

Preparing for Successful Job Interviews-Before the Interview

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Before that important interview for your first teaching job, think about doing the following:

- Check yourself out on social media sites to make sure that information there leaves prospective employers with the impression you want to convey as an intelligent, responsible person **with** wholesome friends and **without** ‘skeletons’ in your closet that might cause embarrassment in the future.
- In exploring each district’s interviewing and hiring practices, see if you can determine:
 - ✓ If a writing activity is included in the process, will it be pen/paper or computer-based?
 - ✓ Will there be a structured interview that will include the recording of your responses?
 - ✓ Will you be expected to do a short demonstration lesson with students in a school setting which will be observed by those involved in the screening process?
 - ✓ Will some of the interviews be done by a group of people that will include administrators, teachers, and others?
 - ✓ Will part of the interview be conducted in Spanish (or another language that is used in the instructional process)?
- Research campus/district/TEA websites to gather as much information as possible about the educational settings in which you may be employed. What trends can you identify in district/campus achievement data or demographics? Is there evidence on campus websites that parental involvement is encouraged and the success of all students is recognized and celebrated?
- Many districts now use an on-line application and reference gathering process, so it is helpful to pull together and organize materials that you may need before you sit down at the computer. You should also get permission and contact information, including email addresses, for persons you want to use as references. In the case of college or university staff, make sure you have completed the necessary FERPA form that gives your professors permission to complete an on-line form that you will not be able to review.

The best time to begin gathering this information is NOW as you chat with friends who are applying for teaching jobs and as you interact with school staff during field experiences or internships. Follow up these discussions by reviewing Human Resources information on district websites. If you have the opportunity to work as a substitute teacher, see if you can determine how the process for obtaining permanent employment compares to the process you experienced in becoming a substitute teacher. Having an understanding of what to expect during each step of this process in advance of that first interview will reduce your stress and help you focus your preparation on what is most important!