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Writing a formal letter is an effective way to voice your concerns, ask questions, and make suggestions about the school district to the board of education. As the nation's leading organization dedicated to rethinking the high school experience, we bring communities together, throughout the country, to help them dream big about what they want to achieve with their high schools. School boards and their members are valuable assets of a community and are therefore essential in catalyzing change. In this article, we'll outline: Why someone might write a letter to their school board How an effective letter is written What to do with your letter once it's written And provide an example to learn from Engaging With A School Board Whether you are a student, parent, or community member, engaging with your local school board ensures that your voice and concerns can be heard when decisions are made. Below is a list of topics anyone could write about to their school board that can connect or impact student learning: Student achievement and learning opportunities Budgetting and resource allocation Transportation and school location Curriculum, teacher development and student courses Student services and support systems Student health and nutrition Code of conduct, discipline and restorative practices Equity and Inclusion initiatives across the district Below is a list of several topics students and parents can communicate with school boards about high schools specifically: Increased access to college-level courses and more rigorous learning opportunities More community-driven projects led by students More learning experiences outside of the classroom Expanding opportunities for internships, CTE courses and certifications Expanding access for college and career counseling Expanded access to mental health services If you want your voice to be heard and to show your concern, writing a letter to the school board is an important step. Schools Schools have long relied on their boards of education to represent the community in academic matters. School boards advocate for teachers and administrators, ensuring they have the tools and training necessary to be effective educators. Boards also play a pivotal role in setting the curriculum. In addition, boards are also responsible for setting policies designed to ensure all students receive the education necessary to be successful in college and the workforce. If you want to drive change, get on board. The school board, that is. According to the National School Board Association, school boards "establish the vision and goals for the public schools in their district, and they set standards for the performance of schools and superintendents." School boards play a crucial role in shaping the education system in the United States. To learn more about they're scope of work, you can read more in our article So, What Does a School Board Do, Anyways?. More than just policymakers and administrators, school board members are elected officials who represent the collective voice and interests of the local community. Their work focuses on achieving the community's vision when it comes to public education. While they are just one of many local government bodies that support a community, they are the most important when it comes to implementing, developing, and reviewing policies that specifically impact student learning. Why Write a Letter to the School Board In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, many parents and community members began to engage more frequently and consistently with school boards, attending meetings and providing more public feedback or input. All school boards post agendas and share with the public when scheduled meetings are to be held. It's always a good idea to attend a meeting, but that can be hard for people with scheduling conflicts and other responsibilities. Many school boards now offer streaming options for community members, which can be a great way to watch and follow along with what's happening. If you do attend a meeting and want to speak, you can sign up to make a comment. But writing a letter is still a valuable way to communicate your perspective to the schools board. There are several reasons people write letters to the school board. It may be to voice concerns or thoughts on a particular topic or to file a complaint about an event or incident. Communicating with the school board regarding your child's education, special services, or school functions shows your concern for your child's well-being and quality of instruction. Beyond the practical tasks, effective school boards set a vision for a community's young people, helping them achieve a world-class education that prepares them for life beyond high school. This focus aligns with one of our six XQ Design Principles—meaningful, engaged learning, which encompasses curriculum, assessment, student agency, and even the structure of the school day. When applied with fidelity, meaningful, engaged learning helps students make connections between disciplines, solve real problems, and grow as learners and people. By using a formal method to communicate with the board, you can expect board members will also respond formally. School districts typically have a timeframe within which they must address issues. A formal letter written to the school board is a tried and trusted way to ensure your comments are heard by the school board in an official capacity. Many are read into the public record. Tips for How to Write a Letter to the School Board Writing a letter to the board of education allows you to address a serious concern about a particular topic. You can write to the entire board or a specific person. When you compose a letter to the board, present your issues in a logical, well-organized manner. It should be written formally and with respect. Introduce Yourself Begin the letter by introducing yourself and identify whether you are a parent, teacher, or another member of the community before then addressing the subject of your concerns. This provides context for your letter. Use a positive tone by commending them on the quality of teachers or administration, direction of the curriculum, or other aspects of the school district. Include a statement that indicates you are confident they will address your concerns seriously. The board may view this as a balanced, open-minded perspective, making members more likely to give your concern the attention it deserves. State Your Purpose Use a voice of respect and authority as you state the purpose of the letter. Write with confidence, showing that you understand the topic you are discussing. When organizing the communication, ask yourself the following: Why you are writing? What are your concerns or questions? What actions do you wish to see? How will your specific concerns impact student learning? Present Your Concerns Start by explaining the situation. Keep the letter short, ideally no more than a page, but make sure you include pertinent information. If you are writing about an incident, add names, times, and dates. Maintain a positive and respectful tone when detailing the situation. Relate the facts as you know them. While writing to stir an emotional response is a rhetorical tactic, a balanced letter will incorporate credible sources that are appropriate and valid. Refrain from becoming so emotional that it seems unrational. Never issue threats, insults directed at the members, or use profanity—even even if you are upset. Describe the steps you have taken to resolve the matter or investigate events that occurred. This may include detailing conversations with teachers, parents, or other school officials. Attach any relevant supporting documentation. Identify how you would like the problem resolved. Conclude the letter on a friendly note and express your appreciation in advance for the board members' time and attention. Be kind and respectful. They work hard and often do not get paid. Communicating with them is not about complaining. Be specific about the issue you are addressing and be candid about your thoughts. Final Steps Use the grammar and spell-check features of your software or ask someone to edit your message to ensure it is error-free. Before sending the letter, take a moment to re-read it. If you were upset when you wrote it, give yourself time to calm down and read it again. Put yourself in the position of the recipients. Is your depiction of the situation and request clear? Don't forget to date the letter and ask for a reply. Provide your contact information, including your email address and phone number to ensure they have everything they need to provide a response. Keep a copy of all correspondence for your records as a reference for future communication. Sample Letter Below is a sample letter. Personalize it by adding or changing information to suit your particular needs. Anytown Board of Education Dear [Name] School Board Members, (If sending to individual members, personalize your letter with their name) [Personalize the introduction – State whether you are a parent, teacher, community member, or have another connection to the school district.] Recently, I read an article where I learned how innovative curriculum is being implemented at Innovative High School in Anywhere, U.S.A. This particular high school, which utilizes project- and place-based learning approaches, had high graduation rates and deeply engaged students. As a parent in this district, I am writing to inquire about how our schools plan to incorporate these innovative practices into our own curriculum. From what I understand, project- and place-based learning provide a more engaging and effective way for students to learn. Students are given opportunities to apply their knowledge to real-world problems and work collaboratively with others to find solutions. By doing so, students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that are necessary for success in today's world. I've included links to articles where other high schools are finding success: As a parent, I believe that our schools should be doing everything in their power to provide the best possible education for our children. By incorporating project- and place-based learning, we can help ensure that our students are well-prepared for the challenges of the future. Therefore, I would like to ask the school board what plans are being made to bring project- and place-based learning to our district's schools. Are there any pilot programs or initiatives currently underway? What steps are being taken to train our teachers and staff on these new approaches to learning? What are the district's policies that might cause roadblocks and what might the solutions be to address them? I appreciate the hard work and dedication of our school board members and staff, and I look forward to hearing more about how our district plans to incorporate innovative teaching practices that will benefit our students. I've included my phone number and email address, and look forward to hearing your response. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Read the complete article on Rethink Together. How Do I Address a Letter to a... How to Address a Board of Directors How to Write a Letter on Behalf... International Business Letter Etiquette Personal Business Letter Example The Proper Way to Insert a Business... How to Start a Professional Letter 501(c)(3) Bylaw Requirements How to Address a Letter to a Masonic... What Is the Difference Between... How to Write a Formal Letter to... How to Start a Business Letter Business Letter Abbreviations Letter Etiquette to Multiple Addressees Best Height to Hang an Office Cork... How to Write a Business Reply Letter How to Write a Speech to a Board... Are you struggling to write a letter to the Board of Education? Look no further! Our blog article provides templates, examples, and samples of letters to the Board of Education to make the process easier for you. Writing a letter to the Board of Education can be intimidating, but it is an important way to voice your concerns or opinions about education policies and decisions. Our article aims to simplify the process by providing you with various templates and examples that you can use as a guide to write your own letter. Whether you are a concerned parent, teacher, or community member, our samples of letters to the Board of Education will help you effectively communicate your message. Keep reading to find the perfect template for your letter and make your voice heard! Dear Members of the Board of Education, I hope this letter finds you in good health. My name is [Your Full Name], and I am a concerned [parent/resident/stakeholder] within the [School District Name]. I am writing to bring your attention to a matter of importance that directly impacts the students, parents, and community members associated with our school district. [Describe the specific concern or proposal you wish to address. Provide background information and any relevant details that will help the Board understand the issue.] It is my sincere belief that addressing this matter will contribute to the overall improvement of our educational environment and the well-being of those it serves. I kindly request that the Board of Education thoroughly review and consider the proposal outlined above. I would be more than willing to discuss this matter further at your convenience. Your dedication to the betterment of our educational system is greatly appreciated, and I trust that you will give due consideration to this request. Thank you for your time and commitment to our community's education. I look forward to a positive resolution and continued collaboration for the enhancement of our school district. Sincerely, [Your Full Name] Dear [Board Members' Last Names], I trust this letter finds you well. My name is [Your Full Name], and I am writing to express my [appreciation/concern/interest] regarding the work and decisions made by the esteemed members of our Board. [Provide specific details or examples of the positive impact or concern you wish to address. Be clear and concise in your communication to ensure your message is understood.] I believe that your commitment to [organization/company mission] has a profound effect on [mention the community, stakeholders, or relevant group]. Your dedication is evident, and I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the positive strides that have been made under your guidance. Alternatively, I would like to bring to your attention [specific concern or suggestion]. It is my hope that this matter can be reviewed and addressed for the continued improvement of our [organization/company]. Thank you for your time and consideration. Your efforts contribute significantly to the success of our [organization/company], and your hard work is genuinely appreciated by the community. Sincerely, [Your Full Name] Dear [Board Members' Last Names], I trust this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. I am writing to formally express my [appreciation/concern/proposal] to the esteemed members of the Board of Directors. [Provide detailed information regarding the purpose of the letter. Be articulate in presenting your thoughts and ensure clarity in your expression.] As stakeholders in [Organization/Company Name], your leadership has been instrumental in guiding the organization towards [success/achievement/goals]. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for your dedication and strategic vision. Alternatively, I wish to bring to your attention [specific concern or proposal]. It is my belief that addressing this matter will contribute positively to the overall growth and success of our organization. I appreciate the valuable time and effort you invest in steering [Organization/Company Name] to new heights. Your commitment to excellence does not go unnoticed, and I am confident that, under your leadership, our organization will continue to thrive. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the betterment of [Organization/Company Name]. I look forward to witnessing continued success and advancements under your esteemed guidance. Sincerely, [Your Full Name] Dear Members of the Board of Education, I hope this letter finds you in good health. I am writing to express my concerns regarding an issue I have encountered within the [School District Name]. It is with a sense of responsibility and a genuine desire for improvement that I bring this matter to your attention. [Clearly and concisely describe the nature of the issue or complaint. Include any relevant details, such as dates, names, and locations, to provide a comprehensive understanding of the situation.] I understand the challenges faced by educational institutions, but I believe that addressing this concern is crucial for the well-being and development of the students in our community. I request a thorough investigation into this matter and appropriate actions to remedy the situation. As a stakeholder in our educational system, I trust in the commitment of the Board of Education to uphold the highest standards and ensure a positive learning environment for our students. Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to a resolution that fosters a healthy and supportive educational environment within our community. Sincerely, [Your Full Name] Dear Members of the Board of Education, After [Number of Years] years of dedicated service to the [School District Name], I am writing to formally announce my retirement from the position of [Your Position]. It has been an incredible journey, and I am grateful for the opportunities for personal and professional growth that this district has provided me. I have had the privilege of working with outstanding colleagues, administrators, and students. The memories and experiences I've gained during my time here will forever hold a special place in my heart. As I step into the next chapter of my life, I carry with me the valuable lessons and friendships forged in this remarkable educational community. I would like to express my gratitude to the Board of Education for their unwavering support and commitment to fostering a positive and enriching environment for both educators and students. It is reassuring to know that our district is in capable hands, and I am confident that the tradition of excellence will continue. Thank you once again for the privilege of serving the [School District Name]. I look forward to witnessing the continued success and achievements of our students and the entire educational community. Wishing you all the best in the future, [Your Full Name] Writing a letter to the Board of Education can be a daunting task, but it is an important way to voice your concerns and opinions about education policies and practices. Whether you are a parent, student, teacher, or community member, your letter can make a difference in shaping the future of education in your area. Here are seven steps to help you write an effective letter to the Board of Education. Before you start writing your letter, it is important to research the Board of Education in your area. Find out who the members are, what their roles and responsibilities are, and what issues they are currently addressing. This information can help you tailor your letter to the specific concerns and priorities of the Board. What is the purpose of your letter? Are you advocating for a specific policy change, expressing your support or opposition to a particular decision, or sharing your personal experience or perspective? Clearly identifying your purpose will help you focus your message and make it more compelling. When writing a letter to the Board of Education, it is important to use a professional tone. Avoid using emotional language or attacking individuals. Instead, focus on presenting your arguments and evidence in a clear and respectful manner. To make your letter more persuasive, provide evidence to support your arguments. This can include statistics, research studies, personal anecdotes, or expert opinions. Be sure to cite your sources and provide links or references where possible. The Board of Education members are busy people, so it is important to be concise in your letter. Keep your message focused and to the point, and avoid rambling or repeating yourself. Use short sentences and paragraphs to make your letter easy to read. At the end of your letter, make a specific request of the Board of Education. This could be to consider a particular policy change, to provide more resources for a specific program, or to address a particular issue. Be clear and specific about what you are asking for. After you have sent your letter, follow up with the Board of Education to ensure that your message has been received and considered. You can do this by attending Board meetings, contacting individual members, or reaching out to the Board's administrative staff. A letter to the Board of Education is a written communication addressed to the governing body of a school district or educational institution. It is usually written by parents, students, or concerned citizens to express their opinions, concerns, or suggestions regarding educational policies, programs, or practices. People write letters to the Board of Education for various reasons, such as to request changes in curriculum, express concerns about school safety, voice opinions on school policies, or suggest improvements in educational programs. It is a way for individuals to have their voices heard and to influence decision-making in the educational system. Your letter should be written in a professional and respectful tone, with a clear and concise message. It should include your name, address, and contact information, as well as a clear statement of your purpose for writing. You should also provide any relevant background information or evidence to support your position. You should address your letter to the Board of Education as a whole, rather than to a specific individual. You can usually find the contact information for the Board of Education on the school district's website or by contacting the district office. If you do not receive a response to your letter within a reasonable amount of time, you may want to follow up with a phone call or email to the Board of Education. You can also attend a Board meeting to address your concerns in person during the public comment period. While you have the right to submit your letter anonymously, it is generally more effective to include your name and contact information. This allows the Board of Education to follow up with you if they have any questions or need additional information. A well-written and thoughtful letter to the Board of Education can have a significant impact on educational policies, programs, and practices. It can bring attention to important issues, influence decision-making, and lead to positive changes in the educational system. Related: School boards and their meetings are generating a great degree of new interest across the country. Learning how to engage and follow up with your school board members can help to effectively document your concerns, get answers, and elevate the community's interests. There are more than 90,000 school board members nationwide, making school boards the largest body of elected officials in the country. They have the greatest influence over the direction of education in your community and for your child.What happens in the boardroom directly impacts what is occurring in the classroom. The best way you can become informed and involved is by doing three things: 1) reading agendas, 2) watching meetings, then 3) writing effectively to your school board members. What's on the Agenda? School boards post agendas for upcoming meetings online. You should read these regularly to see what the school board's priorities are and how it spends its time. If you are just beginning to follow your school board, go to their website and pull prior public agendas to peruse the topics they have covered during meetings. In assessing the agendas, look for time spent on 'woke' issues. For example: Often, the work of a school board is done in smaller subsets of the board or committees during meetings that are held with staff members. Therefore, it is important to look for agendas which cover committee meetings of the board in addition to their regular meetings. These committee meetings are not typically broadcast or videotaped, but notice of them should be publicized in advance in accordance with local or state open meetings law. Minutes from these meetings may also be available on your school board's website. As school boards met virtually during the pandemic, off-the-cuff discussions which may have previously happened in off-camera, smaller meetings occurred in the public domain – with consequences like this one, which resulted in the resignation of the entire school board. As the nation returns to 'normal' and fewer school board meetings are conducted online, watching school board proceedings has renewed importance. The Importance of Showing Up The best way to observe school board meetings is in person. While the meetings are often broadcast live or taped and posted later online, there is no substitute for being in the room as a meeting unfolds. Being present allows parents to observe school board members from perspectives which are not apparent from video. Interactions with the superintendent, communication with district staff, and treatment of those in attendance by school board members have more clarity when observed in person. As you watch meetings, take notes. Documenting questions in real time will help you recall concerns and identify issues which need clarifying – for example, whether your board is eliminating differentiated math, implementing sexualized content and gender ideology, or considering curriculum changes driven on "equity". Attending doesn't have to be a solitary pursuit: Invite friends and fellow parents to attend meetings with you. Uniting together will build a cadre of school board watchers. Write to Your School Board Member After reviewing the work of the school board, it's natural to be tempted to unload your frustration and anger on a school board member. However satisfying that may be, the real goal should be to get a response from them in writing about their views. Here are some tips on how to communicate effectively: Direct messages to your own school board member. School board members are elected to either represent a specific geographic area or as an 'at-large' member for a position that represents a wider population. If you live in an area that is directly represented by a school board member, it is best to write to that board member. There is an expectation of accountability to constituents who can vote for a school board member just like other elected officials. If any at-large member represents you, write to them as well –- but do it separately to seek an answer from each one. Ask direct, straightforward questions. Don't use your letter to pontificate. Instead, use it to find information and to elicit policy positions of the board member on a specific issue or controversy. One parent in Washington state simply asked a teacher whether a particular book was read to first grade children and ended up discovering the school board president owns an "all-ages" sex shop. Keep it short. It is rare that board members have any administrative support, so they are answering their own messages. It is better to engage more often and write shorter emails or letters than to put all your questions and concerns into a long missive. Request data. If you want detailed information from your school board member about the budget, consultants they have hired, curriculum that is taught, or a similar response that involves data, tell them you are asking for their response under a freedom of information act (FOIA) request. You can find our FOIA guide here. Next Steps You have submitted your letter or email to your school board member, so now what? If you have followed the above guidelines – directing a message to your own board member, asking direct questions, keeping it short, being specific, and requesting data – it is reasonable to expect a written response from your board member. If you have not received a response or acknowledgement within a reasonable period – generally one business week – resend your original message and let them know you expect a written response. If the response you receive is 'woke', evasive, or otherwise unacceptable, it is time for your next step: a call for your school board member to change their view, stop a policy, or reverse course. Express your call to action publicly by speaking at a meeting. The ultimate accountability for a school board member occurs at the ballot box. If the answers you receive don't reflect the values and views you and your fellow parents hold, or the call to action is ignored, consider running for school board or supporting those who do! Letters of complaint are issued to school boards for the sole reason of acknowledging a criticism or problem. Letters written to the school board should be formal, direct and respectful. When you write a letter of complaint, direct it either to the entire board or a specific board member. Keep the letter short and to the point, making certain that the reason for the letter is clearly expressed. Address the letter. On the top of a formal letter of complaint, include the school board's name and address. If the letter is aimed at one specific person, include that name. If the letter is aimed at the entire board, write "To the School Board." An email letter of complaint should never be written; instead, always type a formal letter and mail it to the board. State the purpose of the letter. The first paragraph should contain a summary of the precise problem or criticism. This paragraph identifies what the entire letter is about. Explain the situation. Using a positive and respectful tone, explain the details of the situation. If there are specific times and dates relevant to the problem, state those to increase the credibility of your information. Include names of anyone involved in the situation and keep the letter of complaint short, usually one page. If there are many details that are necessary to include, don't cut yourself short by not including them. If the details are pertinent to the situation, include them even if you go over one page. Use a voice of authority. When writing this letter, use a voice that shows you know what you are talking about and that the situation should be taken seriously. Never make threats in this type of letter or use profanity of any kind. Ask for a reply. Include a date by which you expect to hear back from them. This will often motivate the board to take action soon. The board may respond initially with a letter acknowledging the receipt of your letter. The board may also call you and briefly explain when a response will be made. Close the letter. When closing a letter of complaint, it is normally signed "Sincerely." Include your name, address and phone number on the letter.