EPIK Guidelines - Letters of Recommendation

The prestigious EPIK program for public school positions in Korea requires two letters of recommendation and has very specific instructions for them. In the past, they have rejected applications because of letters that did not meet their standards exactly, so these are very important!

Private schools are much more flexible about letters, and any letter that is good enough for EPIK is definitely good enough for them.

For public schools, please work with your recommenders to ensure that letters follow these guidelines:

Your letter must come from a professor or an employment supervisor (Korean or JET co-teachers, pastors, and ministers are also acceptable).

EPIK does not accept letters of recommendation from: family members, relatives, friends, non-supervising co-workers, university teaching assistants, clients, business partners, neighbors, or parents of children from babysitting/tutoring/nannying.

Letters should not mention CIEE at all, since they are ultimately destined for Provincial Offices of Education (POE’s) in Korea. They may reference the EPIK program in Korea, or teaching abroad in general.

Letters must be:

✓ Signed in ink (digital signatures or stamps are not accepted, even if signed over again in ink)
✓ Addressed “To Whom It May Concern” (not to your coordinator or to CIEE)
✓ On the letterhead of the institution or company. If the recommender no longer works at the organization where they supervised you, they must mention this in their letter and explain when they left and what their new role is. Staple a business card if letterhead isn’t available.
✓ Include all of the following: name, job title, address, phone number and email
✓ Dated not more than two years previously
✓ Use your full, legal name (e.g. Pamela, not Pam)

Ask your recommender to send the original, signed letter by mail to CIEE at this address:

Luke Beland
CIEE Teach in South Korea
16 Gay Street
Portland, ME 04103
USA
EXAMPLE LETTER TEMPLATE FOR EPIK

[PRINT ON LETTERHEAD OR ATTACH A BUSINESS CARD]

DATE

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to recommend [candidate’s full legal name] for a position teaching English overseas. I have known [candidate’s name] for [number of years], and I can tell you that...

INFORMATION TO INCLUDE:

- Recommender’s job title and organization
- Explanation of candidate’s job title and role at the organization
- Evaluation of candidate’s job performance
- Candidate’s personal qualities that will help them succeed as a teacher
- Additional comments or endorsements

DO NOT MENTION CIEE OR INCLUDE OUR ADDRESS

Thank you for considering [candidate’s name] for a role with your organization.

Sincerely,

[INK SIGNATURE – no scans or stamps]

THE FOLLOWING INFO IS REQUIRED, EITHER ON THE LETTERHEAD, BUSINESS CARD, OR SIGNATURE BLOCK:

Recommender’s full legal name
Job title
Organization
Mailing or Physical Address
Phone number
Email address