

*Please make note of the following steps and resources for moving along in your search for a position in a K-12 school or district.*

- 1) Reflect on and document your student teaching (or other field) experience.
- 2) Explore and prioritize opportunities.
- 3) Build your network.
- 4) Tweak your resume and cover letter.
- 5) Attend career fairs and other recruiting events.
- 6) Compile your recommendation letters or list of references.
- 7) Prepare for Interviews.

**1) Reflect on and document your student teaching (or other field) experience.** Whether you are observing the classroom, facilitating groups, preparing and teaching lessons, or counseling students, it is vital that you take time to think about what you have learned and how it impacts your philosophy of teaching and goals for developing as a teacher. Make sure you do this on a regular basis as this will help you to:

- Improve your teaching or counseling and elicit helpful feedback from your supervisors.
- Develop your portfolio.
- Prepare more thoroughly for interviews and career fairs.

**2) Explore and prioritize opportunities.** Public, charter or private school? Urban, suburban or rural? In the Delaware Valley or not?

- Many resources for this exploration are available on our K-12 Schools webpage at: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/careerfields/k12education.php>
- Of course, you'll want to look at job listings on particular district or school websites, but also consider general K-12 job boards such as [www.k12jobs.com](http://www.k12jobs.com) or [www.schoolspring.com](http://www.schoolspring.com)
- Be sure to update your career interests and check job listings on [Handshake](#) as well.
- Highlight your versatility where possible. Consider pursuing multiple certifications that align with your interests. Make note of other roles (e.g. coaching, advising, committee work) that you can play to support the students and the goals of the school or district

**3) Build your network.** Connecting with others in your profession can provide insight into what it's like to work at a particular school/district as well as how to market yourself effectively in the job search. Informational interviewing is a great way to gather advice and build your network, though it's important to remember that the purpose of this type of meeting is to gather information and advice, not ask for a job or job interview. Here are some resources to get started:

- QuakerNet (Penn's Alumni Online Community): <http://www.myquakernet.com>
- Penn Alumni LinkedIn Groups: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/networking/linkedin.php>
- [Professional Associations](#) are also a good resource for networking.

**4) Tweak your resume and cover letter.** Career Services can provide critiques during appointments (call 215-898-4381 on weekdays between 9am-5pm to schedule) or via e-mail. Keep in mind that the turnaround for e-mail critiques during busy seasons can be up to one week. Therefore, it is best to use the following online resources to tweak your resume format as much as possible before a critique with a counselor.

- Resume Guide: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/gradstud/resumeguide.php>
- Teaching Resume Samples: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/files/TeacherResumes.pdf>
- Counseling/Advising Resume Samples: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/files/PsychResumes.pdf>
- Cover Letter Guide: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/gradstud/coverletterguide.php>
- Cover Letter Samples: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/gradstud/coverlettersamples.php>

**5) Attend Career Fairs and Other Recruiting Events.** Career fairs allow you to meet a number of recruiters in one place so that you are able to offer resumes to and obtain contact information from employers of interest. Career fairs relevant to K-12 education, include our ***GSE Employer Meet and Greets***, and Delaware Valley Education Consortium's ***Greater Philadelphia Teacher Job Fair*** ([www.dvec.net](http://www.dvec.net)). Check [Handshake](#) and the following link for updates on career fairs: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/careerfairs/>

**6) Compile your recommendation letters (or list of references).** Request recommendation letters (or other references) from supervisors and faculty who know you well and can speak to your qualities and strengths in specific ways. Give your recommenders sufficient time to write the letters and make sure you are clear on how each employer wants to receive the letters. Sometimes, employers may only need contact information from recommenders for phone references. When that occurs, be sure to inquire with your potential recommenders before listing them on an application.

**7) Prepare for Interviews.** The key to successful interviewing is thorough and thoughtful presentation. It is crucial that you reflect on your fieldwork as you prepare answers that reflect concrete examples of your experience.

- desire to work at a given school/district
- philosophy of teaching/counseling/education
- approach to classroom management
- highlights from working with students
- lessons that worked well
- lessons that did not work well and what you learned in the process
- approach to working with students under challenging circumstances
- approach to working with parents and families
- collaboration with other teachers
- strengths/weaknesses
- best practices

It is also extremely useful to practice interviewing. Career Services offers mock interviews as well as other tips and resources that can be found at: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/interviewingadvice/>