

University of Montana

Teacher Résumés & Cover Letters

TEACHER RÉSUMÉS

The résumé is your primary marketing tool to get you in the door. Résumé writing is not an exact science; however, a résumé tailored to show an employer how you can meet their specific needs is more successful.

RÉSUMÉ LAYOUT

Write your résumé toward a specific job, job type, or industry

A specific job description will provide the framework for your résumé. Build a résumé that focuses your skills, qualities, and experience towards teaching and education. Keep in mind that you may need to revise it when you see an actual job description. Always include as many keywords from the job description as possible.

Résumé Sections

- Name, Phone Number, Email Address, City, State
- Career Summary (professional experience, skills, and academic background relevant to job posting; keywords)
- Skills Section (skills relevant to job posting; keywords)
- Education (include GPAs 3.50+) & Credentials (teaching licensure and endorsements)
- Certifications (e.g. CPR/First Aid)
- Teaching Experience (fieldwork, student teaching, paid/unpaid, academic projects, service-learning)
 - Include position title, organization/employer name, employment dates, responsibilities, skills, achievements.
- Related Experience (work with kids; seasonal work; coaching, mentoring, instructing, etc.)
- Community Engagement / Volunteer Experience (volunteer, team membership)
- Professional Development (professional memberships, conferences, workshops, presentations, etc.)
- Honors and Awards (*optional*)
- Languages and Teaching Technologies (*optional*)

DOS	DON'TS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a Career Coach review your résumé.• Give your résumé to each of your references.• Take copies of your résumé to your interview.• Edit keywords to fit the job description.• Emphasize positive points; omit any negatives.• Leave white space; keep it brief and to the point.• Shine the best light on yourself, but don't lie.• List experience in reverse chronological order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add personal information (marital status, age, religious and political affiliations, pictures, etc.).• Include a personal photograph.• Include anything that is untrue.• Refer to high school achievements if you're in college, unless impressive or related to the job you seek.• Cram too much information on 1-page.• Submit a generic, general résumé to all schools.

APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS & ONLINE APPLICATIONS

When applying for teaching jobs online, your résumé will likely go through applicant tracking systems (ATS). An ATS is a human resources software that scans your résumé against a job description (JD) by looking for keywords found in the JD.

ATSs are designed to make recruiters' lives easier by automating the review process. You earn a higher score on ATSs by incorporating as many keywords from the JD as possible.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Tailor Your Résumé

Integrate specific keywords from the job posting throughout your résumé in key places, e.g., career summary, skills section, accomplishment bullets, and job titles. Consider what the principal will find important, most valuable. Your résumé is a marketing document supporting your case for the position. Decide strategically what to add, omit, and spin.

Write with Recruiter's Needs in Mind

Highlight your return on investment (ROI) by making your résumé sales-focused, relevant, visually appealing, quality-oriented, and succinct. Think about the school and district's needs.

Write Tight in F-shape Pattern

Write in first-person implied personal pronouns ("I") with limited articles (a, an, the) and prepositions (of, by). Top- and left-load the most important information. Include periods at end of phrases.

Include Headline & Career Summary

Under your letterhead, insert a headline (**MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER**) that clearly states the job you are applying for. Omit the objective statement and replace with a 3–5-line keyword-rich career summary that highlights your unique value, academic and professional background, certifications, experience, and skills.

Emphasize Achievements, not Tasks

Write bullets in results-action format to highlight your accomplishments. Use action verbs to begin bullet point phrases. Quantify and lead with results when possible.

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) – Online Applications

Follow application instructions. Avoid using templates – start from a blank word document. Upload in Word, not PDF. Avoid textboxes, columns, and tables. Do not put anything in a header or footer. Use an ATS-friendly font e.g., Calibri, Arial, Garamond, Tahoma, Helvetica. Spell out dates (e.g., September 2021).

Focused and Clear

A clear, crisp résumé will make it easy to see who you are and what skills you possess. Use skill-based keywords found in the job description to describe your skills in your résumé.

Accurate

Proofread, proofread, proofread! Errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, dates, phone numbers, addresses, and content reflect poorly on you and can quickly eliminate you from the applicant pool. Delete comments in margins if your résumé was reviewed.

Résumés can Exceed 1-Page.

Many employers indicate that they would rather have a complete picture of an applicant's qualifications than try to read between the lines. If you have strongly related experience, your résumé can be 2-pages. The second page should be at least ½ page, ideally ¾ page.

DESIGN & FORMATTING

- Add color to your letterhead and/or section headers to attract the recruiter's eye.
- Use .5 margins on all sides and use consistent paragraph spacing to create white space.
- Use 1 phone number with periods or dashes—e.g., 406.123.4567. Omit your street address and hyperlinks.
- Use a larger font size for your name and section headings; use 11–12-point font for all other information.
- Use design elements (bullets, bolding, lines, borders, shading) to guide the readers' eyes through your résumé.

MATTHEW SARACEN

Open to Relocation

406.123.4567 | matt.saracen@gmail.com | Missoula, MT 59801

TARGET: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER (K-8)

Passionate educator who creates stimulating learning environments, promotes social-emotional development, and helps children identify and enhance their unique potential for success. Empathetic teacher who blends cooperative learning, innovative technology, and evidence-based teaching methods to create lifelong learning.

- **Student Motivator:** Create inclusive learning environments respectful of individual student needs and cultural diversity to meet students' immediate and long-term needs.
- **Classroom Leader:** Initiate early academic intervention (RTI, PBIS, MBI) to promote positive reinforcement, mutual respect, productive education setting, and individual responsibility.

Skills and experience in:

Classroom Management	Project-Based Lesson Planning	Indian Education for All
Differentiated Instruction	Multitiered System of Supports (MTSS)	Parent-Teacher Collaborations

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

Montana Class 2 Educator License | Elementary Education (K-8) Endorsement

MONTANA OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, *expected May 2022*

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Elementary Education (GPA: 3.61)

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA, Missoula, MT, *expected May 2022*

CPR, AED, First Aid Certificate, American Heart Association, 2020–Present

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Elementary School Teacher (5th Grade) – Student Teaching

January 2021–May 2021

Hellgate Elementary

Missoula, MT

- Promoted learning and growth for 22 5th grade students by providing differentiated reading, writing, math, social studies, and science instruction.
- Collaborate with parents, school staff, and administrators to foster students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral development.
- Employed effective individual and all classroom management techniques according to Montana Behavior Initiative (MBI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) standards.
- Created inclusive classroom experience by assisting in re-evaluation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans, including observations and parent conferences.

Elementary Teaching Assistant (2nd Grade) – Field Work

August 2020–December 2020

Lowell Elementary

Missoula, MT

- Motivated 18 diverse 2nd-grade students by implementing active learning environment, supporting instruction, and applying Response to Intervention (RTI) classroom management strategies.
- Increased students' cultural sensitivity and knowledge by planning and developing thematic units on Indian Education for All.
- Enhanced skills in behavior management, technology integration, project-based learning, and lesson planning by observing 2nd-grade teacher.

Elementary Teaching Assistant (4th Grade) – Field Work

January 2020–May 2020

Chief Charlo Elementary

Missoula, MT

- Improved pedagogical knowledge by developing and implementing research project on classroom motivation techniques and presented results to colleagues.
- Contributed to students’ educational success by assisting experienced classroom teacher with evidence-based teaching and learning exercises.

RELATED EXPERIENCE**Childcare Specialist**

June 2020–August 2020

Big Sky Nanny, LLC

Missoula, MT

- Supervised 3 children ages 3, 5, and 7 to ensure adherence to daily meal and sleep schedules, safe play at home and in community, and nutritious and allergy-sensitive food consumption.
- Supported children’s social-emotional and intellectual development by devising stimulating activities and creative projects.
- Maintained clean and organized living space by completing household chores—washed dishes, folded laundry, vacuumed floors, and cleaned up toys.

Elementary Tutor

August 2019–December 2019

Target Range Elementary

Missoula, MT

- Delivered individualized instruction to groups of 7+ 4th grade math students to support content understanding and answer questions about difficult concepts.
- Establish academic goals with parents and students and monitor progress by reviewing practice assignments and tracking quiz improvements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**Youth Volunteer**, YWCA, Missoula, MT

2019–Present

Youth Mentor, Flagship Program, Missoula, MT

2018–2019

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**Montana Rural Education Association**

2020–Present

National Education Association

2020–Present

Educators Rising, University of Montana Student Organization

2019–Present

TEACHER COVER LETTERS

*Letters are important contacts with employers.
Here's how to make a good impression:*

COVER LETTER OVERVIEW & TIPS

This 1-page letter is the initial contact between you and the employer. Its purpose is to briefly market your skills, experience, and education to a specific teaching job.

- Send it in response to an advertised job.
- Personalize it by marketing your experience, education, personal qualities, and goals toward the specific teaching position for which you're applying.
- Your résumé and cover letter should work together to strongly present your value to a prospective employer.
- It should draw attention to and expand on the most important information from your résumé.

DOS	DON'TS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Match format, font, and letterhead to your résumé.• Keep it clear and concise (1-page).• Include keywords to fit the job description.• Follow the job/internship posting directions.• Address it to a specific person or "Hiring Manager" or "Hiring Committee."• Write employer-focused by tailoring your skills and background to the job description.• Have a Career Coach review it and provide feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ramble or include redundant content from your résumé.• Include personal information (marital status, age, religious and political affiliations, etc.).• Be "me" focused by overusing "I" and "My."• Address your letter "To Whom It May Concern:"• Exceed 1-page.• Submit a general cover letter.• Include anything untrue (shine the best light on yourself, but don't exaggerate).

ADDITIONAL NOTE

Networking Letter

Sometimes, teachers will send a cover letter to inquire about current or potential vacancies and establish communication with schools about future employment. Personalize each letter based on the school/district.

- Use the full name and job title of the reader when possible.
- Mention your interest in applying should a teaching position exist or open up in the near future.
- Highlight your experience and/or academic accomplishments related to the position.
- Enclose a résumé and offer to provide additional information.
- State your interest in the school/district and why you want to teach there.

COVER LETTER FORMAT

Your Letterhead Matching Your Résumé

Date (when you will send the letter)

Contact Person's Name (Ms. Mr. Mx. First Last)

Their Title

Name of Organization

Street Address

City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Ms., Mr., or Dr. Last Name (Never use "To Whom It May Concern" or "Dear Sir or Madam." If you absolutely cannot find a person's name, then use the salutation, "Dear Hiring Committee:" or similar).

FIRST PARAGRAPH

Purpose: To grab the reader's attention and establish interest in employment with the school/district.

- Provide an opening 2-3 sentences that entice the reader to continue reading – reflect on the questions below and consider responding to one for your opening sentences.
 - *What drew you to the education field? How did you become interested in teaching?*
 - *Did a current employee refer you to the school? What do you like about the school?*
- Name the teaching job for which you are applying.
- Mention specific knowledge of the school or district to indicate your interest.

SECOND PARAGRAPH

Purpose: To demonstrate your abilities and potential value to the school/district by highlighting your key strengths, experiences, knowledge, and skills related to the teaching position.

- Acknowledge the skills, education, and credentials required for the teaching position in which you're interested.
- State the specific skills/strengths/experiences you will bring to the school and role.
- Give examples of your teaching skills and any related work experience (quantified results, accomplishments, and achievements). Explain how these skills will transfer to the role.
- Don't repeat information from your résumé. Instead, refer the reader to the enclosed résumé or application, elaborating on/providing more detail regarding how you meet the job qualifications.

FINAL PARAGRAPH

Purpose: To ensure follow-up action and extend your appreciation for being considered.

- Write 1-2 sentences summarizing your unique qualifications for the teaching position.
- Thank the hiring manager/principal sincerely for their time and consideration of your application.
- *Optional:* list your phone number and email address (contact information should match your letterhead).

Sincerely,

Sign your name with signature-type font

Type your name

Enclosures: résumé and professional references

MATTHEW SARACEN

Open to Relocation

406.123.4567 | matt.saracen@gmail.com | Missoula, MT 59801

August 2, 2021

Mr. Chris Clevenger, Principal
Grade 3-5 Building
Hellgate Elementary School District
2385 Flynn Lane
Missoula, MT 59808

Dear Mr. Clevenger:

After completing my student teaching experience at Hellgate Elementary, Angie Jenkins recognized my passion for promoting academic excellence through hands-on student learning opportunities and encouraged me to apply for the 5th-grade teaching position. The level of technology and innovation incorporated in your classrooms makes them stimulating environments for students to learn. My familiarity with the Hellgate Elementary School District coupled with my experience implementing new technologies in elementary classrooms makes me an excellent candidate for this role.

During the past several years, I had opportunities to work with a wide variety of students in diverse learning environments. As a Student Teacher at Hellgate Elementary, I used technology daily, such as Smart Board, Infinite Campus, Google Classroom, and Google Workspace. Through the use of technology and altered organization, I improved my pace of the Read Well Curriculum and enhanced my overall timing in lessons. To meet the needs of all learners, I implemented Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and differentiated my instruction. In addition, I was a volunteer Tutor at Target Range's Youth Education Services where I taught 4th grade Math to groups of students after school.

Response to Intervention (RTI) is crucial to maintaining a safe learning environment. As a student teacher, I monitored behaviors and academic performance while taking note of misbehaviors, addressed issues, and reported information to the appropriate administrators, teachers, and support staff. During my fieldwork at Lowell Elementary, my cooperating teacher provided valuable guidance when implementing RTI classroom management techniques. Setting clear expectations collaboratively and empowering students to choose how to take responsibility for their misbehaviors has proven an effective tool when managing a classroom.

If Hellgate Elementary seeks a dedicated educator eager to implement innovative strategies to motivate, teach, and inspire students, I would welcome the opportunity to highlight how I can contribute to the school district. You may reach me at 406.123.4567 or matt.saracen@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Matthew Saracen

Matthew Saracen

Enclosures: résumé, professional references, and teaching philosophy statement.

EDUCATION KEYWORDS

Soft Skills

Accountable
Active Listener
Adaptable
Ambitious
Analytical
Articulate
Bilingual
Caring
Collaborative
Communicative
Conflict Resolution
Creative
Critical Thinker
De-escalation
Dedicated
Dependable
Detail-Oriented
Diligent
Dynamic
Educated
Empathetic
Enthusiastic
Facilitator
Flexibility
Goal-Driven
Growth Mindset
Honest
Inclusion / Inclusive
Initiative
Innovative
Interpersonal Skills
Leadership
Multitalented
Open-Minded
Organized
Patient
Persistent
Persuasive
Planning / Conceptualizing
Positive Attitude
Precise
Problem-Solver
Public Speaking
Quick Learner
Reliable
Resourceful
Self-Starter
Strategic Planning
Team Builder
Technical
Troubleshooter
Understanding

Hard Skills

504 Plan Support
Academic Goals & Standards
Academic Policies & Programs
Academic Portfolios
Active Lecturing
After School Programs Development
Behavioral Assessment & Support
Blended Learning
Checks for Understanding
Classroom Management
Common Core
Communities of Practice
Conflict Resolution
Creative Problem Solving
Crisis Intervention
Curriculum Development
Data-Driven Analysis
Developing Rapport
Differentiated Instruction
Digital Literacy
Discussion Circles
Embedding Technology
Evidence-Based Pedagogy
Experiential Learning
Formative & Summative Assessments
Guided Practice
Inclusive Classroom
Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
Individualized Instruction
Instructional Material Development
Interactive Classroom
Interdisciplinary Teams
K-12 Plans & Interventions
Lesson Planning
Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
Neurodivergent Populations
Parent-Teacher Conferences
Personalized Learning
Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)
Positive Reinforcement
Program Management
Progress Monitoring
Reflective Teaching
Research-Based Practices
Response to Intervention (RTI)
Scaffolded Instruction
Small-Group Instruction
Standardized Testing & Scores
Student Motivation & Engagement
Student-Guided Learning
Technology Integration
Testing & Assessment

Active Verbs

Adapt
Administer
Advise
Advocate
Analyze
Assign
Assist
Build
Clarify
Coach
Collaborate
Contribute
Coordinate
Create
Deliver
Demonstrate
Design
Develop
Devise
Direct
Educate
Encourage
Enhance
Ensure
Explain
Facilitate
Familiarize
Foster
Guide
Improve
Incorporate
Increase
Instruct
Intervene
Introduce
Lecture
Listen
Mentor
Monitor
Motivate
Observe
Organize
Plan
Provide
Refer
Report
Research
Supervise
Support
Teach
Train