

	Exemplary	Approaching Exemplary	At Standard	Approaching Standard	Below Standard
Sources	Letter uses other sources as evidence for claim, but still maintains his or her own voice.	Letter has at least one other source, but is used in a limited way and may not provide context	Letter has another source, but it does not provide context and simply repeats talking points or sounds like a research paper	Letter does little to substantiate or prove the claim being made by the writer with outside sources.	Letter has no sources and the perspective appears to be only from the writer.
Lead	Hooks the reader and is fewer than 30 words.	Hooks reader, but may be more than 30 words.	Hook attempted, and is more than 30 words.	Hook lacking.	Hook nonexistent.
Quotes & Attributions	Colorful, powerful quotes illustrate the Letter for the reader. Quotes are properly punctuated and writer uses "said" instead of other verbage.	Colorful quotes show the reader the Letter. (Facts in quotes are avoided.) Quotes are properly punctuated and writer uses "said" instead of other verbage.	Some quotes are colorful, but some contain factual information instead of capturing emotion.	Quotes are mostly factual in nature. Quotes seem to take up space instead of add to the letter.	Quotes are not included or are all partial quotes.
Persuasion & Voice	Letter contains a strong and recognizable journalistic voice. Writer consistently maintains a professional decorum while providing context and evidence to convince us.	Letter contains a journalistic voice, but may revert too much to "I think" & "I believe" statements. Writer's voice may take on that of a research paper instead of his or her own thoughtful position.	Letter shows the writer's reflection, but may do little to convince us of a particular viewpoint. Writer may use awkward introductions to controversial material, and may revert to the phrase "____ needs to"	Letter sounds like a rant or a repetition of a particular group's talking points. Writer does little to insert his or her own experiences or observations.	Letter exhibits little evidence of any professional distance from the topic and/or makes little effort to persuade with original information.
Legal & ethical issues	Writer careful not to misquote or misrepresent information.	Information is factual and shows evidence of verification.			Writer violates ethical or legal journalistic standards.
Style (AP and Local) & editing	Letter follows all AP style rules and adheres to all local school rules, and shows clear evidence of revision. Paragraph & sentence structure aids clarity. Voice evident.	Letter mostly follows AP style, and generally shows strong allegiance to accepted style rules. Sentence and paragraph structure moves easily from one idea to another.	Letter may contain a few errors in style. The sentence structure and flow do not distract from the letter.	Letter inconsistent in its application of style rules, and the sentence structure inhibits a smooth transition between thoughts. Little evidence of revision. Graphs may contain more than 3 sentences.	Letter shows no application of AP or local style rules and the sentence structure prohibits cohesive thoughts. No evidence of revision or editing.