

Dr. Leanne Peters Assistant Superintendent Hanover - The Interview

- 12 years senior admin
- Lakeshore, Sunrise, now Hanover

Most school divisions post jobs on their websites. That is where they post things.

1. Apply for jobs on the website
 - a. All jobs are there, dig around for teaching jobs
2. For ed grads, there will not be an ed cert, but you will fill out a declaration that says it's coming
 - a. Signed
 - b. Part of the application process

Cover letter

- "Please have one"
- Initial snapshot, in spring, when everyone wants a job, they may get 30-40 applicants per position - not a lot of time
 - In the fall, maybe 5 or 6
- Crisp and clean, not a lot to make you stand out
- Highlight relevant experience
- Take note of who you address it to - nothing irks her more than seeing the wrong name, changing the name at the top and making sure the school division is the right one.
 - If it's incorrectly addressed, it'll seem like you're uninterested
 - Hiring manager, HR, there are many people who handle things
- Keep it to one page → key skills because she is not flipping it

Resume

- All about practicum and volunteer experiences
 - List and provide detail - school and grades, in the busy season, sometimes the grades taught are the deciding factor
 - Include substitute work
 - They look at volunteer experiences as well

- Any other experiences with children and youth, relevant to put anything else that you do → camp, coaching, instruction
 - You never know what will connect with your audience
- Specific unit and course → specialty, physics, bio, math
 - Unlikely that you'll get a bunch of sections of the same thing
- Eliminate early jobs → if it's irrelevant, take it off
 - Babysitting, paper delivery → unless there were additional responsibilities → money management or shift supervisor
 - Non-relevant jobs should still be there, but later down → restaurant experience or other

When you get a call and are invited for an interview...

- Respond promptly! You may not get a lot of notice, there are often fairly short timelines they have to work with
- Be polite - common sense?
 - Most of the time, the initial organizing of interviews comes through an executive assistant, if you're rude then they'll let others know about it. They follow what other people need
- Times are not negotiable
- Expect that you'll be interviewing in person, they did use zoom through covid but not much anymore
 - They do make some exceptions, it's not that bad to ask, they just need to know the circumstances of why you cannot → student teaching they will accommodate for

Timeline - High season, Spring break

1. 5 days long ad goes out
2. Shortlisting as the ad is out, do not finalize until the deadline (4 pm on whatever day)
3. No exceptions beyond the deadline, unless they have technical difficulties, call the number for the office, and be very very nice when asking if you can submit it another way
4. Call for interviews day of the deadline or the day after

5. Typically book a time to do interviews as the ad is out

Interview Prep

- Think about strengths and challenges in relation to the position
- What makes you great at what you do? What do you bring to a school, the curricula, and the profession
 - Learn to articulate your strengths so they come out fairly quickly
- When you haven't interviewed a lot, it can be hard to sell yourself
 - Consult others and get used to the idea
- Typically ask about something that did not go well → you *need* to have an answer, even if something only went a little sideways, what would you have done differently if you had another chance?
 - About being reflective and knowing better
 - Don't talk sh*t about anyone
- Review portfolio
 - Look over your own teaching philosophy, what do you believe, know, or want to know more about?
 - What are some of the great things you've done, how do they all tie together?
 - Own your teaching experience
- Ask about parking! If you'll be getting an email or phone call!
- Know where the interview is
- Be early - 5 to 10 minutes, and be prepared to wait a few minutes. They try to stick to a schedule but don't cut people off
- Dress appropriately - education is casual in schools, but step it up for the interview
 - No yoga pants.
- Learn how to deal with being nervous
- Feel free to bring - water, a notepad, a pen

Portfolio

- Many diverse opinions about portfolios
- If there's something digital, they may take time to go through things

- If you can use it effectively and cause impact do it, if not, leave it behind

In the room: a principal, vice principal, assistant superintendent, and sometimes an HR person

→ be mentally prepared for a panel

Details

- Typically 35 to 45 minutes, they try to keep an eye on the time
- 8 - 10 questions
- Will do it in board rooms, meeting rooms, offices, classrooms
- Out of the people present, one or more people may be asking questions - she lets the VP and principal do most of the talking and thinks a few years down the road

Be prepared to talk about

- Practicum experience with specific details
- Avoid saying 'it was fun,' and articulate better, she wants it to be fun and engaging, but consider phrasing
- Unit and lesson planning → standard to ask about
 - Welcome to talk about planning extensively
 - Sometimes the question will bleed in other directions, covering assessment, planning, learning outcomes
- Engage in conversations about questions
- Building relationships - students, parents, and other staff in the building
- Working with other people - teams and collaboration, planning and assessing together
 - How would you work with a difficult parent?
 - You can relate this to non-ed parts of your life if you can relate it back to the question
- Challenges and what you can work on

“We’re not looking for perfect, were looking for great humans.”

Own the Interview!

- Jot down keywords in questions → perfectly acceptable
- Sometimes you get a hard copy of the questions
- You can ask for a repeat or rephrase
- The aim is a conversational type of interview
- Remember, the interviewer may be nervous too

Leanne's Top 3 To Stand Out

1. Be really specific, we all have practicum experiences, what did we do, learn, and how did we approach it?
2. Respect confidentiality → if talking about a difficult behaviour, do not disclose the name
3. Be honest - say what you haven't done yet

Questions to ask - come prepared to ask...

- Come up with questions that reflect the school or division, have some knowledge about the strengths of the school and what their priorities are
- "What advice would you give to a new teacher?"

Expect a couple of days lag between the interview and a possible offer, it takes time to do reference checks. Make sure your references know they may be contacted. They are looking for supervisors, who know what you may be like in a classroom.

- The faculty advisor is good

Sometimes, it's not you. Be prepared to receive the other call. If the principal calls, you got it. If the assistant superintendent calls, you did not (Hanover specific). They want to make sure everyone knows before making a job public. You might be receiving feedback, you can also ask for feedback. Sometimes there is no specific feedback to provide.

- Specific, consider what you've done.
- It's all about who you are competing with
- Sometimes you didn't do anything wrong, but what experiences other people have

Trust your gut, if it's a vibe you don't like it's okay to say no. You can ask for time to think about it, but she may give a night, she might not give any time.