

## Education Job Search

In any job search it is important to take a step back before rushing into the process of sending out resumes. It is helpful to consider and research the industry you wish to enter, think about what they do, what skills they are likely to value. Take time to access yourself; what are your strengths, values, skills and how do they relate to the teaching profession. In the job search process you are the product; the better you know yourself the easier it will be to select openings that are likely to be a good match, write your resume and present yourself in the interview. Finally, consider where, when & how principals are likely to go about their job search. There is no question that the education job search process is unique from most other employers. This handout is meant to share some thoughts on the process of landing a teaching position.

The hiring of teachers happens in waves, typically spring and then late summer. Openings are dependent on a variety of factors including current teachers accepting new positions, retirements, class size, and the state/local budgets. The following timeline suggests one approach to insure that you will be prepared when teaching positions are posted.

FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
Write Resume	On-Campus Interviews	Check websites, newspapers
Begin to collect references	Attend Job Fairs (SSC, MERC)	Late summer 2 <sup>nd</sup> wave of hiring
Continue portfolio development	1 <sup>st</sup> wave of hiring	Conduct informational interviews
<b>Register with Career Services</b>	Attend Education Panel	Read, Stay Current (related topics)

As you draft your resume consider your audience (teachers, parents, principals). Focus on those experiences and skills that relate to your field, both specific content and transferable. One key to catching the readers' attention is to use the vocabulary and buzz words of the field (see samples below). Remember as you write your cover letter and resume that the employer doesn't want to know everything about you -- just what you can do for them.

- Diversity/multi-cultural
- Individual educational plan (IEP)
- Frameworks
- Learning centers units
- Self-contained
- Open classroom
- Team teaching
- Integration
- Inclusion

- Cooperative learning strategies
- Hands-on
- Language experience approach
- Interdisciplinary
- Specialized programs:***
- Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
- PALMS
- Standards-Based Instruction

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## EDUCATION

**Salem State College**, Salem, MA  
*Bachelor of Science in Education and Psychology* May 20XX  
Concentration: *Elementary Education* Overall GPA: 3.5  
\* *Passed Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (Elementary 1-6)*

## RELATED EXPERIENCE

**Horace Mann Elementary School**, Salem, MA  
*Student Teacher/First Grade* September 20XX-December 20XX  
Taught in an economically and culturally diverse self-contained 1st grade classroom. Developed and implemented individual lesson plans and curriculum units designed to address multiple learning styles in all subject areas. Facilitated small group and individual reading and math sessions. Progressively took on additional responsibility throughout the semester culminating in total classroom management for one week. Observed and participated in parent conferences.

**Camp Encore Coda**, Sweden, ME  
*Camp Counselor* May 20XX-August 20XX  
Designed age appropriate art activities for 8 children from 7-13 years old. Provided supervision for a cabin of 8 girls ranging in age from 7-10. Documented individual child progress, wrote evaluations and communicated information to parents

## ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Red's Restaurant**, Salem, MA  
*Waitress* September 1998-Present  
Provide efficient service to customers. Answer questions and resolve problems. Work effectively as a team member in a busy, fast paced environment.

## COMPUTER SKILLS

Macintosh, IBM; Excel, PowerPoint, HTML, Microsoft Word

## LANGUAGE

Spanish (fluent)

## ACTIVITIES

Future Educators of America, Art Society, Hispanic American Society

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Volunteer/Big Sister, Coach/Youth Soccer, Volunteer/Rosie's Place

**Portfolios** can be a great way to organize your thoughts and highlight experiences of which you are proud. Typically portfolios are most useful for the elementary level interview. It is very important to think about how you will use your portfolio. Do not just hand it to the interviewer and expect it to speak for itself. Keep in mind that the primary focus of the interview is to develop a rapport with the interview team to become more than just a piece of paper. Listed below are some possible categories to include in your portfolio.

Resume

Letter from parent

Manipulatives

Philosophy of education

Samples of students work

Lesson Plans/Unit

Student teaching evaluations

Photographs

Video Tape (a lesson)

### **Philosophy of Education/Teaching Mission Statement**

For many new graduates the thought of writing a philosophical statement is very intimidating. What school systems generally are looking for is insight into how you will approach the job. Your philosophy is often demonstrated in your approach to classroom management, your style of interacting with children, your approach to lessons, as well as your own commitment to on-going learning. Most students create a draft of their personal vision for teaching in their junior year in an academic course. It is important to realize that this vision is a work in progress. After student teaching you will want to revise the original statement to reflect what you've learned and observed. This re-evaluation of your philosophy and approach will happen many times over your teaching career. What follows are some samples of topics that you may want to include in your philosophy of education.

- What is it about teaching that excites you (why teaching?)
- Describe your teaching style (significant influences, personal experiences, theories)
- What themes or theoretical approaches are seen in your lessons, classroom management approach?
- What do you do to create a supportive learning environment?
- Describe your approach to setting up a classroom that will reinforce the values you wish to communicate to your student, parents, and administration?
- How will you communicate with parents, involving them in the students' educational experience?
- What is your approach to classroom management?
- How do you create and maintain positive relationships with your students?

### **References**

Most school systems will request three references. Consider carefully who is best able to speak to your teaching capabilities (faculty, cooperating teacher, past employers).

- Don't assume, ask the individual if they are willing to be a reference
- Where possible get a reference in writing. Not only will you gain insight into what the reference is saying, you will also have a copy if you lose track of the individual (leaves area, changes jobs).
- Help your reference by updating them on your current target/goal and the experiences/skills that you think would be most helpful to emphasize.

## **Where are the Vacancies?**

It is very important to use a variety of resources to explore teaching openings. It is easy to find yourself focusing primarily on the Internet or the Boston Globe because these are readily available and non-threatening, however you may be missing your dream job. Often a good starting point is Career Services, not only do we receive listings we also sponsor events throughout the spring to help education students prepare for the job search and connect with employers. In addition, the Department of Education has a wonderful site with profiles of school systems and current openings. Wherever possible, the human connection is always the best. Keep in touch with educational personnel at your field and student teaching placements. Conducting informational interviews, volunteering and substitute-teaching are all great ways to increase your network of contacts in school systems.

## **Interview Preparation**

Congratulations! You've received the call that an interview is scheduled for next week. Consider the following items as you prepare for the interview.

- ***Research the community***
  - Realtors often have community information on their web-sites
  - Read local town/city newspapers for current community issues and events
- ***Research the district/school***
  - Check out their profile on the DOE site
  - Do an informational interview with someone in the system (student teachers, parents, teachers...)
- ***Review your experiences***
  - Read over your resume & cover letter
  - Review your student teaching materials (portfolio, reviews, units, favorite lessons)
  - Put on the hat of the employer. What would you be interested in if you were the employer
- ***Anticipate questions (sample)***
  - How would you describe your philosophy of education?
  - Why do you want to be a teacher?
  - What would I see if I walked into your classroom
  - What are some of the trends, issues, methodologies related to your curriculum that you are particularly interested in?
  - What is the most recent book that you've read?
  - What special interests or skills do you bring to the classroom?
  - What is your description of a great teacher?
  - What are some of the ways you would communicate with a parent regarding a student's progress?
  - Describe a time when a lesson was not going well; how did you deal with the situation?

\* For more information on the education job search, visit the Career Services Office and/or check out our website: [www.salemstate.edu/careersvs](http://www.salemstate.edu/careersvs) for additional resources.