

# Career Search for Teachers

## How to Prepare for a Teaching Position

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1. **Write your Resume.** Prepare a draft of a professional resume and have it critiqued in Career Development. Samples are contained in this handout and others are available in the Resume Writing handout on the web site.
2. **Register with Career Development.** Go to NACElink on the career development web page and upload your resume into our database.
3. **Prepare a list of References.** Contact these people and ask permission to use them as references. Select those people who can best describe your teaching abilities.
4. **Write your Cover Letter.** Samples of cover letters are contained in the Business Correspondence handout on the web site.
5. **Prepare your Credential File.** Your credential file contains those documents that support your qualifications to teach.
6. **Research School Districts.** The more you know about the district the better you will interview.
7. **Practice Interviewing.** Practice, practice, practice. The more you do it the better you will become at it.
8. **Fill out Applications.** Be sure to register on the R.E.A.P. System and any other on-line program you like. Contact school districts to find out how you should apply for positions in their districts.
9. **Attend the Education Career Fair.** Approximately 150 school districts attend the spring fair. Don't miss out.
10. **Notify Career Development when you have accepted a position.**  
Call: 271-4205 or e-mail [garlinger@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:garlinger@missouriwestern.edu)





***CAREER DEVELOPMENT IS HERE TO SERVE YOU.  
SO PLEASE LET US HELP IN ANY WAY WE CAN.***

### ***How to Prepare for a Teaching Position***

**Looking for a teaching position may seem like an overwhelming job. Career Development is here to help. Don't hesitate to call or stop by with questions, concerns, for advice or a morale boost. The steps to your goal are not that difficult. Here's a step-by-step procedure to follow.**

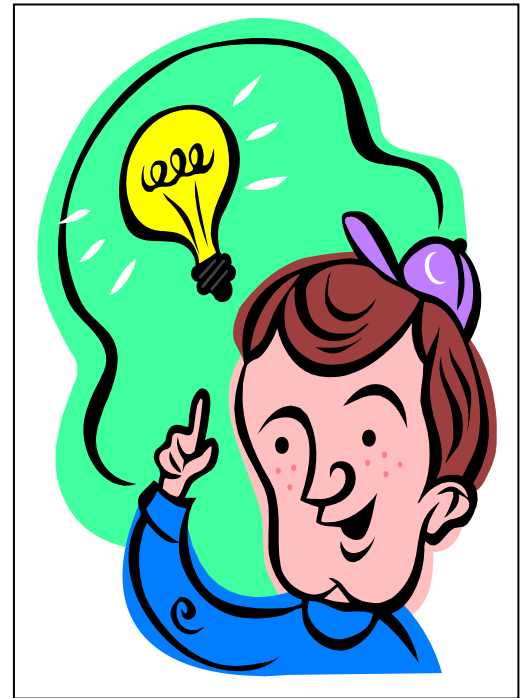
### **Resumes for Teachers**

A resume is your professional advertisement. It can be sent with a cover letter to a school district as a way of introducing yourself. A resume should be included in your portfolio and it is also the first item in your credential file.

A separate handout called Resume Writing is available on the Career Development webpage with specific information for all college graduates. But here are a few suggestions for education majors.

### **The “Do’s” and the “Do Not’s”**

1. Always send an original resume. Do not photocopy your resume. Use a laser printer and an easy to read type face such as Times New Roman.
2. Use quality paper. Do not use pastel colors, parchment or paper with flecks or designs. A good linen type or cotton content paper is very impressive. You may use ivory or light gray instead of white.
3. Make your resume impressive. Do not use borders, vertical lines, shaded boxes or graphics. Remember we are looking for the most professional image.
4. Include information on your resume that is important to the reader. If the information has no relevance to education, teaching, managing or working with youth, parents or peers, it is probably not relevant.
5. Check your spelling, grammar, format, margins and layout. Computer errors are not acceptable.
6. Be sure the address, phone numbers, e-mail and web addresses are correct.
7. Your objective should be short and to the point. Do not write long philosophical statements.



8. Under Education it is not necessary to list high school. Start with the highest degree earned and work backwards. Do not include college coursework from other institutions where you did not receive a degree or certificate. It is not necessary to list education that is not related to your job objective.

9. If your GPA is 3.0 or better, put it on your resume. You may also consider using your GPA in Major or GPA at MWSU if appropriate

10. List all teaching certifications that you have or will be eligible to receive. Clarify the status of each by saying (Applied) or (Eligible to Apply).

11. Be sure to include all your student teaching experiences. Start with the most recent and work backwards. Include any experiences, paid or volunteer, related to teaching.

12. List honors and activities that enhance you as a candidate. Hobbies and interests have no relevance unless they are related to a school activity or sport you are willing to sponsor or coach.

13. Keep your resume updated. Do not submit a resume with inaccurate or outdated information. Do not cross out information or hand write anything on your resume. Do not substitute a resume for an application unless instructed to do so by the school district.

## ***Ready to Begin?***



**Following are a few examples to help you get started. Type your resume in a Word document.**

**Do not use templates. They may not enhance you as a candidate or highlight your best qualifications.**

**Do not agonize over this exercise. Create a draft of your resume. When in doubt, write it down.**

**Then send it to Career Development via e-mail as an attachment to be reviewed. When you get it back you can polish it up and finalize it.**

## MARY K. TEACHER

Campus Address:  
4525 Downs Drive  
St. Joseph, MO 64507  
(816) 233-1234

[mkt0000@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:mkt0000@missouriwestern.edu)

Home Address:  
5 Marty Drive  
Kansas City, MO 64144  
(816) 992-4321

[teacher@aol.com](mailto:teacher@aol.com)

**OBJECTIVE** Elementary School Teacher

**EDUCATION** Missouri Western State University  
**B.S. Elementary Education**  
**Emphasis Area: Reading**

St. Joseph, MO  
May 20XX  
GPA 3.7

### **CERTIFICATION Missouri State Certification K-6**

**TEACHING** **Soaring High Elementary School-Grade 5**

Grand City, MO

**EXPERIENCE** Student Teacher-Senior Experience

Spring 20XX

Prepared and implemented lesson plans in all subject areas to meet Grade Level Expectations (GLE) for 22 students. Coordinated field trip to museum in conjunction with History unit. Organized self-instructional, audio-visual learning stations designed for multi-ability levels. Implemented lesson plans

**Sunnyside Elementary School-Grade 3**

Parkside, MO

Student Teacher-Junior Experience

Spring 20XX

Taught Math, whole class and groups, major unit connected to state standards.

**Silverside Elementary School-Grade 1**

Overly, MO

Substitute Teacher

20XX-20XX

Taught Reading, Language Arts, Music and Social Studies to both small groups and the total class. Created web activities for students connected to Mo-Show-Me standards for MAP testing.

**Singing Brook Elementary School**

Rainbow City, MO

Student Teacher-Sophomore Experience

Spring 20XX

Observed a first grade classroom working in small groups in Reading, Art, Math and Language Arts.

**The Reading Center**

St. Joseph, MO

Tutor

Fall 20XX

Taught reading to 3 nine year olds who were 2 grades below reading level. By the end of the semester, two of the three were reading at grade level.

**ACTIVITIES** Dean's List

**& HONORS** The Write Traits Workshop

American Reads, Tutor

Missouri State Teacher's Association, Student Chapter

**REFERENCES** References and Credentials furnished upon request.

Portfolio may be viewed at [www.teacher.com](http://www.teacher.com)

# John J. Educator

100 Tenth Street  
St. Joseph, MO 64507  
(816) 233-0001  
[educator@aol.com](mailto:educator@aol.com)

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|                                |   |  |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Objective</b>               | Math Teacher  |  |
| <b>Education</b>               | Missouri Western State University<br><b>B.S. Secondary Education</b><br><b>Major: Mathematics</b>   | St. Joseph, MO<br>May 20XX<br>GPA 3.75 |
| <b>Certifications</b>          | <b>Missouri Certification 7-12 Mathematics</b><br><b>First Aid, CPR and Lifeguard Certified</b>   |  |
| <b>Related Experience</b>      | <b>Carlton High School – Grade 9</b><br>Student Teacher-Senior Experience<br>Taught Algebra to class of 20 students. Coordinated Math Fair for 100 freshmen. Designed a peer tutoring program for 25 students. Implemented computer assisted learning modules in the classroom. | Kansas City, MO<br>Spring 20XX         |
|                                | <b>Mercy Middle School – Grade 8</b><br>Student Teacher-Junior Experience<br>Taught Math to three groups of 6 students each.  | Kansas City, MO<br>Spring 20XX         |
|                                | <b>Success High School – Grades 9-12</b><br>Student Teacher-Sophomore Experience<br>Observed Math classes for freshmen through senior high school.  | Paradise, MO<br>Spring 20XX            |
|                                | <b>Whiteside High School – Grade 9</b><br>Teacher’s Aide<br>Worked with small groups of high school students on Math skills two mornings a week during the school year. Assisted classroom teacher in meeting Grade Level Expectations (GLE).                                   | Whiteside, MO<br>20XX-20XX             |
| <b>Other Employment</b>        | Washington Lake Swim Club<br><b>Lifeguard and Swim Instructor</b><br>Managed pool, scheduled lifeguards, provided safe environment for swimmers. Taught intermediate and advanced swimming to youth ages 10-16.   | Lake Ozark, MO<br>Summers 20XX-20XX    |
| <b>Activities &amp; Honors</b> | Dean’s List<br>Regent’s Scholar<br>Missouri State Teacher’s Association, Student Chapter<br>MWSU Swim Team  |  |

Application available on Missouri R.E.A.P.  
Portfolio can be viewed at [www.mathematics.com](http://www.mathematics.com)

## Sample Reference Page

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

### REFERENCES

Dr. Janice Hughes  
Principal  
Evander Elementary School  
123 Main Street  
Old Town, MO 64510  
816.555.5555  
[hughes@evander.edu](mailto:hughes@evander.edu)

Ms. Anita Nielson  
Cooperating Teacher for Junior Experience  
Roosevelt Elementary School  
5 Birkdale Court  
Sutton, MO 64511  
816.444.4444  
Nielson @roosevelt.edu

S. Mary Burke  
Director  
St. Patrick Pre-School  
45 Blessing St.  
Utopia, MO 65412  
816.333.3333  
[burke@stpat.edu](mailto:burke@stpat.edu)

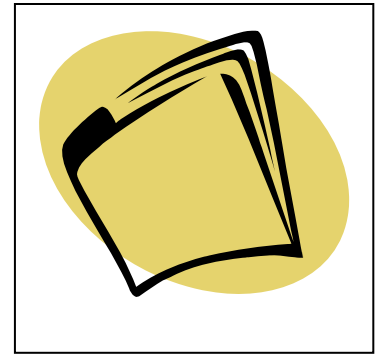
Ms. Marjorie Forest  
Program Director  
Midland Empire Girl Scout Council  
6 Fox Lane  
St. Joseph, MO 64507  
816.222.2222  
[forest@girlscouts.org](mailto:forest@girlscouts.org)

For Cover Letter Assistance go to Business  
Correspondence on the Job Seekers page of the web  
site.

## CREATING AND USING YOUR CREDENTIAL FILE

### What are credentials?

Credentials are those documents that show you are qualified to hold certain positions. They are a reinforcement of your qualifications; a certificate or accreditation of your ability to exercise certain responsibility and/or authority.



### What is a credential file?

A credential file is a packet of materials that you provide to an employer to support your application for a teaching position. It should look professional. Credential folders with envelopes are available from Career Development – SSC 202 for a nominal fee. It is highly recommended that you use these folders for your credentials. Do not design your own using pastel paper and “cute” red school houses or other education logo designs. Save those things for your portfolio.



### Your credential file should contain the following:

#### Resume

**List of Professional References** (Cooperating Teacher, Supervising Teacher, Principal)

**Letters of Recommendation** (These are optional professional references. References are checked, usually by phone, or the school districts may send their own forms to references)

**Student Teaching Evaluation** (Senior Student Teaching Evaluation for beginning teachers)

**Copies of your Teaching Certificate(s)**

**Background Investigation Report**

**Transcript(s)** (Transcripts are available from the Registrar’s Office. Request one final copy of your transcript from the Registrar and make as many copies as you need. Include all transcripts. They do not have to be official for the purposes of applying, but when you are hired by a school district, you must provide a sealed, official copy from the registrar)

#### Tips for using your credential file.

- Keep your documents in a safe and clean place.
- Make sure that the copies you make are high quality, without smudges or stray marks.
- Organize the documents logically.
- Do not send out your credential file indiscriminately.
- Send your credential file only to those schools that request it.
- Do not include character references, personal references, academic references, academic or employment evaluations, commendations, awards or certificates of merit.
- Remember, the point is to make a positive impression on the employer.



## A word (or two) about References.

Always ask permission before listing someone as a reference.

Provide your references with a current resume.

Keep your references up-to-date; maintain contact with them.

Inform them of the status of your job search.

If you are asking them to write a letter, provide a form and a return envelope.

Be sure to thank them for any assistance they may provide in your search for a job.

### What is a letter of recommendation?

A letter of recommendation is a written statement from a professional supervisor who can attest to your qualifications for a specific position.

(If you are applying to graduate school, check with the institution to find out what they require in letters of recommendation).



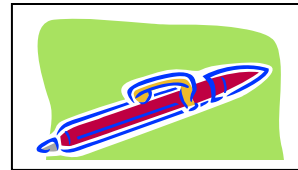
### Who should I ask to write a letter of recommendation?

School districts are very specific about who they want to see write letters of recommendation:

- Your Cooperating Teacher from your Senior Student Teaching Experience
- Your Supervisor from your Senior Student Teaching Experience
- The Principal from the school where you did your Student Teaching

These three references are sufficient for your file. However, if you wish to add more you may include letters from:

- Substitute Teaching
- Religious Education Teaching
- Community Youth Programs



**Reference checks.** A potential employer will call all of your references to talk about your abilities, performance and potential. Other people may be contacted as well. Your references may be asked to recommend someone else to talk to about your qualifications. In addition, background checks are performed on all teachers.



## INTERVIEWING FOR A TEACHING POSITION

### What to do before the interview:

- 1. Be prepared.** Research the school district before the interview. Access their web page if they have one. Read all printed information about the district. Talk with other teachers in the school. Find out who is on their school board. Talk with parents of children in the district. Talk with members of the community about the school district.
- 2. Appearance.** First impressions count. Dress appropriately. You should look like you fit into the classroom for that age group. Do not chew gum, smoke, drink coffee, or bring a cell phone.
- 3. Be on time.** There is no excuse for lateness.
- 4. Be cordial and respectful to everyone you meet.** Office employees are very observant and they may let the personnel director know what kind of an impression made on them.
- 5. Attitude.** You should convey the message that this is the job you really want. Let the interviewer know what you can do for their children. Answer questions by stating “My students did.....” not “I did this.”
- 6. Provide all information and paperwork the school district wants.** (Every school district is different so be sure to ask). Answer all questions on the application. Do not say, “see resume” or “see attached.” Be neat. Photocopy the application and fill out a draft copy before completing the original. Always check grammar and spelling.
- 7. Don't be afraid to call the district to find out if all your paperwork was received.** You may also find out where they are in the selection or hiring process.
- 8. Questions?** Do not hesitate to contact the Career Development Center, SSC 202 at (816) 271-4205 or e-mail [garlinger@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:garlinger@missouriwestern.edu).

### What to do after the interview.

Be sure to send **thank you** notes to all those who interviewed you or helped you in any way. If you did not get business cards from everyone, ask the secretary to spell the names of the people you saw and get their titles as well. Be sure you have the correct mailing addresses and get these notes in the mail as soon as possible. If the school district is asking for additional information, get it to them promptly.



**R.E.A.P.** What is R.E.A.P? The regional Education Applicant Placement program is an online placement service specifically designed by college career officers and education human resource directors to create a more efficient networking system for new education graduates and experienced professionals to find teaching positions. The online application is a statewide system available to all students at Missouri Western at: [www.reap.net](http://www.reap.net).

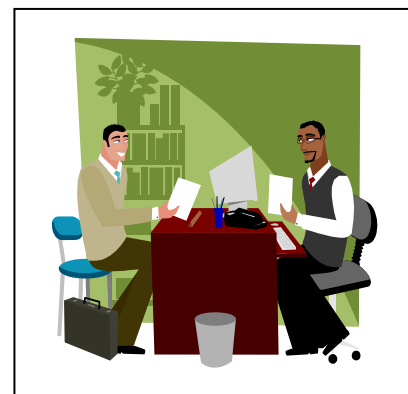
## **QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED IN AN INTERVIEW**

### **For Applicants for Teaching Positions**

1. Why did you choose to go into the teaching field?
2. Would you talk about your student teaching experiences?
3. What are your extracurricular interests?
4. How do you plan to remain educationally current?
5. How long would you plan to teach at this school/district?
6. What would you like to ask?
7. What responsibilities will your students have for their learning?
8. What do you want your students to accomplish?
9. Tell us something about your grading system preferences?
10. What professional journals do you read regularly?
11. Would you rather teach the slow learner or the advanced student?
12. How would you challenge the slow learner and the advanced student within the same classroom?
13. Why did you major in this subject?
14. What teaching techniques have you found to be effective for you within the classroom?
15. What do you feel are your three greatest teaching strengths?
16. What seems to be your three greatest teaching weaknesses?
17. What are the most recent books or novels you have read?
18. What do you believe to be the three greatest strengths of the teaching profession?
19. What do you believe to be the three greatest weaknesses of the teaching profession?
20. Discuss the basic philosophy of Bloom's taxonomy.
21. Discuss the philosophy of Krathwohl's taxonomy.
22. What do you consider an "ideal" class size?
23. Do you believe in homogeneous groupings. Heterogeneous groupings?
24. How do you feel about team coaching? The self-contained classroom?
25. Will individualized instruction be a part of your teaching day?
26. What are your convictions regarding discipline?
27. Should teachers paddle students?
28. Why are teachers becoming more militant?
29. How do you intend to motivate your students?
30. How will you appraise your teaching performance?
31. Comment on some leaders in education. Do you agree with their ideas?
32. Cite several authorities in your major subject of preparation and comment on them.
33. Would you feel comfortable when teaching the educationally and culturally deprived child?
34. What is your greatest concern when in a classroom?

Make sure your responses indicate that you understand the purposes, programs, methods, and materials of instruction; are career minded; understand your subject matter; are enthusiastic about teaching; eager to improve your competencies; and open-minded.

**Practice these questions before the interview and you'll do fine!**



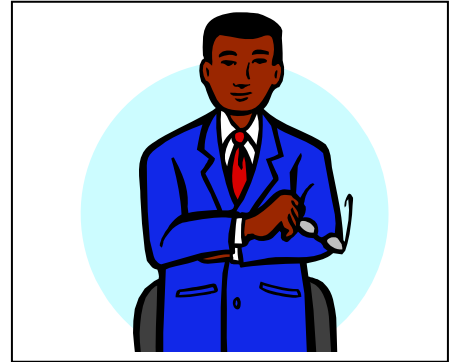
## PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

When applying for a teaching position, you may have an interview with a superintendent, a principal or both. A good way to be prepared for these interviews is to think about the questions that you may be asked and carefully formulate answers.

### The Superintendent

The interview with the superintendent will probably entail more general areas such as personal characteristics and your philosophy of learning and education. Some possible areas of discussion might be:

- Your professional attitude
- Your knowledge of education
- Your understanding of children
- Your understanding of how a child learns
- Your previous teaching experience



The superintendent may be watching for these characteristics during the interview. He/she may consider these important areas in order for a teacher to have a successful classroom:

- Personal appearance
- Poise/Confidence
- Friendliness
- Voice projection
- Enthusiasm
- Tact /Judgment
- Courtesy
- Self-starter
- Love of children

### The Principal

The interview with the principal will deal with more specific areas of the position. He/she will be concerned with how well you fit into his/her school. Some questions he/she might ask are:

- What personal assets qualify you for the position?
- What tasks are you most qualified to perform?
- Do you believe in individual instruction?
- How would you implement individual instruction your classroom?
- What methods of evaluation of students would you use?
- How would you construct an effective classroom (Materials, etc.)
- How would you handle control issues?
- What do you think is the best way to communicate with parents?
- What clubs or activities would you like to sponsor?
- Would you be able to coach a sport?
- With what number of student would you be most effective in the classroom?
- What do you know about this particular school system and why have you chosen it?



This interview will probably concern subjects such as salary, benefits, expectations, etc. Having thought out answers to these types of questions and having them ready at an interview could greatly enhance the impression you will make on the interviewer, which may determine whether or not you will be hired. In essence, you need to know yourself and be yourself.

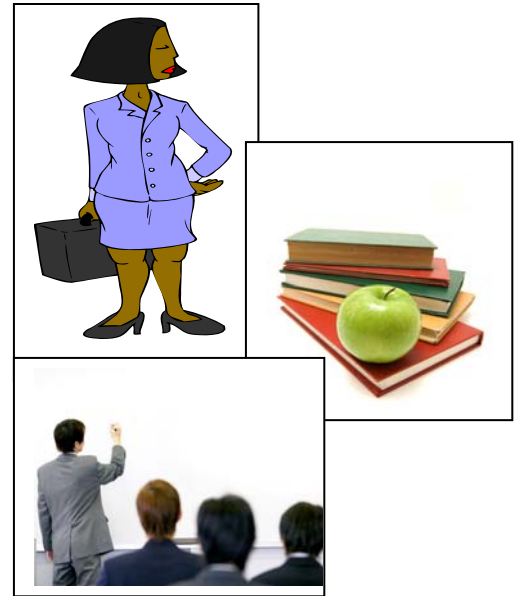
You should feel good about yourself and confident in your ability to do this job. You are trained and ready, so relax! Show that you are glad to be there and excited about the position. Talk about what you can do for their students. Listen to the questions. Be sure you respond to what they ask. Don't talk or ramble on endlessly.

## Hints in Securing a Teaching Position

**Personal Qualities** Type all application materials  
Have a business-like personal appearance  
Demonstrate poise and confidence  
Show enthusiasm and vitality

**Knowledge** Be well informed in subject area.  
Concentrate on what is significant, not trivial  
Have a repertoire of examples/experiences  
Know "state of the art" teaching strategies  
Know positive discipline techniques  
Be versed in classroom management

**Professionalism** Show community involvement  
Demonstrate professional attitude  
Express an interest in personal/  
professional development



## Plan answers to questions which will most likely be asked, such as:

- Interest in the district/position
- Building student's self-esteem
- Ideal school/classroom
- Motivating students
- Assessing student's progress
- Why you are the person for the job

## Have prepared question that you want to ask pertaining to the following:

- Texts and materials
- Student achievement
- District/School goals (i.e. mission)

Close with the following question: "What are you looking for in a teacher?"

## Portfolios

School districts differ on the subject of portfolios. When you are called for an interview, ask if they would like to see your portfolio. If yes, bring it with you. If no, copy two or three samples to bring with you and leave them with the interviewer.