teaching practices

Developed a daily workbook to help students build better student skills, goal setting, problem-solving, SEL skills while building a culture of success within themselves

Behavior and Academic Programs

Adept at implementing PBIS to promote positive student behavior

Skilled at utilizing MTSS to provide academic and behavioral structure

Developed data-driven teaching and re-teaching protocols

ED RATHJEN

BOEE Folder # 1024872

Assistant Principal

Phone

(563) 940-0707

Address

Bettendorf, Iowa

LinkedIn

[linkedin.com/in/EdRathjen](https://www.linkedin.com/in/EdRathjen)

Email

4edsemail@gmail.com

COMPETENCIES

Curriculum Design

- Utilized universal design to meet the need of a broad range of students.
- Redesigned complete curriculum to align daily objectives with lessons, assessments and NGSS standards.
- Developed new curriculum and implemented Standards-Based Assessments & Reporting (SBAR) in classroom.
- Employed backward design in developing curriculum.
- Implemented the 5E instructional model of learning.
- Adept at utilizing phenomena-based learning teaching model.
- Implemented and taught using prescriptive design curriculum.

Action Research in the Classroom

- Four years of in-depth research into the science and theories of learning, from a biological, psychological, and educational perspective.
- Designed and implemented my own learning model in the classroom while utilizing data analytics to determine the most effective teaching practices.
- Developed a daily workbook to help students build better learning skills, goal setting, problem-solving, SEL skills while building a culture of success within themselves.

Behavior and Academic Programs

- Adept at implementing PBIS to promote positive student behavior.
- Skilled at utilizing MTSS to provide academic and behavioral structure.
- Developed data-driven teaching and re-teaching protocols.

Andrew R. Walters, Ed.D

6246 North 157th Avenue Circle
Omaha, NE 68116

(402) 677-4209 (c)
andyrwalters@yahoo.com

Career Objective

Utilize my administrative and teaching experiences, interpersonal skills, and personal values within an educational setting to support the success of all students, staff, and families.

"Our greatest contribution is to be sure there is a teacher in every classroom who cares that every student learns and grows and feels like a real human being." Donald O. Clifton, The Gallup Organization

Education and Certification

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION, EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION, 2015, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE

P-12 ADMINISTRATION ENDORSEMENT, 2013, Wayne State College, Wayne, NE

MASTER OF MUSIC IN EDUCATION, 2005, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

BACHELOR OF ARTS—MUSIC EDUCATION, 2001, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Kearney, NE

Certification: Nebraska Administration Certification (Principal PK-12 and Superintendent PK-12), Iowa Administration Certification, Iowa Evaluator Training

ANDREW R. WALTERS, ED.D.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

andyrwalters@yahoo.com • [linkedin.com/in/dr-andrew-r-walters-05498280](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dr-andrew-r-walters-05498280)

(402)677-4209 • Omaha, NE 68116

Highly skilled and effective organizational leader with over 20 years of experience in education. Motivational leader with a successful track record hiring, training, and developing teachers and classified staff. Expertise in staffing and professional development systems, training models and organizational growth.

Areas of Expertise include:

- Strategic Planning & Organization
- Acute Crisis Management
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Political Governance/Influence
- Talent Acquisition and Retention
- Training & Evaluation Systems
- Staff Collaboration Structures
- Project Management
- Parent collaboration/support

EXPERIENCE & NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS • Omaha, Nebraska • 2020 - current

Assistant Principal/Activities and Student Services Director, Omaha North High Magnet School

Supported successful transition of new building Principal after retirement of legendary educator. Provide strategic support for the overall mission of North High School as part of Leadership Cabinet. Directed and oversaw all operations for Activities, Transportation, and Student Services for 1950+ students and 235 staff. Implemented Virtual learning model to accommodate COVID protocols during the pandemic. Spearhead organization and distribution of Virtual Learning Materials for all North students through collaboration with 137 teachers. Planned and facilitated professional development, school improvement planning, staff evaluations, human resource processes, and implementation of in-person and virtual communication systems. Collaborated with Athletic Director, Curriculum Specialists, and Principal to facilitate all indoor and outdoor sporting events. Create staff weekly staff incentive programs which recognize and catalogue staff accomplishments. Reinstatement of school-wide assemblies after an extended absence from the school experience.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Implement OPS District Homeroom curriculum in collaboration with teacher-leaders and all teaching staff.
- Collaborated with Douglas County Department of Health to provide COVID vaccination centers as lead.
- Expand and update camera systems at North High from 60 to 140 cameras to improve building safety and

★ Activity: Resume reshine

- Look for opportunities to add data
- Share positive growth info
- Check for Community Involvement

Saydel Community Schools

Des Moines, IA

Principal, Woodside Middle School, Grades 5-8 July 2015- June 2020

- Evaluate, coach, and support staff to improve universal instructional practices
- Create and lead weekly professional development to all staff
- Support all Special Education processes in the building (DS, SDI, IEP meetings, LRE programming, associate assignment, work with AEA consultants)
- Research and lead professional development in the transition to Standards Reference Grading practices
- Overhauled building schedule to support MTSS interventions and enrichment opportunities for all learners
- Guide instructional coaches to maximize their impact on teacher instruction and student learning
- Work tirelessly to ensure safe school environment and a positive culture for students and staff



Picking References

- ❑ **Current evaluators**
- ❑ Can speak directly to your skills and abilities
- ❑ Consider picking a reference to call/email on your behalf
- ❑ More is not better
- ❑ **Reference surveys vs. phone calls**



Activity: What would your references highlight?

To Whom It May Concern:

I write to recommend [REDACTED] have known [REDACTED] for three years and have worked with him for the past two. [REDACTED] is an intelligent, energetic, visionary leader that is as driven by organizational success as anyone I have worked with in my 28 years in public education.

Two years ago [REDACTED] had the opportunity to hire a new leader at our unique [REDACTED] program. We actively recruited [REDACTED], based on his outstanding leadership career, most notably his success as principal at [REDACTED]. We were fortunate enough to bring [REDACTED] at a critical time for [REDACTED] we were implementing competency-based student reporting, attempting to upgrade our Career and Technical Programs, and improve our CTE facilities to be more responsive to the ever-changing education and economic landscape. Additionally, he has been instrumental in the multi-million dollar facility redesign at his 300,000+ square foot campus.

His success in this role speaks for itself. Under [REDACTED] leadership, [REDACTED] was the first in the state to have a fully certified apprenticeship program and there are more to come. There has been an unprecedented increase in dollars and in-kind support from our business community as [REDACTED] steered growth at [REDACTED] toward the needs of our local community's workforce. And, enrollment is up across all of our student subgroups. He leads outside his formal position as well, which gives him broader reach and credibility. His community leadership and professional association leadership roles are too numerous to list.

More than most, [REDACTED] can anticipate the change that most of us cannot see over the horizon and he effectively uses that vision to frame his work and the work of his team. It also allows him to more effectively partner with the community and grow support from outside the organization. He is an excellent communicator, an advocate for students, and a positive force for progressive change. He will be an excellent addition to any leadership fortunate enough to employ him. If you would like to discuss his candidacy further, please contact me at [REDACTED]

In what capacity did you work with the applicant?

Applicant reported to our Office of Schools which then reported to me. Due to the uniqueness of the programs he oversaw, I worked with him more directly than most others on his level.

* If the applicant were to apply/reapply for employment in your organization today, would you recommend hire/rehire?

No

On a scale of 1 to 10 (low to high), how would you compare the applicant to other employees you have supervised or worked with in similar positions?

5

	1 (Low)	2	3	4	5 (High)	Comments/Remarks
1. Professional Judgment			X			
2. Professional Attitude				X		
3. Emotional Composure			X			
4. Time Management			X			
5. Problem-Solving Skills			X			
6. Initiative/Personal Motivation				X		
7. Interpersonal Relations			X			
8. Ability to Influence Others				X		

How would you describe this candidate's leadership style?

He is very big-picture oriented and very verbal. He motivates others through his effective communication of a grand vision.

What are the candidates strengths or particular areas of accomplishment?

He was effective in initiating partnerships with outside organizations and in promoting the programs which he was charged with leading.

What are the candidates leadership weaknesses or areas of growth potential?

Integrity of communication among different audiences is an important area for growth. It was difficult to know if everyone was singing from the same hymnal; difficult to build trust.

Back to Cover Letter...

- What you want to highlight upfront ★
- Highlights from resume ★
- Reference highlights ★
- Focus cover letter on desired qualifications from job ★

