

Minnesota Education Job Fair

Tips to Prepare for the Fair

Job Fair Website: www.mnedfair.org

General Fair Info:

- ✓ Register for the fair with your career office. You must be pre-registered to attend!
- ✓ For a complete listing of career offices visit the job fair website at www.mnedfair.org.
- ✓ Districts will continue to register up to a day before the job fair.

Research before the Fair:

- ✓ Research your priority districts on the job fair website and take notes to help you be prepared the day of the fair. Know their mission, students they serve, curriculum, and prepare educated questions for district representatives.
- ✓ Visit the job fair website for districts who may be offering information sessions the day of the fair.
- ✓ Contact the district representatives listed on the job fair website to schedule an interview. Some will schedule interviews in advance, while others prefer to schedule interviews at the job fair.

Prepare for the Fair:

- ✓ Create a strong resume with an emphasis on all teaching related experiences. Have it reviewed by your career center.
- ✓ When possible, complete applications for districts of interest *prior* to the fair. Plan ahead, each application can take several hours to complete and may require essays.
- ✓ Prepare an elevator speech - a 30 second introduction of who you are and what you are looking for professionally. Practice your elevator speech with others.
- ✓ Plan for logistics - map out how to get to the Minneapolis Convention Center, when to arrive and where to check-in. Bring money for parking and lunch. (Pre-registered attendees will be provided with a **FREE box lunch**)
- ✓ Visit the job fair website for directions, parking information, and nearby restaurants.
- ✓ Review common asked teacher interview questions and formulate responses.
- ✓ Dress professionally. Be sure you have appropriate attire such as a suit, dress pants/skirt and blazer, or button down collared shirt. Wear comfortable, polished shoes. Have a neat and appropriate haircut. You want to look great!
- ✓ Gather all necessary materials:
 - Multiple copies of your resume printed on quality resume paper
 - Writing pad/folio to carry resumes, extra paper, and a pen
 - List of your priority districts with research notes gathered on each

At the Fair:

- ✓ Arrive early and plan to spend the day at the fair. Some employers will interview until 5pm.
- ✓ Check in at your college/university career service table. There, you will receive a name tag and district list/map.
- ✓ Create a strategy to visit your targeted districts. Before meeting with your top districts, practice approaching others on your list.
- ✓ Use the student lounge. Plan breaks into your schedule to allow you to rest, keep your materials organized, and check your appearance.
- ✓ Expect long lines. Be strategic. If the line of one of your priority districts is long, move onto the next one and come back.
- ✓ Consider attending district presentations to break up your day and learn about job search tips.

Connect with District Representatives:

- ✓ Review your district notes before approaching the table.
- ✓ Respect others privacy as they complete their contact.
- ✓ Use a firm handshake, good eye contact, and be friendly.
- ✓ Greet employers with your 30 second elevator speech: share your educational/professional background and what interests you in the district, then inquire about open positions.
- ✓ Offer your resume.
- ✓ Do not be offended if district representatives do not take your resume and ask you to apply online. This may be their preferred method to receive applications.
- ✓ Be flexible with districts that do not have openings in your area of specialty at the time of the job fair. A position may open in a few weeks or over the summer.
- ✓ Always thank the district representative for his/her time and ask for a business card or contact information.
- ✓ Jot down notes about the specifics of your conversation. This will help you write a thank you note later.

Interview at the Fair:

- ✓ Any interviews taking place at the fair will be short - 20-30 minutes. Be sure to present your most relevant information, focus on your strengths and accomplishments.
- ✓ Respond truthfully, while remaining positive. For example, "I have not had the opportunity to...but in a similar situation I would..."
- ✓ Be prepared with questions to ask the district representative. Remember, this is your chance to interview them as well as show that you have done your research on the district. Asking about the hiring process and timeline is particularly useful.
- ✓ Schedule your interviews to allow for time to reflect on the interview: What went well? What do you wish you had said? What questions do you still have? Jot down a few notes.
- ✓ Don't be discouraged if you are not offered a position – many district representatives use the fair as an initial screening. You will likely attend a second interview before hearing of an offer.
- ✓ If you ARE presented with an offer, don't feel pressured to respond that day. Thank them for the offer and tell them you would like to have some time to consider.
- ✓ Always ask for the interviewer's business card and contact information.

After the Fair:

- ✓ Organize all the materials collected at the fair.
- ✓ Follow-up with thank you notes within 24-48 hours.
- ✓ Keep accurate records of all contacts to ease follow-up communications.