

Get Ready, Get Set, Get a Job!

Get Ready! *As the job search begins:*

- Gather all materials i.e. portfolio, student teaching evaluations, letters of recommendation, copies of clearances, transcripts, and any other supporting materials.
- Start networking. Talk to current and former teachers, school personnel, friends, relatives. Visit on-line job boards i.e. school district websites, pareap.net, PMEA website, etc. View newspaper classified ads. Quickly follow up on any leads of interest.
- Determine your other areas of interest and/or strengths. Can you comfortably perform and/or teach other instruments? Do you sing? Can you accompany? Are you willing to teach areas outside of your concentration? Are you willing to teach a variety of age groups? Do you work well with special learners? Can you speak another language? How are your technology skills?
- Determine your personality traits. What words best describe you, your work ethic and/or your relationships with others?
- Consider listing leadership and/or teaching experiences gained from non-school settings i.e. camps, religious institutions, community music ensembles.
- Develop a personal philosophy regarding the importance of music education.
- Join a substitute teaching service at the conclusion of student teaching as there is always a need for music substitute teachers.
- Monitor your profile on social media and any websites. Remove anything that can be construed as detrimental to you. Given the current popularity of sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Foursquare, etc., remember that "what happens in Vegas" may not be staying in Vegas!
- Participate in job fairs.
- Participate in mock job interviews.

Get set! *You've received an interview!*

- Learn about the school district/school by visiting that institution's website or other credible sources. Be sure to review programs offered by the district/school, student activities, student and teacher demographics, location and size of the district/school and any other information that you deem important.
- If possible, try to find accurate information about the district/school's music program. Learn which types of classes, ensembles, and programs are offered. If curriculum is available on-line, take time to review it.
- Ask the person who contacted you about the interview if you need to teach a demonstration lesson and/or demonstrate instrumental or vocal proficiency.
- Have all materials ready to take to the interview.
- Get good driving directions to the location of the interview.

Go Interview! *It's time to shine!*

- Wear appropriate attire. Show that you are a professional.
- Arrive at the interview site early so that you have time to relax and focus.
- Greet everyone at the interview table. Make eye contact as much as possible.
- When answering questions, pause to think before speaking.
- If a question seems unclear, ask for the question to be re-stated.
- Emphasize your strengths. Be confident, but not arrogant.
- Ask about responsibilities and expectations of the position being offered.

- Ask questions about the curriculum including focus on methodologies used, availability of materials to support instruction, etc.
- Ask if technology is an important component of instruction.
- If asked why you are interested in this position, try to state the professional reasons for your interest. Avoid personal stating personal reasons i.e. “It’s close to home.”
- If interested, indicate willingness to teach areas outside of your concentration.
- Indicate abilities in areas related to, but not necessarily part of the position being offered.
- Ask if a mentoring and/or new teacher induction program is available.
- Ask if additional support is available if students with special needs are part of the program.
- Be willing to share how instruction would look in your potential class.
- Be willing to share classroom management techniques if asked.
- Be willing to share assessment techniques if asked.
- Realize that this position might not be a “dream job”, but it could be a first step into teaching. You have the potential to make the job your own, should you receive it.
- At the conclusion of the interview, thank everyone for the opportunity to interview. You might also want to inquire about the timeline for making a decision about hiring.
- Make sure that the district/school has the correct contact information for you on file.
- Take time to write or send an e-mail of thanks to those who interviewed you.
- If you do not receive the job, do not become discouraged! Many times, a school district is looking for a specific type of person or skill set to fill a position. Keep trying!!
- If you do receive the job, **congratulations** on your efforts! We’re glad that you will be joining us!

Susan Basalik
 Music Department Coordinator, Methacton School District, Eagleville, PA
 sbasalik@methacton.org