

Education Job Search Guide

KNOW YOURSELF

- Interests: What stimulates you? (Engages your mind, makes you look forward to going to work)
- Values: What is important to you? (Causes, issues or qualities that engage your spirit and heart)
- Skills: What are you able to do? (Talents, gifts, abilities, and strengths)
- Preferences: What can't you live without in a position? (Location, driving distance, culture, travel)
- Ask Yourself:
 - Why did I become a teacher?
 - What passions do I bring to my teaching?
 - What are my dreams/aspirations for the children I teach?
 - How can I best articulate my strengths/gifts/philosophy of education?
 - What gives my life meaning and purpose?
 - What impact do I want to make on the world and the field of education?

DEVELOP A TASK LIST & TIMELINE

- View your search as a job itself. For maximum results, set reasonable expectations for yourself when setting your goals.
- Begin planning early. Create a list of tasks and set target dates for each. You are the best expert on your energy and work ethic, so be sure to keep your plan realistic.
- Commit your plan to paper, as you may be more likely to tackle your search if a plan is clearly organized and written down. This will also give you the satisfaction of checking off tasks as they are accomplished.
- If job searching out of state, become aware of any differences in licensing requirements. Visit sites like Teach.com to see the differences for each state.

POLISH YOUR APPLICATION MATERIALS

- Create a resume and cover letter and have both critiqued. See the [Education Resume, Cover Letter & Reference Guide](#) for helpful advice and examples.
- Practice your interviewing skills. See the [Education Interviewing Guide](#) for helpful advice and sample interview questions.
- Schedule a mock interview with a Career Counselor. Call (920) 403-3040 to schedule an appointment.
- Participate in MIRT (Mock Interview Relay for Teachers) which takes place every spring for senior Education majors.

CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE JOB SEARCH

- Respond to Position Openings
 - For education positions in Wisconsin:
 - Complete a profile on [WECAN](#).
 - Complete your profile on [Hire a Knight](#), SNC Career & Professional Development's online job and internship database.
 - Register on the [Job Center of Wisconsin](#) website.
 - Sign up to on the Education listserve through the SNC Education Department.

- Search for professional associations related to the field of education as they advertise openings.
- Use [SchoolSpring](#) to search for openings by state, category, or grade.
- Visit the Department of Education for the state in which you plan to work to start searching for openings.
- If you are searching outside of Wisconsin, contact Career & Professional Development for an individualized approach.
- Develop a Targeted List of Employers
 - Visit the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#) to search for schools by CESA districts
 - Get links for K-12 public and private school listings and search by county on the State of Wisconsin Education site.
 - Use the [National Center for Education Statistics](#) to search for public schools in the U.S.
 - Send a letter of inquiry introducing yourself and sell your skills.
- Network
 - Often times, other teachers are a great resource in learning about upcoming openings; therefore it pays to develop good working relationships with your cooperating teacher and other teachers at your student teaching placements.
 - Increase your network through people you know both formally and informally, such as parents/siblings, extended family, friends, professors, cooperating teachers, advisors, mentors, colleagues, supervisors, former employers, neighbors, contacts from professional organizations.
 - Get connected with young professional organizations to increase your network and hear about potential openings before they are posted.
 - Every time you network with someone, be sure to ask “Do you know two more people I could talk to regarding this topic?” as this is how your network will grow.
- Attend Education Career Fairs
 - Career fairs provide candidates with an opportunity to meet many districts in one location and receive first-hand information about the district and available positions. (See our [Career & Internship Fair Prep Guide](#))
 - Consider attending the [Wisconsin Educational Recruitment Fair, WERF](#), held every spring in Madison
- Visit Career & Professional Development (Todd Wehr Hall, Rm 215) for assistance with any of the above activities.

FOLLOW-UP

- It is not enough to simply send or e-mail your application materials. It is essential that you conduct a follow-up after submitting your application. That can be as simple as calling the employer you applied to, asking if they have received all of your application materials and asking about their timeline for the hiring process.
- The reason for conducting a follow-up is to set yourself apart from the other applicants and show initiative.

BE FLEXIBLE

- Evaluate your job search plan periodically to make sure it is still working for you.
- You may need to make modifications along the way based on what is or is not working.
- Reward yourself along the way for all of your hard work!

STUDENT LOAN INFORMATION/DEFERMENT

- If you have student loans taken out, be sure to talk to someone in Financial Aid. You will want to know exactly how much you have taken out, when repayment begins, and your repayment plan options.
- Research Loan Forgiveness/Cancellation Programs for Wisconsin Educators (<http://tepd.dpi.wi.gov/programs/loan-forgiveness-or-cancellation>)

Job Search Checklist

Searching for a job can feel overwhelming, so it is helpful to break it into manageable steps. The good news is you don't have to do every step in order and you can receive assistance for all of the steps below through Career Services.

Step 1: Know yourself

- Identify personal strengths, skills, interests, and values.
- Make a list of experiences from your student teaching that you can share in an interview to prove your skill set.

Step 2: Know where you want to work

- Research schools and districts that align with your teaching philosophy and educational values.
- Identify 10 potential schools at which you can see yourself working.
- Research the field: entry level salaries, trends in the field, etc.
- Identify the top three geographic areas where you would like to live and work.

Step 3: Get ready for the search

- Have your resume and cover letter(s) reviewed by Career Services and a professional in the field.
- If applicable, prepare a portfolio or work samples to highlight your experience, skills and talent.
- Develop your "[60 Second Commercial](#)" for interviews and networking opportunities.
- Analyze your education and identify unique benefits to your liberal arts education.
- Identify three individuals who will serve as references.
- Prepare for interviews by practicing your responses to typical questions.
- Participate in MIRT (Mock Interview Relay for Teachers), an event in the spring for senior Education majors.
- Prepare interview attire that is appropriate for the field in which you plan to work.
- Create a professional-sounding answering machine/voice mail message in case an employer calls.
- Use a neutral/professional e-mail address to on your application material.

Step 4: Engage in the search

- Upload your resume(s) onto WECAN* and Career Connections.
 - Regularly check WECAN* and Career Connections for opportunities.
 - Create a system for keeping track of your contacts, interviews, and other search activities.
 - Follow up on every interesting position lead in a timely manner.
 - Develop a list of potential networking contacts and keep in touch with them.
 - Follow up each application with a phone call or e-mail to the employer.
 - Send thank you letters or e-mails to every person who interviews and assists you in your search.
- (*Note: If you are searching outside of Wisconsin, contact Career & Professional Development for an individualized approach to locating job search resources.)