**Letter of Concern to a Government Official**

Writing or emailing a letter of concern to a government official provides students an opportunity to express their opinions and reactions about a current issue. This writing strategy will prepare students to participate as a concerned citizen on public issues.

Writing Format for Students: **ONE PAGE MAXIMUM**

**Opening Paragraph:**

Introduce yourself and identify the focus of your letter in a way that makes the reader interested.

**Body Paragraphs:**

In each paragraph of the letter, cover one main point related to your issue, including specific facts, statistics and examples that support the paragraph’s main point. Also include steps you want government officials to take. Start a new paragraph whenever there is a shift in your ideas or emphasis.

**Concluding Paragraph:**

Summarize your main points and remind officials of the actions you want taken. Thank the official for their time, wish them well.

**Resources:**

Websites to use for finding the official you want to write to:

US House of Reps: <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/> (type in your zipcode)

US Senators (IL): Mark Kirk (<http://www.kirk.senate.gov/?p=offices>) and Dick Durbin (http://www.durbin.senate.gov/contact/)

State legislators:

<http://il--nea.capwiz.com/nea/il/directory/statedir.tt?state=IL&lvl=state&action=myreps_form> (type in your zipcode)

**Officials you may want to write to:**

School board member

Village Board President/City Planner

President of the United States

State Representative

State Senator

U.S. Representative

U.S. Senator

Illinois Governor

Your Home Address

Town, IL Zip Code

December 7, 2015

The Honorable Senator Mark Kirk

230 South Dearborn

Suite 3900

Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Senator Kirk:

My name is Ms. Shay and I teach social studies at Oswego High School. It has come to my attention that the State of Illinois is planning to abandon use of the ACT for college entrance requirements. Instead, students will need to take the SAT. While I realize there must be a purpose, I feel that it is not beneficial to students for many reasons.

The first reason I believe the SAT is not beneficial to student is…………………………

The second reason I believe ………………………

Lastly, ………………………………

As you can see, the decision to change from using the ACT to using the SAT is not productive because ………….. I thank you so much for taking the time to consider my opinion. I wish you and your family a very happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Ms. Brenda Shay