

## Guide for Creating a Letter of Warning

No two letters will be the same because each employee disciplinary issue is different – there are different “for cause” reasons, different issues, different history, different nuances. This is your letter and should reflect your interests as a supervisor. The letter should be clear, objective, without hyperbole, and printed on school letterhead. As you review what you have written be sure the following key elements are included:

- A statement indicating the letter is a written warning
- “For Cause” reason is identified
- Details of the issue are included (what happened and the history)
- Consequences are stated
- Employee signature line and acknowledgement statement are included

Below is a step-by-step guide for your use (*note that examples are in italics*)

1. **Date** – This should be the date you intend to meet with the employee to give him/her the letter
2. **Name** – First and Last Name of Employee
3. **Address** – Employee’s home address (but deliver the letter in person)
4. **Salutation** – It may be best to be more rather than less formal (*e.g. rather than Dear John, write Dear John Doe*)

5. **First Paragraph** – There are two parts to the first paragraph
  - a) Identify the letter as a written warning and specify the “For Cause” issue(s). See excerpt from DSD Policy 2HR-004 defining and identifying “For Cause” conduct.

*This is a written warning for violations of the “Davis School District Employee Code of Ethics.”*

- b) State the behavior(s) at issue

*Specifically, you yelled at the students for doing poorly on a test*

6. **Second Paragraph** – Give details of the issue

*On May 15, 2016, it was reported to me that you yelled at your students saying, “I can’t believe you didn’t get this after all the review we’ve done on this subject.” When we visited, you confirmed that you yelled at them and stomped your foot.*

7. **Third Paragraph** – There are potentially two parts to the third paragraph
  - a) Tell the employee this is not acceptable and why it is not acceptable

*Yelling and stomping your foot at students is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. It is our responsibility as educators to create a positive learning experience for students.*

- b) If there is past history, recount it and tell what action you took at that time

*This is not the first time I’ve had to talk to you about similar concerns. In January 2016, you stalked out of your classroom and slammed the door during a discussion with your students. At that time, I warned you verbally about your unacceptable behavior.*

**8. Fourth Paragraph** – There are potentially two parts to the fourth paragraph

a) Tell the employee the District’s and your expectations

*As specified in the “Davis School District Code of Ethics,” employees are to treat students with dignity and respect, and promote a safe, nurturing, and positive school and work environment. I expect you to act positively and professionally.*

b) Give directives about future expectations

*In the future, you are to refrain from yelling at or demeaning students; and maintain a safe, nurturing, and positive environment*

**9. Fifth Paragraph** – This is the consequences paragraph. You’ll repeat the “For Cause” reason for the warning in this paragraph. (This is bold in the example; do not bold it in your letter).

*By this warning, I give you an opportunity to correct your unacceptable behavior. **Further violations of the “Davis School District Employee Code of Ethics” will result in more severe disciplinary action which may include dismissal from employment with the District.***

**10. Sixth and Last Paragraph** – Offer assistance and express hope he/she is successful. DO NOT give positive strokes here; remember this is a written warning.

*It is my wish that you be successful in all aspects of your job. Please let me know if I can assist you in making the necessary corrections.*

**11. Closing**

- Salutation – *Sincerely,*
- Your Name – Be sure to sign the letter
- Your Title - Principal

**12. Cc:** - Make sure you copy the District Personnel File (include the employee’s ID Number)

*Cc: District Personnel File #XXXXX*

**13. Employee Signature Statement**

- Deliver the letter personally to the employee
- Have them date and sign it
- Give them a copy of the letter
- Keep the original in your files
- Send a copy to Human Resources for inclusion in the employee’s District Personnel File

*I have received a copy of this letter and understand its contents*

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*Employee Signature*

*Date*

**14. Proofread and re-write** as necessary checking for clarity, content, punctuation, grammar, etc.

## SAMPLE LETTER

(from examples used in the "Guide for Creating a Letter of Warning")

July 5, 2016

Mr. John Doe  
123 Freedom St  
Farmington UT 84025

Dear Mr. Doe:

This is a written warning for violations of the "Davis School District Employee Code of Ethics." Specifically, you yelled at the students for doing poorly on a test.

It was reported to me on May 15, 2016, that you yelled at your students saying, "I can't believe you didn't get this after all the review we've done on this subject." When we visited, you confirmed that you yelled at them and stomped your foot.

Yelling and stomping your foot at students is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. It is our responsibility as educators to create a positive learning environment for students. This is not the first time I've had to talk to you about similar concerns. In January 2016, you stalked out of your classroom and slammed the door during a discussion with your students. At that time, I warned you verbally about your unacceptable behavior.

As specified in the "Davis School District Code of Ethics," employees are to treat students with dignity and respect, and promote a safe, nurturing, and positive school and work environment. I expect you to act positively and professionally. In the future you are to:

- Refrain from yelling at or demeaning students.
- Maintain a safe, nurturing, and positive environment.

By this warning, I give you an opportunity to correct your unacceptable behavior. Further violations of the "Davis School District Employee Code of Ethics" will result in more severe disciplinary action which may include dismissal from employment with the District.

It is my wish that you be successful in all aspects of your job. Please let me know if I can assist you in making the necessary corrections.

Sincerely,

Joe Smith  
Example School Principal

Cc: District Personnel File #12345

I have received a copy of this letter and understand its contents.

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Employee Signature

Date

## SAMPLE LETTER

May 20, 2016

Martha Washington  
123 Main St.  
Farmington, UT 84025

Dear Ms. Washington:

This letter is a written warning for neglect of employment obligations, serious misconduct related to your job, and insubordination. Specifically, you failed to correct an ongoing pattern of noncompliance with directives and protocol, violated Davis District policy, and have inaccurately recorded hours worked.

The following summarizes pertinent events:

1. When I visited with you on February 2, 2016, you were directed to notify me prior to the start of your shift if you are unable to arrive on time or will be absent. Additionally, I spoke to you on March 15, 2016, and reiterated to you that this was still the directive.

Since February 2, 2016, you have arrived to work late eight times without providing notification as directed. Additionally, there have been six instances where you have been absent or late and provided notice, but the notice was provided after your scheduled start time.

2. In our department staff meeting on March 24, 2016, all staff members were directed to swipe in and out each day using the card reader. From April 25, 2016, through May 20, 2016, you have failed to follow my directive and have not used the card reader at any time to scan in or out.
3. For the three dates you were absent from work (April 20, April 21, and May 12, 2016), you failed to accurately enter your absences on your time card. For two of those dates (April 20 and April 21, 2016), you indicated on your time card that you worked a full day. For the other absence (May 12, 2016), you indicated on your time card that you worked half of your scheduled hours.
4. On May 9, 2016, you violated the District's purchasing card policy by splitting a credit card purchase to ABC Corporation.

Your failure to follow my directives with regard to your absences and your violation of District policy cannot be tolerated. As an employee of Davis School District, you are expected to follow the directives of your supervisor and comply with all District policies.

You are hereby given the following specific directives:

- a. You are to notify me prior to your start time if you will be late or absent from work. Notification is to be emailed or texted directly to me.

- b. You are to use the card reader to scan in and out each day. This is required at the beginning and end of your shift, as well as at the beginning and end of your lunch break.
- c. You are to read and be in full compliance with the District's purchasing card policy; a copy is attached to this letter.

The events outlined above confirm a problem on your part that has not been corrected. By this warning, I give you an opportunity to correct this unacceptable behavior. Further neglect of employment obligations, serious misconduct related to your job, insubordination, and/or violation of District policy, will result in more severe disciplinary action which may include dismissal from employment with the District.

It is my wish that you be successful in all aspects of your job. Please let me know if I can assist you in making the necessary corrections, and/or if you would like to meet with me again to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Betsy Ross  
Sewing Department Director

Cc: District Personnel File #1776

I have received a copy of this letter and understand its contents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## SAMPLE LETTER

May 3, 2016

Jennifer Johns  
456 Main St.  
Farmington, UT 84025

Dear Ms. Johns,

This letter is a written warning for a violation of professional conduct as outlined in the "Davis School District Employee Code of Ethics." Specifically, you are not treating students with dignity and respect and not promoting a safe, nurturing, and positive school environment.

This is not the first time I have brought this issue to your attention. On October 19, 2015, I verbally warned you about using disrespectful language with your class and individual students, and directed you to communicate in positive, respectful ways with all members of our school community. I provided you a written confirmation of the verbal warning.

Since October 19, 2015, the following incidents demonstrate your ongoing pattern of behavior that is contrary to the expectations of a professional educator as well as the standards as outlined in the Code of Ethics.

- On Tuesday, April 22, 2016, when picking your class up from Computer Prep, Mr. Reynolds reported to you that some of your students had been difficult and disrespectful during computer class. As you walked your class to lunch, it was reported that you told one of your students that you wanted to "slap some good sense into her." The student reported this to the office. Statements were gathered from students who witnessed your verbal abuse. When I confronted you about the incident, you admitted to being frustrated with your students' behavior and saying to a student, "I feel like I want to slap some good sense into you." The student expressed that she did not feel safe in your classroom because of things you said. This is not the first time we have talked about concerns with how you treat students through your words, tone and actions.
- At a faculty meeting on March 7, 2016, you were quite vocal in expressing your dislike of students, student behavior, and dissatisfaction of the teaching profession in general. Your actions and communications do not promote a safe, nurturing, and positive school environment.
- On December 13, 2015, we met with a student and her parents to discuss their concerns regarding how their daughter felt in your class. At that time, you admitted to cursing in your classroom out of frustration because the copier was not working and you couldn't get your worksheets ready. This was upsetting to the student.

As educators, we must promote the highest standards of professionalism through our words and actions with students, parents and employees. Building positive relationships with students is extremely important in creating a safe and positive learning environment. It is critical that this type of behavior and communication stop.

The District has a reasonable expectation that you will comply with the Davis District Employee Code of Ethics. I am directing you to treat your students with dignity and respect by addressing specific concerns without threats, sarcasm, or negative statements. Student behavior should not be corrected publicly or in a demeaning manner. I am also directing you to establish and maintain a safe, nurturing, and positive school environment through your interactions with students, staff, faculty, and parents.

These events confirm a problem on your part that has not been corrected. By this warning, I give you an opportunity to correct this unacceptable behavior. Further violations of professional conduct as outlined in the Davis School District Code of Ethics will result in more severe disciplinary action which may include dismissal from employment with the District.

It is my wish that you be successful in all aspects of your job. Please let me know if I can assist you in making the necessary corrections and/or if you would like to meet with me again to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Flint Rock  
Principal, Stone Elementary

cc: District Personnel File #987654

I have received a copy of this letter and understand its contents.

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Employee Signature

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Date