

Interview Prep

Remember	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You might not get the job – that does not mean you are a horrible person or a bad teacher. ● You only need one place to say yes – then go in and rock it.
Interview Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research the school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is the exact position, what classes or ages are you expected to teach, what is the prep time for that position, will it be with a co teacher, will it be a long term sub position, is it a contract position? ○ What is the school/district’s motto or teaching philosophy – how does your align with the school’s? ○ What kinds of activities, clubs, sports, special programing does the school offer – what would you be interested in getting involved in? ○ Average age of the teachers – do you notice any trends – all young, all old, do people stay here for their careers? ○ What kinds of academic programing does it offer its students – what kinds of tracked classes are being offered? Electives? Languages? ○ What is the curriculum like for students prior to arriving in the class you would teach? ○ What notable accomplishments has the school, district, or particular students had in recent years? ● Contact any colleagues or friends that work in this district or know people in this district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask for advice ○ Ask for a candid description of the school ● Contact your References <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make sure they know they might be getting a call ○ Make sure they are still willing to be a reference (if it is an old one) ○ Provide them with any information they might need about the job
Question Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Go over the questions we have provided (scroll to bottom of webpage) and others you find online ● Type out your answers ● Practice talking through your answers with a colleague, parent, or friend, or say them aloud to yourself ● You don’t want to sound like a robot, so no need to memorize them, but you want to have the answers readily available. ● Pinpoint a variety of examples that illustrate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Your teaching philosophy ○ Your classroom management techniques ○ How you turned an unsuccessful lesson into a successful one ○ Trouble shooting on the fly while teaching ○ Students that grew with your help ○ How you differentiate instruction in the classroom ○ How you address students with emotional, behavioral, or learning disabilities ○ How you communicate with parents and guardians

<p>Arrival Prep</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do a test run – drive to the school earlier that week. Find where you will park. Find the front entrance. Time how long it takes. Give yourself extra time the day of. ● Lay out your outfit the night before ● Organize the items you will take with you ● Eat a good breakfast – be full but not weighed down. ● Pack a snack just in case ● Reread student thank you letters to remind yourself of what you are capable of in the classroom. ● In the car, listen to your pump up music – get yourself energized and in a positive mindset ● Feeling nervous – take some nice deep, long breathes, drink some ice cold water, play your highlight reel in your head (all the snapshots of great moments you have had in the classroom). ● *Remember – the interview starts as soon as you walk in – put your phone away, be polite to people, be on your best professional behavior even in the waiting room prior to the interview.
<p>What to Wear</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Buy a nice interview outfit. ○ Get it tailored ○ When the clothes fit right, you look professional and you feel good ● Shoes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ladies, you don't need super high heels – wear something you can walk in – you are a teacher not a model. ● Be Conservative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nothing low cut or short ○ Nothing see through ○ Nothing flamboyantly colored – don't walk in with a lime green suit on ○ Take out excessive piercings and cover up tattoos ○ Makeup – nothing excessive ● Perfume/Cologne <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Don't go nuts – you don't want people to suffocate when in close proximity to you ● Facial Hair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep it trimmed – don't look like a mountain man and no hipster mustaches that make you look like a silent movie villain.
<p>How to Act</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No gum ● Firm hand shake –indicates confidence ● Eye contact – indicates confidence ● Posture - Shoulders back, chest out, head up, walk with confidence, sit up straight ● Politeness – be kind and respectful to all people you encounter, including office staff and maintenance staff ● Own the room – but not in a pretentious way, in a teacherly way
<p>What to Bring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teaching portfolio ● Write down your questions for the interviewers on an index card ● Packet for the interviewers – manila folder with a cover page, cover letter, resume, transcript, letters of recommendation, business card with online portfolio ● Several writing utensils – just in case ● A paper notepad or digital tablet for taking notes ● A water bottle – keeps you from getting parched

<p>Essay Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May be written or typed ● May or may not be a time allotment ● Might do before or after interview. Might need to finish after interview. ● Likely multiple prompts to select from. ● Make sure to include a coherent thesis, topic sentences, and supporting details.
<p>What to Highlight in your Interview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Your Summerbridge experience ● Your lesson planning training ● Times when lessons went wrong and what you did to fix it ● Best lessons, what you did, how did you differentiate ● Specific kids and their growth and contributions ● Sample activities ● Special classes you have taken that provide you with unusual or rare knowledge – specialties you have ● Talents you have that will allow you to advise an extracurricular activity – sports team participation, coaching experience, musical instruments, conducting experience, engineering/robotics, proficiency/fluency in sign language or foreign language, experience traveling abroad, journalism experience, yearbook experience, event planning, any special skills or interests. ● Leadership experience – team leader, group leader, etc ● Taking initiative – any projects you initiated, created, developed, etc. ● Teamwork – you have co-taught and team taught ● Your teaching philosophy ● Your positive interactions with students, coworkers, bosses, and parents/guardians ● Before you leave the room – sell yourself – this is my passion, this is what I love to do – leave a strong impression.
<p>Questions you might ask the interviewers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What kind of extracurricular involvement is available to me for getting involved in the school community? ● What kinds of resources do you offer to new teachers? ● Will I have any common planning time with people in my department/team? ● Do you have a mentor teacher program for new teachers? If not, who might I go to for professional development? If not, is that something I could spearhead in the future? ● What are the top qualities you are looking for in the candidate you hire for this position? ● Thinking back to people who have been in this position previously, what differentiated the ones who were good from the ones who were really great? ● Do teachers participate in curriculum review and change and how frequently does that happen? ● What is the next step in the hiring process? What is the hiring timeline? ● What do you like about working here? ● What is the structure here in regard to writing and submitting lesson plans? ● Do you offer common planning time in departments or teams?

<p>What comes next</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make sure to get interviewer’s contact info (or call office) to email thank you’s afterward. ● Direct them to your online portfolio – make an online portfolio ● Go home and reflect on the experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write down as many questions and answers from the interview that you can remember ○ Write down any comments they had for you ○ Use this exercise to help yourself for the next interview or help friends ● Second interviews and teaching interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you meet with a superintendent, that is a good sign ○ If you are asked to teach a class, be you. Trust your gut.
<p>Second Interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A second interview might entail a variety of different elements. Each school will have its own procedure. ● Demo Lesson: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This lesson might take place in a real classroom with students of any age (might not be the age you are applying to teach). It might be in front of a room of adults or a few adults in a boardroom. ○ Demo lessons can be any amount of time. You might have 10 minutes with a group of adults of a regular lesson length with a classroom of students. ○ Sometimes, a school will simply ask for a video of you teaching. ○ Don’t be afraid to ask questions about what technology is available to you in the demo lesson and what group you will be interacting with. The more information you have, the better prepared you can be. ○ If teaching in a classroom with someone else’s students, ask what material that teacher is covering and see if they would like you to create a lesson that fits into his or her unit. ○ Sometimes a school will give you a specific topic. Sometimes it will give you a series to choose from. If given the choice, pick something you are comfortable with. Do not try something new for the first time in a demo lesson. Use activities you know work and are engaging. Prove that you can write a good plan, create meaningful objectives, create engaging activities that meet those objectives, etc. ○ Bring all necessary materials – do not bank on being able to use their machines to make copies or print ● Interview with Principal or Superintendent: In a second-round interview, you are likely going to meet or interview with someone who is high up. You may get similar questions; you may get new ones. The best thing you can do is stay calm. Do not change who you are just because someone important enters the room. ● Interpreting Data: some schools want to see that you can think on your feet and also interpret data. One SB teacher was given printed student data and asked how she would alter instruction based on that data. She was given 15 minutes to come up with a plan. ● All Day Interviews: Independent schools are most likely to employ these. It will be a long day, you will meet a lot of people. Do your best to remember names – use names when you are introduced and again before you leave. You may be repeating yourself as new people ask you the same questions. Don’t be afraid to ask for a restroom break. Make sure to stay hydrated. Wear something classy but comfortable (esp. shoes). Keep a smile on your face the entire day. In these situations, when you meet with a variety of teachers, they are thinking about whether or not they can work with you and what you might be like as a colleague. Leave them with a good impression because they will weigh in on you as a person.