

# Career Development

---

[careers.dom.edu](http://careers.dom.edu)

## *Resources for Educators*

**7900 W. Division Street, Crown Link 100  
River Forest, Illinois 60305**

**Phone: (708) 524-6786  
[careers@dom.edu](mailto:careers@dom.edu)**

# Job Search Checklist

Adapted from the *Job Search Handbook for Educators, 2017*.

- Register online in both Handshake and CCCI (Quick Links found at: [careers.dom.edu](http://careers.dom.edu))
- Begin constructing a resume, or update one you already have. Set up an appointment to meet with a career counselor to review your resume.
- Upload your resume onto Handshake and CCCI. Make sure to publish your resume into the resume books.
- Create a Linked In account and join the Dominican University Alumni group.
- Attend any workshops or upcoming related events.
- Meet with a career counselor to start planning a job search strategy.
- Determine the types of schools and geographical area in which you will apply for teaching positions. If you are “mobile” and can relocate, your options will increase.
- Start collecting letters of reference from previous field experiences.
- Attend any job interviewing and/or job fair preparation workshops.
- Attend education job fairs in the area and any other opportunities for professional development.
- Send follow-up thank-you letters and e-mails after interviews and job fairs.
- Apply to school systems online or on paper; follow each district’s specific procedures.
- Consistent follow-up is crucial! Make sure to maintain a constant communication process with all districts with which you have applied and/or interviewed.
- Keep a log of these communications and all of your applications.
- Review the offer to best decide the fit between you and the position, as well as to obtain clarification on any points that do not make sense to you.
- If you decide to accept the offer, take time to celebrate! Also withdraw from other serious contenders. Stop looking and do not accept any more interview offers from other contenders.
- If you do not end up with a full-time contract, you may want to try looking for teaching assistant or substitute teaching positions. Stay in contact with Career Development and your preferred school districts in case any last-minute opportunities arise.

# Job Search Basics

## RESUME

Administrators are most concerned about the teaching-related content of your resume, such as student teaching and other practicum experiences. In addition, you may want to include any other experiences, such as tutoring or working as a camp counselor, that are relevant to working with your desired population in a teaching or mentor capacity. It must be easy-to-read, and error-free. Be truthful about all of the information that you provide on your resume.

## COVER LETTER

Write individual letters to each school district and personalize those letters by explaining briefly why you want to work at *that* district. Give specific examples of your accomplishments related to the position you are applying for. Keep in mind that cover letters can be seen by administrators as a sample of your writing, so make sure it flows well, makes sense, and is free of errors. This letter may set you apart from other candidates, and you want administrators to read your letter and want to read your resume.

## THANK YOU LETTER

Thank you letters can be either handwritten or typed, but make the effort to write one within one to two days of an on-site interview or job fair interview. The thank you letter reconfirms your interest in the job and provides you another opportunity to briefly summarize your qualifications. It also sets you apart from those who do not take the time and effort to write one.

## INTERVIEWING

When considering what clothes are appropriate for interviewing, dress up and dress conservatively. Be prepared to discuss your accomplishments, tell a story! More information on interviewing follows in this Education Career Guide.

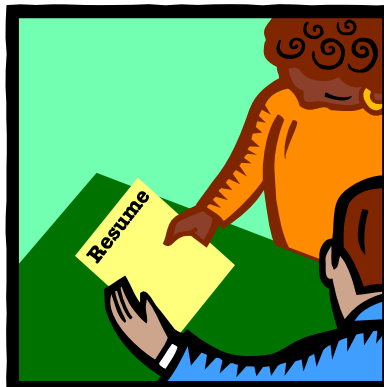
### **In general, school districts are looking for teachers who:**

- Have good interpersonal skills and enjoy working with children
- Are knowledgeable about the science of teaching
- Are knowledgeable about the content of their discipline
- Have had a variety of experiences
- Are organized
- Have good communication skills
- Will present a good model for children
- And believe that they can make a difference in a child's life through their teaching.



## Helpful Hints For Resumes

- **First Impressions:** Your resume is the first piece of work that a potential employer will see. Be sure to double check spelling and grammar. Have a friend proofread your final product. Typos and other small errors make a big difference!
- **Font:** Use only one font consistently throughout your resume. Arial and Times New Roman are very standard fonts. Also, **bolding**, *italicizing* and underlining within the same font can improve the readability and appearance of your resume (if these graphics are not overused). An 11 or 12 point font is suggested; use a professional-looking font.
- **Contact Information:** (Name, Address, Phone Number and E-mail address)  
Include a professional-looking e-mail address as a form of contact, double check your e-mail address to ensure it looks professional. Include a home or cell phone number and avoid listing a work number whenever possible. Most employers are comfortable leaving messages on answering machines (make sure to check your outgoing message on your voice mail!)
- **GPA:** List GPAs of 3.0 or higher on your resume. Include your major GPA if that is significantly higher than your cumulative GPA.
- **Length:** College students and recent graduates should maintain a one-page resume until they have completed an internship or full-time professional experience. If you have an extensive work history, or in a graduate degree program that relates to your professional field, then a two-page resume is acceptable.
- **Final Comments:**
  - Have your resume printed on plain, white paper, resume paper is fine, but not required.
  - Avoid fancy borders and graphics as they will distract the reader from your accomplishments.
  - Since your resume is a work-in-progress, prepare only a few copies. Your address and phone number may change or you may take on a new position.
  - Use effective and concise language and word choices.



**Add action to your resume by utilizing this list of verbs to describe your  
Involvement at work and other activities....**

Accelerated	Created	Initiated	Recruited
Accomplished	Critiqued	Instructed	Rectified
Achieved	Decided	Integrated	Reduced
Adapted	Delegated	Interpreted	Referred
Addressed	Delivered	Interviewed	Rehabilitated
Adjusted	Demonstrated	Introduced	Reinforced
Administered	Designed	Investigated	Repaired
Advanced	Detailed	Involved	Represented
Advised	Developed	Launched	Researched
Analyzed	Devised	Learned	Resolved
Applied	Diagnosed	Lectured	Restored
Appraise	Directed	Led	Restructured
Approved	Discovered	Maintained	Reviewed
Arbitrated	Distinguished	Managed	Revised
Arranged	Distributed	Marketed	Revitalized
Articulated	Diversified	Mediated	Scheduled
Ascertained	Dramatized	Mentored	Screened
Assembled	Edited	Met	Selected
Assessed	Educated	Moderated	Served
Assisted	Eliminated	Modified	Shaped
Attained	Enabled	Monitored	Showed
Balanced	Encouraged	Motivated	Simplified
Budgeted	Enlarged	Negotiated	Solved
Built	Enlisted	Networked	Sponsored
Calculated	Established	Nominated	Staffed
Captivated	Estimated	Observed	Stimulated
Catalogued	Evaluated	Obtained	Streamlined
Clarified	Examined	Operated	Strengthened
Coached	Executed	Organized	Studied
Collaborated	Exhibited	Originated	Submitted
Collected	Expanded	Oversaw	Summarized
Commended	Explained	Participated	Supervised
Competed	Facilitated	Performed	Supported
Communicated	Familiarized	Persuaded	Surveyed
Compiled	Finalized	Planned	Systematized
Completed	Focused	Prepared	Taught
Computed	Found	Presented	Tested
Conceptualized	Generated	Presided	Trained
Condensed	Grouped	Processed	Transformed
Conducted	Guided	Produced	Translated
Conserved	Handled	Projected	Traveled
Consolidated	Hired	Promoted	Unified
Contributed	Identified	Proposed	Updated
Controlled	Illustrated	Provided	Upgraded
Converted	Implemented	Purchased	Utilized
Cooperated	Improved	Qualified	Validated
Coordinated	Incorporated	Quantified	Verified
Corrected	Increased	Realized	Widened
Corresponded	Influenced	Received	Worked
Counseled	Informed	Recommended	Wrote

**SALLY STAR**

7900 W. Division Street ▪ River Forest, Illinois 60305  
(708) 524-6786 ▪ [sstar@dom.edu](mailto:sstar@dom.edu)

---

<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>Dominican University</b> , River Forest, Illinois Master of Arts in Teaching Expected May 2020 GPA: 3.7/4.0 Licensure: Elementary Grades 1-6 Endorsement: English as a Second Language <b>Loyola University</b> , Chicago, Illinois Bachelor of Arts May 2018 Major: English GPA: 3.6/4.0 Dean’s Scholarship 2014-2018
<b>FIELD EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>Hatch Elementary School</b> , Oak Park, Illinois Fall 2019 Student Teacher, Second Grade <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developed, planned and organized lesson plans for morning and afternoon classrooms with 20 students per session</li><li>• Effectively utilized lesson plan format to emphasize long and short-term goals and assessment</li><li>• Used formal and informal assessments to improve instruction and increase learning</li><li>• Worked effectively in with a diverse student population and modified lesson plans to ensure student success</li><li>• Assisted with parent-teacher conferences and open houses and translated for Spanish speaking parents</li></ul>
<b>EARLY FIELD EXPERIENCE</b>	St. Edmund Elementary School, Oak Park, Illinois October 2017 St. Miguel Elementary School, Chicago, Illinois September 2018 Hephzibah Reading Academy, Oak Park, Illinois July 2019
<b>RELATED EMPLOYMENT</b>	<b>Dominican University</b> , River Forest, Illinois 2017-present Student Tutor, Learning Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support and tutor 15 students with writing, reading and critical thinking across all disciplines.</li><li>• Aid college level students in the brainstorming, drafting and editing processes.</li></ul>
<b>LANGUAGE SKILLS</b>	Fluent in reading, writing and speaking Spanish
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Kappa Delta Pi, Education Honor Society</b> , Member 2018-present <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Obtained membership based on strong academic achievements</li><li>• Participated in service program tutoring to community schools</li></ul>
<b>COMPUTER SKILLS</b>	Smart Board, Kurzweil Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook, Publisher
<b>ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT</b>	<b>Law Office of John Smith</b> , Oak Park, IL 2016-2017 Office Manager/Legal Secretary <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compiled documents for legal filings and organized over 500 case files</li><li>• Communicated with clients and court liaisons and confirmed all court hearings</li></ul>

# What NOT To Do in a Resume

Addison "Addy" Montgomery

100 Main St.

River Forest, IL 60305

Cell: (630) 555-5555

sexychica@yahoo.com

Don't include nicknames

Use a professional email address

**Objective:** To obtain a teaching position in an elementary school, making the world a better place, one child at a time.

Don't include fluff. Have a specific objective

**Education:** Dominican University

B.A. Major in History Certification: Type 03

GPA: 2.9/4.0

I will be getting my certification soon!

Include city & state

2009-2013

Only include GPA over 3.0

Only need year you graduate

Avoid "I" statements. Give specific certification information

**Teaching Experience:**

King Elementary School, Chicago, IL

*Student Teacher, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade*

Fall 2012

Don't repeat action verbs

- Worked with students on various lessons
- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Worked with cooperating teacher on lesson plans
- Used classroom management techniques
- Worked one-on-one with students completing homework assignments
- Assigned homework assignments and classroom projects

Whole section needs to be more specific. List accomplishments that set you apart from other

**Practicum Experience:**

Wright School, Chicago, IL

*Practicum for Social Studies, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade*

Spring 2011

Don't repeat what you said in other bullet points

- Observed lessons
- Developed own lesson plans for class
- Worked one-on-one with students completing homework assignments

Be more specific!

Edison Elementary School, Stickney, IL

*Practicum for Language Arts, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade*

Winter 2010

- Helped students with homework and class assignments
- Taught own lesson to class

Need to be more specific!

**Other Experience:**

Nanny for the Smith family

2009-Present

Try to include experiences with children other than babysitting or nannying.

- Play with the kids while parents are at work
- Feed them, bathe them, help them with their homework
- Drive them to and from school, extracurriculars, etc.
- Get them ready for school each day

Watch for typos!

**REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST!**

Don't need this

## Creating a Winning Cover Letter

Keep in mind the basics about cover letters:

- **Keep it short.** The ideal cover letter is 3-4 paragraphs and never exceeds one page.
- **First Paragraph** -- Answer three questions: Who are you, what do you want and how did you find out about it? (this does **not** mean, start the paragraph by saying, "My name is ...") Provide information showing your specific interest in the company. Also indicate how you became aware of the opening (newspaper, website, etc.) and the specific job title if you have it.
- **Second Paragraph** -- Sell yourself! Highlight one or two qualifications you feel would be of greatest interest to the employer. Be specific!! Don't just say "I'm organized" say "I have demonstrated strong organizational skills in preparing lesson plans and assignments for a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class with 26 students." If you have had related experience or specialized training, point it out as well.
- **Third Paragraph** -- Thank the reader for his/her time and consideration. Indicate that your resume is enclosed, and credential file is available. Invite the reader to schedule an interview at his/her convenience.
- **Explain why you want the job.** Keep the focus on the school and what you can offer them, not what YOU wish to obtain in the position. Genuine enthusiasm will set you apart from those sending generic form letters.
- **Keep the tone and content professional.** If you are sending via email, do not use the casual tone associated with emails and text messages. Keep it formal.
- **Address a specific person.** This could be an administrator or principal, but could be HR personnel. Make sure to spell his/her name correctly and use proper salutation (ex. Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms., etc.) Make a phone call if you're not sure who to address it to.
- **Remember** -- This is a sample of your writing style. Proofread. Again. Spell check will not catch everything. Even if your letter is free of typos, poor grammar also makes a bad impression.





# Sample Cover Letter

**SALLY STAR**

7900 W. Division Street ▪ River Forest, Illinois 60305

(708) 524-6786 ▪ [sstar@dom.edu](mailto:sstar@dom.edu)

---

October 18, 2019

Dr. Joseph Smith  
Principal  
Hatch Elementary School  
1000 N. Ridgeland Ave.  
Oak Park, Illinois 60302

Dear Dr. Smith:

I was very excited to see your listing for a third grade teacher in the Handshake job listings on the Dominican University website. I will be graduating with a Master of Arts in Teaching from Dominican University in May with an endorsement in English as a Second Language, and I am eager to apply my various experiences working with children.

The enclosed resume details the specifics of my student teaching and extracurricular experiences. As you can see, I have focused on opportunities that involved working with first through third graders. This age group seems to draw out my most creative instincts. I am also attracted to the progressive mission of District 97. I visited the District website and noticed that District 97 is initiating a program to heighten the use of technology in the classroom. This is a special interest area for me. I have taken technology coursework and attended several workshops on using technology in the classroom.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this position and my qualifications with you. I would also be happy to provide you with my credentials. Please feel free to contact me at [sstar@dom.edu](mailto:sstar@dom.edu) or 708-524-6786. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Sally Star

Enclosure

# Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral Interviewing is a new style of interviewing that more and more organizations are using in their hiring process. The basic premise behind behavioral interviewing is this: the most accurate predictor of future performance is past performance in a similar situation.

During a behavioral interview, always listen carefully to the question, ask for clarification if necessary, and make sure you answer the question completely. Your interview preparation should include identifying examples of situations from your experiences on your resume where you have demonstrated the behaviors a given company seeks. During the interview, your responses need to be specific and detailed. Tell them about a particular situation that relates to the question, not a general one. Briefly tell them about the situation, what you did specifically, and the positive result or outcome. Your answer should contain these four steps (Situation, Task, Action, Result or "STAR") for optimum success.

## STAR Method

**Situation:** give an example of a situation you were involved in that resulted in a positive outcome

**Task:** describe the tasks involved in that situation

**Action:** talk about the various actions involved in the situation's task

**Results:** what results directly followed because of your actions

Before the interview process, identify two or three of your top selling points and determine how you will convey these points (with demonstrated STAR stories) during the interview.

Whenever you can, quantify your results. Numbers illustrate your level of authority and responsibility. For example: "I was a shift supervisor." could be "As Shift Supervisor, I trained and evaluated 4 employees."

## Example of a STAR Answer

**Situation:** During my student teaching last spring, I managed a classroom of 5th grade students.

**Task:** I noticed that whenever we studied our science lessons, many of the students became disengaged and disinterested which caused disruptions in the class.

**Action:** I revised the lesson plan and had teams of student's research and create displays showing the differences in cell structure of both plants and animals. The students then presented their findings to the class.

**Result:** As a result, whenever we have science lessons, students are more focused and engaged, and I have integrated more "hands on" learning into my lesson plans.

## Sample Interview Questions

- Tell us about yourself and why you are interested in this school district and/or position.
- What are your career goals short term and long term?
- What do you consider to be your major strength you bring to the classroom?
- What do you enjoy most about teaching?
- What is your most successful accomplishment?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Discuss your student teaching experience. What did you like/dislike? What changes would you have made?
- Review your teaching experiences, such as levels/subjects taught, years, location, etc.
- Tell me about your most challenging experience while working with children or in the classroom.
- Tell us about your other school-related experiences, such as extra-curricular activities, committees, curriculum development, etc.
- What opportunities have you had to bring multicultural education into your classroom?
- What experience have you had with students from culturally diverse backgrounds?
- Describe the best lesson you have delivered. Why was it successful?
- Describe the teaching techniques or strategies that are most effective for you.
- Describe your typical lesson. What does it include and who participates – how do they participate?
- How would you include cooperative learning in class teaching?
- How important is success in learning? How do you help pupils experience success?
- How will you instruct/challenge students with varying abilities?
- If pupils were having difficulty learning a skill or concept, what would you do?
- Tell me about some specific motivational strategies you use to get students excited about learning.
- Describe different student learning styles of students and how you adjust lessons to benefit those differing styles.
- Explain your skills using a computer – address classroom management, instructional, other. Are you comfortable with the use of technology in the classroom?
- What is your philosophy regarding discipline?
- What was the most challenging discipline problem that you encountered and how did you handle it?
- What techniques would you use to handle discipline problems that may arise in your classroom?
- What is your classroom management plan/style? What are your goals?
- How would you describe your learning environment?
- What role does classroom management play in the education process?
- Describe a situation when you felt pressure. How did you handle it?
- Describe your educational background and teaching experience related to your subject area.
- How do you stay current in your field?
- Are you willing to sponsor any extra-curricular activities?
- What are some methods of communicating student progress to parents other than report cards?
- How can you get students to be excited about learning?
- Do you have a specific grade level/age that you prefer to teach? Why?
- Why have you selected teaching as a profession?

## Sample Thank You Note

This should be sent no later than 24 hours after an interview

### SALLY STAR

7900 W. Division Street ▪ River Forest, Illinois 60305  
(708) 524-6786 ▪ sstar@dom.edu

---

February 4, 2019

Dr. Joseph Smith  
Principal  
Hatch Elementary School  
1000 N. Ridgeland Ave.  
Oak Park, Illinois 60302

Dear Dr. Smith:

Thank you for the interview on February 3, 2019. I appreciated learning about Hatch Elementary School and District #97. I am very interested in the second grade teaching position we discussed.

During the interview, I told you about my background and student teaching experience at Longfellow Elementary School, in which I utilized various methods of teaching, including the use of computer technology. This technology allowed for hands-on activities to get the students motivated and involved. This rewarding experience compliments my coursework and provides a well-rounded background, which will enable me to successfully contribute to the Hatch Elementary School team.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (708) 524-6786. Thank you again for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you again soon.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Sally Star

# Websites for Educators

## Elementary – Secondary Information & Jobs

Illinois State board of Ed	<a href="https://www.isbe.net">https://www.isbe.net</a>
Illinois Regional Offices of Education	<a href="https://www.isbe.net/roe">https://www.isbe.net/roe</a>
Archdiocese of Chicago	<a href="https://schools.archchicago.org/">https://schools.archchicago.org/</a>
American Assoc. of School Personnel Administrators	<a href="http://www.aaspa.org">www.aaspa.org</a>
American Association for Employment In Education	<a href="http://www.aaee.org">www.aaee.org</a>
Illinois Assoc. of School Administrators	<a href="http://www.iasaedu.org/">http://www.iasaedu.org/</a>
Chicago Metro Early Childhood On-Line Job Board	<a href="http://www.chicagometroaeyc.org/">http://www.chicagometroaeyc.org/</a>
K-12 Jobs.com	<a href="http://k12jobs.com/">http://k12jobs.com/</a>

## Private Schools/Non-Traditional Routes to Teaching

Teach for America	<a href="http://www.teachforamerica.org">www.teachforamerica.org</a>
Boarding Schools Online (Private Schools)	<a href="http://www.schools.com">www.schools.com</a>
Careers with Non Profit Organizations	<a href="http://www.npo.net">www.npo.net</a>