



THE EDUCATION JOB FAIR: Tips to make the teacher fair a BIG event for you!

Make the most of this unique opportunity to meet and interact with potential employers. At the very least, teacher fairs offer important opportunities to network, research districts, submit your résumé, and pick up applications. Many schools will not be doing actual interviews at the fairs but merely screening for good candidates. Be prepared for this and leave behind a favorable impression of you!

BEFORE THE FAIR:

1. **Have a Plan** – Just showing up is not enough. Preparation is key. Meet with a career counselor to clarify your mission and do a one-on-one practice video interview or sign up for mock interviews.
2. **Register with CSO** – Many schools will want you to apply online. Get ahead of the game by opening an account with Career Services Online (CSO) before the event: <http://careerservices.colorado.edu/student>. CSO will allow you to download your résumé(s) and cover letters in preparation for your job search and also check out job postings.
3. **Résumé Workshop for Student Teachers** – This is an important session during the Kick-Off/Orientation. The information you gain about teacher résumés will help you to *create a résumé worthy of you*. Every adult needs a living résumé that changes and grows as her career advances. A good résumé gets your foot in the door and should be ready when you need it. Work with a counselor to develop a strong résumé that you can build upon for your entire life.
4. **Research Schools** – Review what schools will be at the fair(s) and then do some research. Target the schools you wish to interview with; then do your homework. The recruiter may ask you what you know about their district/school, so be prepared.
5. **Apply Online** – Most schools want you to complete the online application before attending the fair. Having your application already in the system gives you an advantage.
6. **AAEE Job Search Handbook** – This booklet, which is given to you at the Kick-Off Workshop, is an invaluable tool for your job search. Read it cover-to-cover.

AT THE FAIR:

1. **Arrive Early** - There are usually long lines at fairs, so you want to be close to the front in order to get into to see your targeted schools first.
2. **Look Professional** – First impressions do count! Every contact with a prospective employer is a mini-interview. Regardless of what you might wear while you are teaching, show up at the interview in professional dress. Professional attire means:
 - Clothes that are clean, fit well, and are nicely pressed
 - A dark gray, navy blue, or black suit
 - A white shirt or another light color
 - No perfume or cologne
 - Simple jewelry and make-up, if you choose to wear any
 - Comfortable, closed-toed shoes in a dark, coordinating color
 - (For men) - avoid overly bright ties with distracting designs
 - (For women) - no short skirts or revealing clothingAvoid clothing that is distracting. You want the interviewer to concentrate on what you are saying, not on what you are wearing. If you don't have a suit, men should wear dark slacks with a light shirt and tie. Women can substitute a suit with a dark skirt or slacks and a blouse.

3. **Be Assertive** – Walk directly up to a recruiter and offer a firm handshake, and ask for what you want. Even if you know that the school may not be interviewing for your teaching field, take a chance and talk to them anyway -- they may be impressed enough to interview you despite what their expected needs are. Draft a *60 second personal introduction* and practice it over and over. This introduction should include: your name, teaching field, teaching objective, your knowledge of the school district, teaching experience, etc. Practice your introduction with a friend or career counselor, or in front of a mirror. Smile and make eye contact! For sample introductions, refer to page 43 in the *2010 AAEE Job Search Handbook*.
4. **Ask for a Follow-Up** – Before you leave a recruiter, ask him about the specifics of their hiring process and what their deadline is for filling the position. Assert your interest!
5. **Items to Bring with You:**
 - Pens and paper (for taking notes)
 - List of target schools
 - Résumés
 - Documents/information needed to fill out applications
 - A lightweight file to hold applications, résumés, business cards, school district literature, etc.
6. **Items to Leave at Home:**
 - Bulky backpacks – you don't want to look like a student
 - Cell phones – at least turn them off and make phone calls outside the interview area
 - Portfolios – save these for the follow-up interview; recruiters don't generally have time to look at these at the fair
 - Chewing gum – at least before speaking with recruiters

AFTER THE FAIR:

1. **Follow-Up** – Contact the recruiters highest on your list and thank them for their time. Write a thank you note or letter to remind them of your interest and desire for a second interview. Letters offer another chance for you to outline what you know about the school, your qualifications, and why you wish to teach in their district. Include details that will help them remember you.
2. **Expand Your World** – Remember that not every school attends fairs, and some do not bring enough recruiters to interview all qualified candidates. Submit applications to individual districts that you were not able to interview with at the fair. Attend more than one fair to increase the odds that you will secure interviews with all the schools that interest you. If possible, be willing to move out-of-state for a few years to teach.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) provides the following guidelines in their *Principles for Professional Conduct* concerning candidates' obligations in the job search process: (1) providing accurate information, (2) accepting an offer of employment in good faith, (3) notifying employers on a timely basis of an acceptance or non-acceptance of an offer, and (4) withdrawing from the recruiting process after accepting an offer of employment.

For more tips, check out the *Teacher Resources* page on the Career Services website:
<http://careerservices.colorado.edu/students/teachers.aspx>



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