

Checklist for Preparing for the Education Career Fair (or Any Other Professional Event)



- Know the **event details**.

[Education Career Fair](#)—Friday, April 7, 11am-1pm, Student Activity Center

The event is open to all candidates from 11am-1pm; no registration or RSVP needed.

- Prepare a **professional resume**. Bring 10+ copies to the event.

A strong teaching resume is an organized, easy-to-read 1-page document (2 pages for some graduate students) focused primarily on teaching/clinical/relevant experience (including student teaching).

Use the [Teacher Resume Guide](#) for guidance.

Have 2+ people (career advisor, professor, university supervisor, cooperating teacher, principal) review your resume.

- Know **what to wear**

Candidates dressed in professional clothing will make the best impression. Dress for the fair in the kind of clothing you would wear to an interview.

Business Professional (BEST)

Skirt or pants suit (colors, patterns are ok—like a red blazer with black pants)

Business Casual (GOOD)

Slacks or skirt with a button-up shirt or blouse. Tie and blazer optional.

Casual (Not Recommended)

Jeans, shorts, capris, t-shirts, athletic wear, immodest attire.

View the [Business Attire Guide](#) and [video](#).

- Plan **what to say**

Make a strong first impression by preparing a strong introduction—the first thing you will say to a recruiter/principal. Your introduction may include your name, licensure area, experience, teaching interests, and what you know about the district/school.

Example: *Hi, I'm Brooke. I will be graduating from the Elementary Education program in May. I am student teaching at Harrisburg Elementary, where I have been involved with the Literacy Improvement Team, a collaborative group of teachers and volunteers. Through that work, I have found my passion for literacy, especially working with early elementary students. What opportunities do you expect to have open in the coming year?*

View the [guide to introductions](#) and [video](#) on the topic.

Research schools/school districts attending the fair.

Do your research to

1. Identify organizations of interest (remember, you always want to have a Plan B).
2. Learn enough about organizations to be able to have a conversation with them.

Find the list of [registered organizations online](#)—use the Advanced Search to find organizations by position types and licensure areas sought.

For each organization you plan to talk to, it's best to be familiar with their location/size, student body demographics, and mission/goals/programs. For example, with a quick look at Cabarrus County Schools' "Our District" section of their website, you can find that they have 30,000 students and 41 schools; some of the keywords from that page are STEM, world languages/global studies, and technology—these may be good topics to ask questions about or talk about your experience with. Feel free to bring a portfolio to the event with some notes like this that you can look at before approaching an employer.

Know what to expect.

Common questions about the fair and school hiring:

What is the fair like? Expect 100–120 organizations—most are from NC and SC, but other states and international opportunities are represented. Public, private, and charter schools will be there. Organizations will have tables throughout Halton Arena; organizations may bring Human Resources staff, principals, superintendents, curriculum directors, teachers, or other representatives. View pictures from a [recent Education Career Fair](#).

What do I need to bring? Bring 10+ copies of your resume, ideally in a professional portfolio. Cover letters, transcripts, and reference lists aren't typically expected at a fair.

What do I do at the fair? During the fair, you will talk to organizations about their opportunities. You can share your resume, get information about their hiring process, and even schedule an interview (depending on the organization).

What will I be asked about? During your conversations, you may be asked about your licensure area, teaching interests, teaching experience, geographic preference, and school preference. At the very least, prepare an introduction (see the "Plan what to say" section) and an answer to the question "why should we hire you?" To prepare for potential interviews during or after the fair, see some [typical teacher interview questions](#).

Will I get hired at the fair? Most organizations will want to conduct interviews before hiring, but a few districts may make conditional offers at the event. Some organizations may conduct short interviews with candidates at the fair or may schedule interviews for later.

I'm nervous! Career fairs make most people nervous, including some principals and recruiters attending the event! If this is your first fair, check out pictures ([here](#) and [here](#)) to get a sense of what to expect. Going through this checklist and preparing (especially what to say) will help you feel more confident going into the event. Remember that the majority of the people that work at these organizations are passionate about education, friendly, and excited to talk to you! When you get to the event, give yourself some time to walk around and get a feel for things. Get warmed up by talking to a couple of organizations that are on your "Plan B" list before approaching organizations that you're most interested in.