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Introduction


The interview process provides a gateway for improving teaching and learning outcomes for children. A knowledgeable and skillful teacher has a significant impact on student achievement. It is the teacher who establishes the learning environment, so the hiring decisions that district/school leaders make are crucial. The basic goal for every interview is to determine the instructional competence and interpersonal skills of the candidates. Successful interviews have the potential to place highly skilled teachers in every classroom. To do this district/school leaders must establish a systematic and fair interview process that targets research-based teacher competencies.

This section of the toolkit provides resources to help district/school leaders plan and conduct successful interviews with teacher candidates. It provides an overview of the process and procedures for conducting interviews with teacher candidates. It includes guiding questions for establishing the interview process and procedures, and details on the steps throughout the interview process.

There are many pitfalls in the interview process, so those responsible for selecting and hiring new teachers must be savvy. The goal is to hire highly qualified teachers who will thrive in a district/school environment. This takes effective marketing, a strategic planning process, and an interview structure that leads to the desired outcomes.

Establishing the Process and Procedures for Conducting Candidate Interviews

After recruiting and screening a group of prospective teacher candidates, the interview process begins. The district/school administrator with the Selection Team should implement a systematic process for interviewing candidates to insure that the procedures are efficient, consistent, and fair.



Interview Process

- ✓ Determine the interviewers
- ✓ Plan the interviews
- ✓ Conduct the interviews
- ✓ Evaluate the interview data and determine the next steps

The interview process is the core of the screening and selection cycle. The Guiding Questions will assist team members as they implement the process and procedures for the interviews. The purpose of the interview process is to narrow down the selection until there is one candidate, the new hire.

This process has a dual focus:

1. Determining if a candidate is a good match for a district/school, and
2. Choosing a highly qualified teacher who will inspire children to learn.

Guiding Questions for the On-site Interview Process and Procedures

1. What are the process and procedures for effective, structured interviews of candidates?
2. How do districts/schools ensure they are following legal guidelines and best practices when conducting interviews?

Implementing the Interview Process

The Selection Team usually develops the interview process. The process outlines the procedures to follow when interviewing candidates (applicants who are selected for interviews are now candidates for the teaching position). The interview process should be systematic and efficient. It is important that the established procedures are followed so the interview process is consistent and fair.



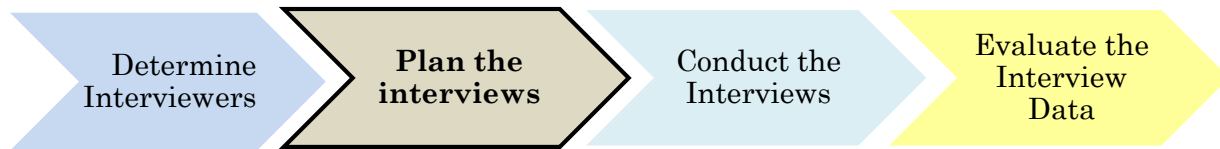
Determine the Team Members who will Conduct the Interviews

Determine which members of the Selection Team will be part of the interviews. Ideally the interviewers will consist of three to five members, including teachers as well as administrators. Sometimes, districts/schools include non-certified staff as well.

Once the interviewers have been identified, it is important that all interview team members participate in the interviews of all teacher candidates for a specific position. It is not only difficult to come to a hiring consensus if the interview team members do not participate in every interview, but it is not fair to the candidates.

So, district/school leaders should choose interview team members who are:

- a. knowledgeable of the competencies needed for a teaching position;
- b. have a vested interest in the outcomes; and
- c. will be available to participate in all the interviews for a specific position.



Plan the Interviews

Remember, your district/school is not the only district/school that is searching for highly qualified teachers. Because this is a competitive process, the interview team must carefully plan the interview.

In addition, the interview team must also “market” their district/school to prospective teachers they hope to hire. Since, excellent teachers often have numerous job offers, these candidates will not only be interviewed by the district/school. The candidates will also be interviewing the district/school leaders to see if it is a good match for them.

Tooms and Crowe (2004) emphasize that leadership teams cannot “fake it” during the interview process. An intelligent and perceptive candidate will quickly realize if the interview team is not prepared (i.e., did not read the candidate’s cover letter, letters of recommendation, or review the resume). A disorganized office, completing last minute tasks, waiting for the arrival of interview team members, or interruptions during the interview do not leave a positive impression of the district/school or its leaders. Detailed planning will prevent interview disasters.



Guiding Questions for Planning the Interviews

The interview team must decide how the actual interviews will be conducted. Planning is the key to a smooth interview. The interview team should meet and decide on the location and time frame for the interviews. Additionally, the interview team should collaborate on preparing the Interview Protocol and Schedule. Taking the time to prepare for the interviews will eliminate confusion and problems on the day of the interviews.

✓ Where will the interview occur?

When selecting a location for an interview, consider the ease in finding the building and the availability of parking. The interview room should be comfortable and professional. Do not conduct an interview in a disorderly office. A well-maintained conference room is often the best choice.

✓ How will you arrange the room?

Arrange the room so the candidate feels welcome and comfortable, not intimidated. Do not place a teacher candidate at the end of a long conference table. The interview room should be well-lit and free from noise and other distractions. It is preferable to have a candidate and interviewers in comfortable chairs around a small table.

✓ How will you prepare the office staff?

First impressions are important. An office staff person, who is not friendly or ignores a candidate, may negatively affect the opinion of a highly qualified candidate, a person who may be a good match for a district/school.

How much time will be allocated for each interview?

When determining the time allocation for interviews, consider the time needed for introductions, questions by the interview team, questions from the candidate(s), and evaluating the candidate's responses immediately after the interview.

How will the interview begin?

It is often helpful to script the welcome and the directions provided to a candidate at the beginning of the formal interview. Although the interview team wants the interview environment to be friendly and relaxed, it is important to put in writing the information that you want all the candidates to hear. The welcome and directions are often part of the Interview Protocol.

Who will ask what questions?

When the interview team selects or develops interview questions, the members should also determine who will ask each question. In addition, it is often helpful to have identified a potential set of follow-up questions to gain additional or specific information.

When constructing the Interview Protocol, determine the initial questions, the follow-up questions, and who will ask the questions.

Are the interview questions open-ended?

Open-ended questions, questions that cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no” response, enable candidates to highlight their strengths and discuss their beliefs regarding curriculum, instruction, assessment, classroom management, and commitment to the profession. The interview team should review the interview questions when constructing the Interview Protocol to determine if all of the questions are open-ended.



✓ **Are the interview questions customized for the position and differentiated for the candidate’s level of experience?**

Interview questions should be developed from the competencies needed for a specific position. Competencies are a pattern of thinking, feeling, acting, or speaking that causes a person to be successful in a job or role (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

Additionally, the interview questions may need to be differentiated based on the level of experience of a candidate (e.g., novice or veteran teacher). The content of the interview questions, however, remains the same – based on the identified competencies. Only the format or the wording of the question is changed to adapt to the candidate’s level of teaching experience (e.g. novice or veteran teacher).

✓ **How will each candidate’s answers be recorded?**

Using an Interview Protocol provides organization for note-taking. This graphic organizer lists the selected questions and who will ask the specific questions.



Please refer to Appendix A for Top 10 Reminders for Conducting a Successful Interview.

How will the interview end?

Plan what will occur as the interview comes to an end. Express appreciation to the candidates for taking the time to meet with the team.

Provide opportunities for each prospective candidate to ask team members questions.

Additionally, provide a candidate with a brief summary of the after-interview process (i.e., what will happen next – will the Selection Team contact the references; when will he/she will be notified, how will the candidate will be notified; will there be a second round of interviews, is a demonstration lesson required, etc.).

Who will notify the candidates regarding the outcome of the interview?

The interview team uses the collected data to determine which candidate will be asked to return for any additional steps in the selection process. Determine if an administrator or a member of the Selection Team will contact the “finalists.”

Also, determine how the district/school will notify the candidates, who will not be asked to continue on to the demonstration lesson or the next step in the selection process. Usually the leader of the Selection Team telephones all the candidates who were interviewed to discuss the outcomes with formal follow-up letters.

Throughout the process, the Selection Team needs to communicate and collaborate. As a group, they should meet before the interviews to review the competencies they are looking for in a successful candidate, discuss the interview schedule, and delineate the tasks.

Once the interview team has planned the interview process and procedures, it is ready to engage in a number of tasks before the interviews are conducted.



Pre-interview Tasks

Pre-interview tasks should be addressed prior to conducting the interview process with a candidate. These tasks are listed in the table below, and described in further detail on the subsequent pages.

A list of Pre-interview Tasks	
1	Gaining a clear understanding of the interview process
2	Reviewing the job description
3	Building a consensus and articulating the competencies needed to be a successful candidate for the specific position
4	Selecting questions for the interview
5	Planning for the Interview Protocol
6	Determining evidence for categories of response
7	Contacting the candidates for interviews
8	Reviewing a candidate's application package and screening results
9	Developing an interview schedule

1. Gaining a Clear Understanding of the Interview Process

Once it has been decided which members of the Selection Team will be interviewers, it is wise to bring all the individuals together for a meeting. At that time, the district/school leadership should review the interview process and respond to any questions from the interview team. This initial meeting also provides an opportunity for the team to bond, schedule team planning sessions, and indicate dates they are available for the interviews.

2. Reviewing the Job Description

Each member of the interview team should have a copy of the job description. The job description and hiring goals are often discussed at the first meeting when the administrator or team leader meets with the interview team.

3. Building Consensus and Articulating the Competencies

As they plan for the interviews, the interview team needs to build consensus and articulate the competencies the successful candidate will possess. The Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS), developed by the Delaware Department of Education, is an excellent resource to determine teacher competencies and guide the development of interview questions. This performance appraisal system, based on the work of Charlotte Danielson (2007), includes the following four components:

- Component 1: Planning and Preparation;
- Component 2: The Classroom Environment;
- Component 3: Instruction; and
- Component 4: Professional Responsibility.

The DPAS II provides definitions and clarifies each of the components. This document will assist teams as they develop interview questions.

Refer to the components and criterion of the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II which is included in this Toolkit. A chart can also be accessed at the Delaware Department of Education website:

<http://www.doe.k12.de.us/domain/375>



Key Questions to Articulating Competencies. Research tells us that there are many competencies that outstanding teachers possess that are beyond degrees, certification, and test scores. Additionally, a teaching position may demand some specific instructional skills and personal characteristics. For example, a highly effective kindergarten teacher may have a specific set of skills and personal characteristics that differ from a highly effective middle-school English teacher.

When the interview team members agree on the instructional skills and personal attributes of a successful candidate, it will be easier to plan the structure of the interview and the decision-making process after the interview.



Please refer to Appendix B for a template and a Discussion Map with an example. This tool can be used to facilitate the process of selecting the key competencies that guide the selection of the interview questions.

4. Selecting Questions for the Interview

Effective questions are the key to obtaining crucial information about each candidate's instructional skills and personal attributes. This knowledge will enable the interview team to select a highly qualified teacher who will match the goals of the district/school. The questions should focus on the competencies needed for the job position. After the interview team has determined the instructional competencies for a specific teaching position, they should use this information to select and/or develop the interview questions. The questions should be based on the competencies and aligned to the evaluation criteria, such as a rubric. Thus, there should be questions that focus on each of the four components of effective teaching, identified in DPAS II.

Strong Questions should....



- Provide evidence for one or more of the competencies selected
- Encourage a candidate to discuss specific examples in all of his/her answers
- Be connected to specific, observable indicators that were previously identified for each of the competencies
- Allow the elicitation of evidence from candidates of all skill levels and backgrounds (TNTP, 2012).

A good place to begin is to access the many online resources that provide sample questions and suggestions and target predetermined instructional competencies and personal attributes.

The key types of questions for the interview include:

- ❖ Open-ended questions,
- ❖ Scenario questions,
- ❖ Differentiated interview questions between novice and experienced teachers, and
- ❖ Follow-up questions.

These key types are further explained on the next pages.



Please refer to Appendix C.1 to view sample Interview Questions and Scenarios aligned with DPAS II as well as Appendix C.2. interview questions identified by the University of Delaware.



Open-ended Questions

The selected interview questions should be open-ended (the candidate cannot answer with a simple “yes” or “no”). Additionally, avoid “why” questions that lead to speculation. Use “what” and “how” questions that encourage factual details. For example, “How would you integrate reading across the curriculum?” “What techniques do you use to keep students actively involved during a lesson?”

Although members of the Selection Team reviewed the candidate’s application package (e.g., resume, grade transcripts, and letters of recommendation) during the earlier screening phase, it is through direct questions that the interview team will have a better sense of each candidate’s knowledge base, instructional skills, attitudes, and work ethic. The questions that are selected for the interview will significantly impact the selection and hiring process.

The interview team should select questions based on the teaching position and the information they will need to make a good hiring decision. A list of questions or an interview protocol should be developed so there is consistency across all interviews for a specific position.

Additionally, the interview team will want to determine if a candidate is a good match for the district/school. It is the personal attributes of a candidate that provides the basis for interaction and often determines whether an individual is successful. The interview team should consider the culture and climate of the district/school. What interpersonal skills are needed for a new teacher to thrive in the district/school environment? The interview team should select questions or provide scenarios that will tap the personal attributes and work ethic of each candidate.

For charter schools, additional questions may focus specifically on the candidate’s experience with charter schools.

Avoid Leading Questions

A leading question is a question which subtly prompts a candidate to answer in a particular way. Leading questions are generally undesirable as they result in false or slanted information. For example:

“Tell us about a time when you had to adapt to a difficult situation.”

The leading word above is “adapt.” It signals to a candidate that the team only wants to hear an example of a time a candidate “adapted” to a difficult situation.

Instead, a **non-leading** question would ask: “Tell us about a time when you faced a difficult situation.”

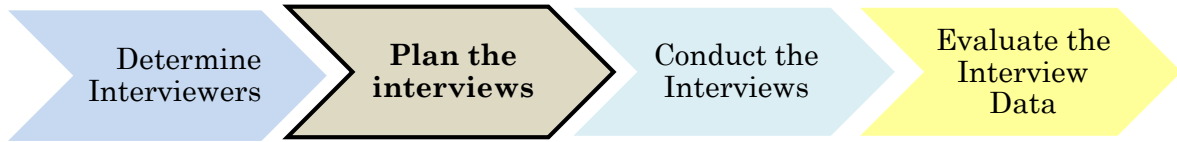
In this case, a candidate would tell the team about a time they “adapted” or “solved” a difficult situation.



Please refer to Appendix C.1., Interview Questions and Scenarios, to view examples of interview questions that are aligned with DPAS II components and criterion.



Please refer to Appendix D for Lawful and Unlawful Questions to ask during an interview.



Creating Scenario Questions

Questions that ask candidates to provide a step-by-step solution to a typical and/or difficult scenario are particularly effective (TNTP, 2012). The scenarios can be tailored to specific school scenarios that will help you identify particular strengths of candidates and abilities to handle challenges unique to a district/school. They also require a candidate to think beyond a scripted response.

TNTP Recommends...



- ❖ Use realistic scenarios that represent your district/school (e.g., common struggle of new teachers, specific classroom management challenges, site-specific challenges, or peer/parent interaction situations);
- ❖ Consider different scenarios for different types of teachers and different levels of teaching experience;
- ❖ Provide context but keep the scenario brief; and
- ❖ Allow ample time for the candidate to think through the situation and develop an answer.

Usually, every scenario has three basic parts:

- ✓ The Set-up: A brief explanation of a teacher's situation, providing the details that should be considered as part of the context as well as a description of the problem.
- ✓ Complex Problems: A successful scenario poses more than one problem so that the candidate has to establish priorities in the proposed solutions as well as meet realistic expectations.
- ✓ A Clear Question: Though the problem may be complex, it should be obvious to the candidate what is expected for an answer (TNTP, 2012).

Example of a Scenario

It is the third month of your first year of teaching. To assist your struggling students, you begin offering an hour of your time before and after school. That time has definitely increased their progress, but the additional two hours has taken away much of your time for planning after school. Now the other teacher at your grade level will be out for a few months, and the principal has asked you to assume responsibility for some of her students, most of who are behind the students in your class. What would you do? (Adapted from TNTP, 2012).



Please refer to Appendix C.1., Interview Questions and Scenarios, and Appendix E to view Examples of Scenarios that can be used as part of the interview questioning process. The scenarios should be adapted, if needed, for novice or veteran candidates. The scenario may differ slightly, but not the focus or intent of the question.



Differentiate Interview Questions Between Novice and Experienced Teachers

The interview team needs to be cognizant of the differences between a novice and a veteran teacher. For example, for teachers who have taught, the questions can focus on their teaching experiences while for novice teachers, the questions could represent scenarios.

Because a novice teacher does not have significant teaching experience, the interview questions must target the potential for success. As a result, the questions the team asks a novice teacher may differ slightly from those prepared for a veteran teacher.

Note: It is important to recognize that there may be minor differences in the wording of the questions, based on a candidate's background experience. Using the same or similar questions enable the interview team to compare the candidates and determine which one is the best match for the position and the school. The resources listed below and found in the appendices will assist you as you select or construct interview questions.

Be sure every member of the Team is informed of unlawful questions!



All of the interview questions, however, should target the same competencies. The wording may be slightly different; but the basic questions are the same.



Please refer to Appendix F to view Differentiating Questions for Novice and Veteran Teachers. Use parallel questions when interviewing both Novice and Veteran teachers for the same position. The format differs, but not the content of the questions.

Plan Effective Follow-up Interview Questions for Standard Use Across Candidates

A follow-up question is a question to help clarify a candidate's response or ensure that the candidate has provided sufficient information to an initial question.

A common approach is to develop discretionary follow-up questions at the same time that a team identifies structured questions. Since candidates' responses may vary in the level of detail and length, it is common practice to identify follow-up questions that may be used across candidates rather than forming spontaneous questions. Spontaneous questions may introduce new topics or issues which may lead to a source of bias.

Using the same or similar follow-up questions across candidates enables the interview team to compare candidates and determine which one is the best match for the position and the district/school.

Types of Follow-up Questions

To obtain more specific details from a candidate, think of the following types of questions: would, who, when, what, why, and how of the candidates' responses. Examples are provided below.

- Would questions:** Would you give an example? Would you explain further?
- Who questions:** Who else was involved? Who else helped you with this situation?
- When questions:** When did this take place? How long ago did that happen?
- What questions:** What factors led to the situation? What were the outcomes? What was your role? What techniques did you use?
- Why questions:** Why was this situation a particular challenge? Why did you take that approach?
- How questions:** How did you prepare for this? How did you develop the idea?



Using Follow-up Questions for Different Purposes

Depending on a candidate’s initial response to a structured question, the team may need to use a combination of follow-up questions for different purposes. Listed below are examples of different purposes and types of follow-up questions.

Clarifying a Candidate’s Response

Questions that ask for definitions and examples (appropriate for all questions):

Examples:

1. Would you explain what you meant by X?
2. I’m not sure we completely understand what you mean by X. Would you say more about it?
3. Would you give us a specific example of X?
4. What exactly happened?
5. When you say, “X”, what do you mean?

Redirecting a Candidate’s Response

Questions that probe the more interesting parts of a story (appropriate for questions addressing a candidate’s past experiences):

Examples:

1. Would you tell us more about X?
2. Would you walk us through your process for X?

Understanding a Candidate’s Decision-making and Thought Processes

Appropriate for questions addressing a candidate’s past experience and beliefs:

Examples:

1. What were you thinking when X?
2. What were your reasons for deciding to X?
3. How did you decide what to do first?
4. What do you think were contributing factors to X?
5. How did you determine that X was a problem?
6. What do you think it would take to X?
7. How have you come to that belief?
8. Do you think X is possible?

Differentiating a Candidate's Action and Reactions

Questions that differentiate between a candidate's actions and circumstances (appropriate for questions addressing a candidate's past experiences):

Examples:

1. How did you begin?
2. What specifically did you do?
3. Then what did you do?
4. How did you handle that?
5. What exactly did you say to X when that happened?
6. What happened next?

Asking for a Candidate's Reflection and Evaluation of Results

Questions that ask for a candidate's evaluation (appropriate for questions addressing past experiences):

Examples:

1. What happened ultimately?
2. Were you satisfied with that result? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think it resulted that way?
4. What could have made it better?
5. Is there anything you would do differently if you had to do it again?



Please refer to Appendix D for
Lawful and Unlawful Questions to
ask during an interview.



5. Planning for the Interview Protocol

After the interview team agrees on the key competencies and constructs the interview questions, the next step in the planning process is to develop an Interview Protocol. This protocol is simply a graphic organizer that is constructed for the formal interview.

The protocol is based on the teaching position, identified instructional competencies, and whether a candidate is a novice or veteran teacher. The Interview Protocol provides organization, helps ensure consistency across multiple interviews, and guides the interview team through the sequence of the interview process.

Usually, the protocol includes the following sections:

1. Introductions;
2. Interview information (procedures and format);
3. Templates for the individual questions, with space for note-taking;
and
4. Rating system.

Using an Interview Protocol enables the team to systematically gather and compare the candidates' responses to the interview questions and determine which candidates should be asked to continue to the demonstration lesson phase. All components of an Interview Protocol can be customized based on the interview process.



Please refer to Appendix G for the Team Internal Planning Protocol for Determining Questions and Levels of Evidence.

6. Determining Evidence for Categories of Responses

For each major question, it is recommended that a team consider evidence for how a candidate's responses will be evaluated and rated. For each selected question, develop a representative response for each performance level. As the team is developing and/or selecting questions, consider the table below in determining performance levels.

The performance levels for responses to interview questions are based on the performance levels of DPAS II.

Interview Question	Highly Effective Response	Effective Response	Needs Improvement Response	Ineffective Response
	What response would indicate exceptional evidence or outstanding evidence of the desired key concepts, competency, and/or indicator?	What response would indicate strong evidence of the desired key concepts, competency, and/or indicator?	What response would indicate developing or mediocre evidence or fundamental knowledge of the desired key concepts, competency, and/or indicator?	What response would indicate little or no knowledge of the desired key concepts, competency, and/or indicator?

The questions in the above table were adapted from TNTP (2012).



Remember: Please refer to Appendix G for the Team Internal Planning Protocol for Determining Questions and Levels of Evidence.



Rating Scale

The use of a rating scale for all candidates is a key component of a structured interview process (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2008). A rating scale can be a four-, or five-level, point-based scale.

Rating scales should be defined by levels of responses for each question. For example, the following rating scale is provided that is aligned with the DPAS II:

Rating	Level	Evidence
4	Highly Effective	Responses indicate exceptional evidence and outstanding knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component (e.g., Planning and preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, Professional Responsibilities).
3	Effective	Responses indicate solid evidence of performance and strong knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
2	Needs Improvement	Responses indicate mediocre or developing performance or fundamental knowledge of and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
1	Ineffective	Responses indicate little or no knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
0	Unable to evaluate	Missing sufficient information to rate.

7. Contacting the Candidates for Interviews

During this time of planning, the interview and Selection Team should not lose track of the candidates. The team leader should be sure that the candidates have been contacted and that the interview dates are scheduled.



Please refer to Appendix H for an example of Interview Invitation Letter.

8. Reviewing the Candidates' Application Packages and Screening Results

Every member of the interview team should receive copies of the candidates' application materials prior to the interview for their review. This may include: cover letters, applications, resumes, transcripts, letters of recommendation, writing samples, and any other documents. This will assist each team member in becoming familiar with each candidate's background information.

9. Developing the Interview Schedule

As the day of the scheduled interview approaches, the team leader should take time to develop a schedule for the interview team members. An Interview Schedule will help the team members follow the process for the formal interview with consistency and fidelity. Additionally, the interview team will be aware of the time parameters.

Time Frame. Most interviews are scheduled for a two to three-hour time frame, including the time needed to evaluate the interview notes. A mistake that is often made is scheduling several interviews on one day and not having sufficient time to devote undivided attention to each candidate. Avoid this by allowing sufficient time between interviews.

When scheduling a time frame of two to three hours for an interview, only about 45 to 60 minutes will be available for asking the candidate questions. Time is needed for the welcome, introductions, and explanation of the format at the beginning; additional time is needed to answer candidate's questions and discuss the next steps at the end of the interview.

Typical Number of Questions in Time Frame. The time for questions will go quickly; so there will be sufficient time for only six to ten questions. Thus, the interview team must be strategic.

It is important to listen carefully to the candidate's responses to the questions. The candidate should do most of the talking, not the interview team. As a simple guideline, consider the *80-20 rule*. The candidate should talk 80% of the interview time; the interview team should talk 20% of the interview time.



Interview Schedule Example

Time Allotment	Category
Welcome and Introductions	
10 to 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smile and be courteous. • Establish an informal, friendly tone to put the candidate at ease. • Provide a brief overview of the district/school and the job. • Explain the interview process. • Ask the candidate if he/she has any questions before the interview begins.
Questions	
45 to 60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to the 80/20 rule. The Interview Team should do about 20% of the talking (asking the questions and probing for a deeper understanding); the teacher candidate should do about 80% (responding). • Ask about 6 to 10 questions. Allow time for the candidate to ask clarifying questions and reflect on the question, before responding. • Ask follow-up questions when appropriate, but do not waste time asking questions that cannot be evaluated.
Candidate's Questions	
10 to 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the teacher candidate to ask questions. These questions often provide a window into the person's thinking and what he/she values.
Closing and Next Steps	
5 to 10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank the candidate for his/her interest in teaching at your school and for taking the time to interview for the (position). • Review the selection process, the next steps, and timelines.



Conduct the Interviews

If the interview team prepared for the formal interviews, paying attention to the details of the process, the day of the interview(s) will go smoothly. Nonetheless, the interview team should always be prepared for unexpected problems, such as a traffic jam or a team member becoming ill. It is important to remain flexible and calm, but have an alternative plan in place.

Set the Tone for a Good Beginning. During the introductory phase of each interview, it is important to start the interview in a welcoming, friendly, informal manner to help put a candidate at ease and establish a positive tone.

During introductions, smile and shake the hands of the candidates. Initial small talk can help relieve any stress or anxiety a candidate may be feeling. Offer the candidates a cup of coffee or water. Be sure that each candidate feels comfortable initially.

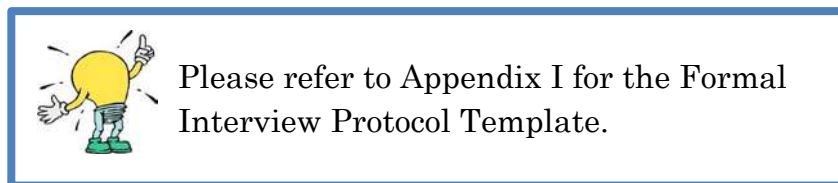
Sell the District/School. When providing an overview of the district/school and the position, be sure to share the interview team's attitudes about the district/school and experiences. It is important to generate the candidate's excitement and interest in a position.

Realize that the interview team needs to sell the district/school's strengths and unique characteristics to attract the best candidate for the position. Be sure to use words and actions that make a prospective job candidate want to commit to the district/school.



Ask the Interview Questions according to the Formal Interview Protocol. During the interview, the interview team members should focus on asking the questions, listening to the candidate's responses, asking follow-up questions as appropriate, and taking detailed notes. Be sure to record any follow-up questions that were asked at the time.

Give sufficient time and silence after asking a question, so that a candidate's thinking process is not interrupted. An interview team member could encourage a candidate by saying: "Take your time; we want you to be specific."



Maintain a Conversational Tone. The tone should be conversational throughout the interview while team members express interest in a candidate. Nonverbal signs of interest include: eye contact, smiling, nodding heads, leaning forward, and/or maintaining open body language.

Record Candidate's Responses to Questions. It is recommended that the interview team members record key words or phrases that each candidate used. Good note-taking is essential during the interview process and provides a solid base for discussion of interview outcomes after the interview is concluded.

The notes should:

- ✓ Summarize the candidate's content and delivery;
- ✓ Document the candidate's grammar, body language, and other non-verbal factors;
- ✓ Be of sufficient quality and quantity to document whether the candidate's answer meets the criteria; and
- ✓ Serve as documentation to support the team's final decision. (Adapted from U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2008).

Do not assess responses during the interview.

Conclude the Interview. At the end of the interview, the team leader should explain and indicate how and when a candidate will be contacted. If a follow-up interview or demonstration lesson is required as a next step, this should be clearly communicated.

It is crucial that the interview team follows the indicated steps with candidates. For example, if a candidate is told he/she will receive a telephone call within two weeks --whether or not he/she is the chosen to advance to the next level, then the interview team must be sure that this is completed.



Remember: Please refer to Appendix I for the Formal Interview Protocol Template to record questions and responses.



Evaluate the Interview Data

It is important to document the results of an interview immediately following the interview meeting. All interview notes and comments should be job-related and supported with objective and factual information (Denver Public Schools, 2007).


Independent Review and Rating by Each Member. Each team member should independently review his/her notes immediately after each candidate's interview. Highlight interview responses that can be rated in comparison to competencies and the performance level criteria. Determine whether there is enough information for the assessment of major competencies.

Then, compare and evaluate a candidate's responses against the established criteria for a question and the performance levels to determine the ratings for each candidate. At this stage, each member is forming an independent evaluation without discussion with other team members.



Remember: Please refer to Appendix I for the Formal Interview Protocol Template to rate levels of responses to interview questions.

Team Review and Consensus on Each Candidate's Ratings. After the interview team members have independently rated each candidate, they should compare notes, ratings, and supporting evidence. Team members should thoroughly explore the basis for discrepancies in their ratings, and then reach a consensus rating on each candidate




Please refer to Appendix J for the Final Team Rating Form for an Interviewed Candidate. This form will help to consolidate the ratings from each of the Team members.


During and after the interview, the interview team needs to be aware of common mistakes. On the next page is a list of six common mistakes.




Common Interviewing Mistakes

 **Not Knowing the Job:** Interviewers, who do not have a comprehensive understanding of the skills needed for a job, often form their own opinion about what constitutes the best candidate. They use this personal impression to evaluate candidates.


Therefore, it is important to make sure interviewers fully understand the requirements of the job.

 **Pressure to Hire:** When interviewers believe they need to make a decision quickly, they tend to make decisions based on a limited sample of information, or on a small number of candidate interviews.

Interviewers should adhere to the established interview procedure and timeline with each candidate to avoid making erroneous decisions.

 **Relying on First Impressions:** Interviewers tend to make rapid decisions about the qualifications of a candidate within the first few minutes of the interview based on minimal information.

Interviewers should reserve their judgment until sufficient information on the candidate has been gathered.

 **Nonverbal Behavior:** Interviewers should base their evaluation of the candidate on the candidate's past performance and current behavior as it relates to the competency being evaluated and not just on how the candidate acts during the interview.

Questions and probes relating to the competencies of interest will usually direct the interviewer to the important information.



Negative Emphasis: Unfavorable information tends to be more influential and memorable than favorable information.

Interviewers should avoid focusing on negative information to the exclusion of positive information.



Contrast Effects: The order in which the candidates are interviewed can affect the ratings given to candidates.

While assigning ratings to each individual candidate, interviewers should refrain from comparing and contrasting candidates to those who have been previously interviewed. (Adapted from U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2008, p. 29).



Team Review and Ratings for all Candidates

After the last candidate has been interviewed and rated, the interview team should review the ratings given to all interviewed candidates. This will ensure the Team has considered the performance of each candidate thoroughly and objectively and the final ratings were reached by a consensus.



Please refer to Appendix K for the Final Team Rating for All Interviewed Candidates.

Then, the team can rank order the candidates to determine recommendations for which candidate should proceed to a demonstration lesson, the next step in the selection process.

Determine Next Steps for Candidates. The team should select the two or three teacher candidates with the highest ratings and determine the next steps for these candidates.

The next steps could possibly entail: a demonstration lesson or checking references. Refer to these sections as appropriate.

Notifying Candidates after Interviews

The Team needs to identify which member will inform the candidates of the Team's decisions, the methods of contact, and the timelines for the contacts.

TNTP recommends making a personal call to all candidates who completed the full interview process. In addition, formal written correspondence is recommended as well.



Please refer to Appendix L for a Letter for unsuccessful candidate(s).

Maintain all Interview Documentation

The Delaware Department of State (2008) identified what personnel records must be maintained by school districts. Retain interview documentation for three (3) years or through the final disposition of charges of discrimination or legal action and then destroy. The interview documentation may contain the following but not be limited to:

- ❖ Copies of tests;
- ❖ Structured interview questions;
- ❖ Procedures used for screening applicants; and
- ❖ An explanation of scoring process if applied and/or ranked.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (2008) recommends that the following information be recorded and retained:

- ❖ Date, time, place, and length of the interview;
- ❖ Name, job title, race, national origin, and sex of the interviewers;
- ❖ Interview questions, notes, and scores for each candidate; and
- ❖ Interview guides, rating scales, and any other materials used.

Summary

This section of the toolkit outlines the process and procedures for structured interviews of teacher candidates. Guiding questions for establishing the interview process and procedures were first introduced before the actual implementation of the interview process. The implementation of the interview process includes: determination of interviewers, planning the interviews, conducting the interviews, and evaluating the interview data. Throughout the screening and selection process, the team has listened, observed, and collected data from multiple sources, including: the various components of the Application Package, the screening results, the initial telephone interview, and the formal on-site interviews.

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For additional information, please refer to the Annotated Bibliography.

Resources for Interview Questions

TNTP (The New Teacher Project)

The New Teacher Project is a national nonprofit organization founded by teachers. TNTP works with schools, districts, and states to provide excellent teachers to the students who need them most and advance policies and practices that ensure effective teaching in every classroom.

Teacher Talent Toolbox (under Resources)

Web site: <http://tntp.org/teacher-talent-toolbox/>

The Toolbox includes a variety of open source resources on recruitment and retention, including effective interviewing, sample interview question bank, and scenarios.

University of Delaware, Career Services Center

Sample interview questions for teachers. Newark, DE: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.udel.edu/CSC/pdf/InterviewTeach.pdf>

Appendices

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Appendix A

Top 10 Reminders for Conducting A Successful Interview



1. **Plan the interview – this will avoid interview disasters.**
2. **Establish an informal, friendly environment so the candidate is relaxed and can focus on answering the interview questions.**
3. **Clearly explain the interview process and format.**
4. **Use an Interview Protocol to provide consistency for all candidates.**
5. **Base interview questions on teacher competencies.**
6. **Avoid “why” questions that lead to speculation. Use “what” questions that encourage factual details.**
7. **Use follow-up questions to probe for more detail, but do not waste time on questions that cannot be evaluated.**
8. **Give scenarios to tap a candidate’s problem solving and decision making skills.**
9. **Record notes during and after the interview.**
10. **Use objective criteria to evaluate the formal interview immediately after the session.**

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Appendix B
Template: A Discussion Map with an Example

[District/School Letterhead]

Applicant Name:		Advertised Position:	
Team Member(s):		Date:	

Directions:

This *Discussion Map* is a graphic organizer to facilitate the selection of the key teaching competencies based on the Charlotte Danielson model that will be targeted in the interview questions. The Interview Team should use the Discussion Map with a copy of the DPAS II Teacher Competencies to determine the key competencies needed for the advertised teaching position.

<u>Planning and Preparation</u>
--

<u>The Classroom Environment</u>

<u>Instruction</u>

<u>Professional Responsibilities</u>

Discussion Map Example

[District/School Letterhead]

Applicant Name:		Applied Position:	
Team Member(s):		Date:	

Teaching Position: First grade teacher

Planning and Preparation

1. Goal oriented - Child-focused
2. Differentiate instruction (flexible grouping, independent work that is meaningful – NO BUSY WORK)
3. Deep knowledge of content & pedagogy
4. Knowledge of students
5. Written plans – clear and comprehensive
6. Aligned to curriculum /standards
7. On-going formative assessments

The Classroom Environment

1. Effective classroom management
2. Positive discipline/interactions
3. Inviting room environment – student work samples, class library, work stations
4. Focus on active engagement of learning
5. Safe environment – no clutter
6. Learning materials accessible to children
7. High expectations for student success – culturally sensitive

Instruction

1. Student learning activities promote active engagement
2. Implements effective differentiated instruction – based on data and student learning needs (flexible grouping)
3. Clear oral and written communication
4. Uses high-level questions and discussion techniques
5. Explicit, systematic instruction
6. Immediate and focused feedback

Professional Responsibilities

1. Reflective of instructional practice – continually learning
2. Willing to be involved in the school community
3. Places a high priority on communicating with parents
4. Organized – meets established deadlines, effective recording system

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
	<p>management purposes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you integrate _____ (e. g., language arts) across the curriculum? • How would you handle varied reading abilities in the content areas? • In which curriculum areas are your strengths? 	
<p>1.d. Demonstrating knowledge of students</p>	<p>1.d. Demonstrating knowledge of students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This position is teaching grade _____. Have you taught this grade level? (If so, what are children like at this age? If not, what are your expectations for students at this grade level?) • Describe your experience(s) working in an urban setting. • What are some of your strategies for differentiating lessons? • Describe different student learning styles and how you adjust lessons to benefit those differing styles. • How do you handle different ability levels of students in classes? • Provide an example of how you use your knowledge of students (in terms of abilities, cultures, and interests) to plan your instruction. 	<p>It is mid-October and Sarah is a new student in your first grade class. She is struggling with reading, cries often, and is having difficulty making friends. What will you do to ease her transition?</p>

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
	<p>Demonstrating Knowledge of Culturally Diverse Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What experiences have you had with students from culturally diverse backgrounds? Give us your background on teaching and mentoring experiences with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. • Provide us with examples of how you managed diversity in your classroom experience. • What do you see as the most challenging aspects of teaching an increasingly diverse student community? What strategies have you used to address diversity challenges? • Do you find students from different cultural backgrounds have different learning needs? • How do you adapt your teaching to meet the different cultures and learning styles of your students? • How would you address racial tension among students in your classes? • What would you do to motivate and engage students in learning who have varied perspectives of diversity? 	

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
1.e. Designing student assessments	<p>1.e. Designing student assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe a formative assessment you designed and explain how you used the data to plan instruction and monitor students? • How would you use authentic assessments in classes? • How do you incorporate students into the formative assessment cycle? • What would you do if 50% of your class did poorly on a formative assessment? 	<p>Imagine you are teaching a lesson about XX, tell me three different ways you would assess whether your students learned the concept.</p>

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
		<p>If that doesn't work, what do you think is causing the disruptions? How might you draw on external resources?</p>
<p>2.c. Creating an environment to support learning</p>	<p>2.c. Creating an environment to support learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you build students' confidence in their ability to learn and meet challenges? • What is the ideal relationship between a teacher and student? • Provide an example of how you have handled peer conflicts. • You witness a student bullying another student. How would you respond? 	<p>It is the first day of school, and you go to your class and find that the textbooks have not arrived. What would you do?</p> <p>And then what? And if after a month, there were still no text books, what would you do?</p>
<p>2.d. Organizing physical space</p>	<p>2.d. Organizing physical space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you establish a safe classroom environment for your students? • Describe the classroom environment you have established in previous teaching positions. 	

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
<p>3.c. Communicating clearly and accurately</p>	<p>3.c. Communicating clearly and accurately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you communicate to students your learning expectations? • How do you ensure students understand the learning objectives of lessons? • Give an example of directions you have given to students for class work or homework. • Describe an assignment that you recently gave to students. 	
<p>3.d. Using questioning, discussion techniques</p>	<p>3.d. Using questioning, discussion techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What questioning techniques do you use to move students from simple to complex answers? • What discussion techniques do you find effective with students? • Provide me examples of higher level critical thinking questions that are related to _____ (e.g., relevant topic or subject). 	

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
3.e. Using assessment in instruction	<p>3.e. Using assessment in instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What formal and informal methods do you use to assess student learning? • Provide an example of your performance standards and criteria for a written assignment. How do you communicate these to students? • Describe when and how you provide feedback to students. • Describe the data and decision-making processes you use to regroup students. • When you review and analyze your student achievement data, what patterns do you see in terms of achievement gaps? What have you done to work with struggling students? What strategies work best in raising performance levels for all students? 	

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
Component 4: Professional Responsibilities		
<p>4.a. Communicating with families</p>	<p>4.a. Communicating with families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how you involve parents in the learning process. • Describe how you would communicate with parents of different socio-economic, cultural and/or ethnic groups. • Describe when and how you communicate with the parents/guardians of your students, including student progress. What strategies do you use to communicate with families? How often do you communicate with families? • Describe how you conduct a parent/guardian conference. • How would you address a parent who disagrees with an assignment or your grading method? 	<p>One of your students has persistent disruption problems. You have observed him taking things from other students, calling you names when your back is to the students. In several instances you have disciplined him by giving lunch detention and separating this desk from other students. He has not improved. Today his mother is at the school because the student told her that you have been picking on him and separating him from the rest of the class for no reason and she is very upset. How would you approach a conversation with his mother at this time? What kind of tone would you try to convey?</p>

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
<p>4.b. Recording data in a student record system</p> <p>4.c. Growing and developing professionally</p>	<p>4.b. Recording data in a student record system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how you track student assignments and progress. • In the past, how did you collect, organize and use student data? Which data? • With what data systems have you had experience? • How do you ensure student data is recorded accurately and kept up-to-date? <p>4.c. Growing and developing professionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the most significant professional development in which you have participated? • What have you read/studied recently that led to changes in your instruction? • What is a challenge that you feel you recently overcame in your teaching career? How did you search out resources to help you do so? • How have you recently improved your professional skills? • How do you solicit and receive feedback? Give an example of feedback you've received that has made you a better professional or person. • What was the last piece of feedback you received in an observation or evaluation? What did you do in response? 	<p>How would you converse with a parent who stormed into your room during class and accused you of picking on and being biased against her/his child?</p> <p>You are a new teacher and this is your first teaching assignment. You've been assigned a mentor and she is very friendly, but she hasn't helped you with the problems you are facing organizing small group instruction and pacing your lessons. You've approached her several times to schedule a time to meet, she says she'll get back to you, but she never follows-through. What will you do?</p>

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
4.d. Reflecting on professional practice	4.d. Reflecting on professional practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you evaluate your own teaching? • What is the most creative lesson you have ever taught? • Why should you be hired for this position? 	
Other District/School focused	<p>Other Additional Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Describe your experiences with _____ schools. 2) What about your background makes you more likely to fit into this district/school’s community? What role do you see yourself playing? 3) Why are you applying for this position? 4) What challenges do you think you might face working in a _____ school? 5) Can you share some examples of ways in which you have worked to improve a district/school? 6) What activities would you like to coach or advise as a member of this staff? 7) How do you get involved in a district/school community? 	

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion

Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
Interactions and Relationships with Colleagues	<p>Other Additional Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How would your colleagues describe you? 2) How would others describe you as a team member? 3) How would you deal with an uncooperative colleague? 4) How would you contribute to building and improving staff morale? 5) Please give an example of when you had to work to build a successful relationship with a colleague. 6) Describe a conflict you faced with administration or another teacher. How did you handle the situation? 	
Diversity and Cultural Competence in Schools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How would you define diversity? 2) Describe a specific situation in which you worked with a diverse group of people over a period of time. Based on this experience, what did you learn? Can you describe a time that you adopted your work style in order to effectively work with individuals different from you? 3) What have you done to further your knowledge about diversity? What books/materials/authors have you read on the subject of diversity? 4) What kinds of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than you own? What kinds of experiences have you had in relating with people whose backgrounds are different from you own? 5) Tell us about a time when you had to alter your work style 	

Potential Interview Questions and Scenarios Aligned with DPAS-II Components and Criterion		
Criterion	Potential Interview Questions	Potential Scenario Questions
	<p>to meet a diversity need or challenge.</p> <p>6) How have you handled a situation when a college was not accepting of others' diversity?</p> <p>7) What efforts have you made, or been involved with, to foster multicultural understanding and cultural competence?</p>	
Teaching as a Career	<p>Other Additional Questions:</p> <p>1) What do you find most rewarding in being a teacher? What is most frustrating?</p> <p>2) What have been your most positive teaching experiences? Most negative teaching experiences?</p> <p>3) What do you do when instructional requirements are not aligned with your educational philosophy?</p> <p>4) What are your career goals five years from now?</p> <p>5) What are your career goals, short term and long term?</p>	

Sources: DPAS II Guide Revised for Teachers (2014 and 2015); Association of California School Administrators; KIPP NYC – Example Question Bank; The New Teacher Project (2011 and 2012); Rochester Institute of Technology (no date); Society for Human Resource Management (no date); Tooms and Crowe (2004); University of Alaska, Anchorage (no date); University of Delaware Career Services Center.

Appendix C.2. Interview Questions Derived from the University of Delaware

CAREER SERVICES CENTER *at University of Delaware*

401 Academy Street
Monday-Friday 8 am to 5 pm
Phone: 302-831-2392
<http://www.udel.edu/CSC>

Sample of Interview Questions for Teachers

Professional Experiences

1. What is your philosophy of education?
2. Describe your student teaching experience(s). What are some of the most significant things you learned from your cooperating teacher(s)? What did you like/dislike?
3. What is your knowledge of and experience with standards-based education?
4. What experience have you had with students from culturally diverse backgrounds?
5. When did you first become interested in teaching?
6. What opportunities have you had to bring multicultural education into your classroom?
7. Describe your experience(s) working in an urban setting.
8. How well has your college/university prepared you for the teaching profession?

Planning Skills

1. What do you include in your daily lesson plans? How closely do you follow your plans?
2. Describe a good lesson you've planned and implemented. Explain why it was good.
3. Describe a time when a lesson was not going well. What did you do about it?
4. How would you integrate language arts across the curriculum?
5. How would you go about setting up your reading program?
6. How would you handle varied reading abilities in the content areas?

7. How much homework will you assign? How do you know how long it will take your students?

Instructional Skills

1. Describe the teaching techniques or strategies that are most effective for you.
2. How would you include cooperative learning in your classroom?
3. How would you identify the special needs of your students?
4. What do you include when you write learning objectives?
5. What techniques do you use to keep students actively involved during a lesson?
6. What methods would you use to assess student learning?
7. Describe different student learning styles and how you adjust lessons to benefit those differing styles.
8. Do you feel that the teacher should be responsible for developing objectives or should they be provided in the curriculum?
9. How do you deal with the unmotivated student?
10. Is drill and practice important? How and when would you use it?
11. What would you do if 50% of your class did poorly on a test?
12. What do you see as the relative strengths and weaknesses of norm-referenced tests?
13. How would you use authentic assessment?

Technology/Computer Skills

1. How would you incorporate technology in your classroom?
2. What are your computer skills? What software have you used for instructional or classroom management purposes?
3. Assuming you have adequate equipment, how would students be allowed to use technology in your classroom?

Classroom Discipline

1. Describe your philosophy regarding discipline.
2. What techniques would you use to handle discipline problems that may arise in your classroom?
3. What was the most challenging discipline problem you've encountered and how did you handle it? Were you prepared to handle this situation? In hindsight, would you have handled this situation any differently?

4. What kind of rules do you have in your classroom? (Share an example.) How are they established?
5. How would you create and promote a safe atmosphere in your classroom?

Classroom Management

1. What is your classroom management plan/style? What are your goals?
2. Describe what you consider to be the model classroom. What would a typical day look like in this classroom?
3. Share three interesting classroom management techniques used in your classroom.
4. When students say they want their teacher to be fair, what do you think they mean?

Relationships with Administration, Staff, Parents, and Students

1. Describe an outstanding teacher. What makes this educator outstanding?
2. What does “teamwork” mean to you? Give an example.
3. What should a principal expect from teachers? What should teachers expect from their principal?
4. What kind of principal would you like to work for?
5. How would your students describe you as a teacher?
6. How do you approach parent/teacher conferences?
7. What do you feel is important to know about your students? How do you gather this information?
8. Describe your approach with a parent who is upset with you - - and you know you are right.
9. How can you get students to be excited about learning?
10. Describe your use of paraprofessional aides and/or parent volunteers in your classroom.
11. How do you develop self-esteem in your students?
12. How do you keep parents informed about the daily/weekly progress of their son/daughter? What vehicles do you use to communicate with parents?
13. What kind of people do you find it difficult to work with and why?
14. Do you want students to like you? Why or why not?
15. What do you value most in a child?

Personal Qualities

1. Why have you selected teaching as a profession?
2. What are your career goals, short term and long term?
3. What makes you an effective teacher?
4. Describe yourself with three adjectives and explain why they were chosen.
5. What distinguishes you from other candidates?
6. Describe your fears as you begin your first year teaching.
7. If I were to contact your references what do you think they would say about you?
8. Would you describe yourself as a team player or an individual achiever?
9. What is your most successful accomplishment?
10. Tell me whom you would like to emulate. Why?

Miscellaneous

1. What activities would you like to become involved in within our school, district, or community?
2. Why do you want to work in our school system?
3. Tell me about yourself.
4. Describe your thoughts about student and teacher accountability.
5. What professional development topics interest you? What are your plans for professional growth?
6. What gives you the greatest pleasure teaching?
7. What do you think is wrong with public education today?
8. At which grade level do you think you would do the best job?
9. Would you be willing to teach at a different grade level (elementary) or teach a different subject (secondary)?
10. What are your greatest weaknesses?
11. Why should we hire you over the two other finalists who have comparable qualifications?

Appendix D

Lawful and Unlawful Questions

This appendix includes topics, and examples of lawful and unlawful questions to be asked during the selection process.

Topic	Lawful	Unlawful
Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your full name? • In checking your references and/or educational background, will I be able to identify you by your current name? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your maiden name? • Do you prefer Ms., Miss, or Mrs.? • What type of a name is _____?
Address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How long have you lived at this address? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birthplace? • Names and relationships of person with whom the applicant lives • Do you own or rent your home?
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What schools did you attend? • What courses did you take? • What degrees did you earn? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What years did you attend? • When did you graduate from high school?
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you under 18 years of age? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How old are you? • What is your date of birth?
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After describing the essential functions of the job, can you perform these with or without a reasonable accommodation? • After describing the essential functions of the job, will you be able to meet these requirements? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any disabilities that would prohibit you from performing this job? • Have you ever had a back (or any other type) of injury? • Have you ever been injured on the job? • Have you ever filed for Worker's Compensation?
Health/Medical Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do NOT ask any questions related to the health/medical condition of the person being interviewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any existing health condition that would prevent you from doing this job?

Topic	Lawful	Unlawful
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you present proof, if hired, that you are eligible to work in the United States? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you a U.S. citizen? Can you provide a green card or a visa?
National Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What language do you speak/write fluently (if job related)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where were you born? What is your native language? How/where did you learn to speak that language?
Race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What race are you?
Family/Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you married? Divorced? How many children do you have? Do you live alone? What does your spouse do for a living?
Sex/ Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you planning to have any children? Are you pregnant? What is your sexual orientation?
Military Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What education & training have you obtained through the military? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the dates of your military duty? Have you served in a foreign military? What was your type of discharge?
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have reliable transportation that will assure that you arrive at work on time each day? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have a car? How will you get to work?
Arrests/Convictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever been convicted of a felony? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever been arrested?

Adapted from: TNTP (2012).

Appendix E

Examples of Scenarios

1. It is mid-October and Sarah is a new student in your first grade class. She is struggling with reading, cries often, and is having difficulty making friends. What will you do to ease her transition?
2. You are a new teacher and this is your first teaching assignment. You've been assigned a mentor and she is very friendly, but she hasn't helped you with the problems you are facing organizing small group instruction and pacing your lessons. You've approached her several times to schedule a time to meet, she says she'll get back to you, but she never follows-through. What will you do?
3. It is the third month of school and the assessment data indicates that over one third of your students are not making adequate progress. What will you do?
4. You carefully planned a science lesson that included a demonstration of static electricity. Although the process worked when you practiced the demonstration, it did not work during the lesson. As a result the lesson was not successful. One student said: "Wow, this is boring!" What will you do next?
5. You were just notified that the mother of one of your students is in the office, waiting to see you after school. The school secretary alerted you that the mother is very angry because her daughter is not in the advanced reading group. The children were initially placed based on assessment data. As the teacher, you are able to move children from one "flexible" group to another. This child, however, is struggling with many of the concepts within the "grade level" group. How will you prepare and conduct this difficult conversation with this mother.

Adapted from: TNTP: Teacher Talent Toolbox

www.tntp.org/teacher-talent-toolbox/explore/hiring

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Appendix F

Differentiating Questions for Novice and Veteran Teachers

[District/School Letterhead]

Applicant Name:		Applied Position:	
Team Member(s):		Date:	

Directions:

These sample questions provide parallel examples that can be used when interviewing both novice and veteran teachers for a teaching position.

Parallel Interview Questions for Novice and Veteran Teachers <i>(Based on DPAS II Teaching Competencies)</i>	
NOVICE	VETERAN
<p>Component 1: Planning and Preparation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How do you plan instruction? 2) What is formative assessment and why is this data so important for planning instruction? 3) How will you determine instructional goals? 4) This position is teaching grade _____. What are your expectations for students at this grade level? 5) As a new teacher, where will you seek help and assistance when planning instruction? 	<p>Component 1: Planning and Preparation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What process did you use to plan instruction? 2) Describe a formative assessment you designed and how you used the data to plan instruction? 3) Explain the process you use to establish instructional goals. 4) This position is teaching grade _____. Have you taught this grade level? (If so, what are children like at this age? If not, what are your expectations for students at this grade level?) 5) What resources do you use to plan instruction?

Parallel Interview Questions for Novice and Veteran Teachers
(Based on *DPAS II Teaching Competencies*)

NOVICE	VETERAN
<p>Component 2: The Classroom Environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What techniques will you use to handle discipline problems that may arise in your classroom? 2) When you are working with a small group of students, what will the other students do? How will you determine if the assignments are meaningful tasks? 3) If we walk into your classroom, what will we see; what will we hear? 4) How will you build students' confidence in their ability to learn and meet challenges? 5) As a classroom teacher, what safety issues will you need to address? 	<p>Component 2: The Classroom Environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What was the most challenging discipline problem you've encountered and how did you handle it? 2) When you worked with small groups of students, what were the other students doing? Describe the learning tasks. 3) Describe the classroom environment you've established in previous teaching positions. 4) How did you build students' confidence in their ability to learn and meet challenges? 5) How did you establish a safe classroom environment for your students?
<p>Component 3: Instruction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What should you consider when you write learning objectives? 2) What experiences have you had with students from culturally diverse backgrounds? 3) What teaching techniques will you use to actively engage students in the learning process? 4) How will you differentiate instruction? 5) How will you implement flexible grouping in your classroom? 	<p>Component 3: Instruction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Give an example of a learning objective you've written and explain your decision-making process when you constructed it. 2) Describe your experiences with students from culturally diverse backgrounds. 3) Describe how you actively engage students in the learning process. 4) Describe how you differentiated instruction in your classroom. 5) Describe the data and decision making process you used to regroup students.

Parallel Interview Questions for Novice and Veteran Teachers (Based on DPAS II Teaching Competencies)	
NOVICE	VETERAN
<p>Component 4: Professional Responsibilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why is it important to communicate with parents? 2) When and how will you communicate with parents? 3) How will you serve the school community – beyond your classroom? 4) How will you collect, organize, and use data? 5) How will you continue to improve your instructional practice? 	<p>Component 4: Professional Responsibilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Describe when and how you communicated with the parents/guardians of your students. 2) How will you increase school and home interaction? 3) Describe your past service to the school community – beyond your classroom. 4) In the past, how did you collect, organize and use data? 5) How will you continue to grow professionally?
<p>Additional Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why do you want to be a teacher at our school? 2) What experiences have you had with charter schools? 3) How do charter schools differ from traditional public schools? 4) What is your philosophy of education? 5) How do you handle conflict? 6) What does the term “<i>professional ethics</i>” mean to you? 	<p>Additional Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What do you find most rewarding in being a teacher? What is most frustrating? 2) Describe your experiences with charter schools? 3) Why are you applying for a charter school position? 4) What do you do when instructional requirements are not aligned with your educational philosophy? 5) Describe a conflict you faced (with administration, parents, or another teacher). How did you handle the situation? 6) What do you consider the most important elements of professional ethics?

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Appendix G

Template: Team Internal Planning Protocol for Determining Interview Questions and Levels of Evidence

[District/School Letterhead]

Applied Position:		Date:	
Team Member(s):			

Directions: The team identifies the initial interview questions to be asked of each candidate, including potential follow-up questions. Then the team identifies the potential examples of representative responses that would correspond to each level of the rating scale. This should be completed prior to the interviews of candidates. The team will also need to decide on the range of total number of points for each performance level depending on the total number of questions asked.

Rating Scale for Each Question		
4	Highly Effective	Responses indicate evidence of exceptional performance and outstanding knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
3	Effective	Responses indicate evidence of solid performance and strong knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
2	Needs Improvement	Responses indicate mediocre or developing performance and fundamental knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
1	Ineffective	Responses indicate little or no knowledge and minimal understanding of the key concepts, indicators and/or competencies within a DPAS II component.
0	Unable to Evaluate	Responses missing sufficient information for rating.

Critical Components and Criterion Based on DPAS-II	Initial Questions to be Asked	Follow-up Questions to be Asked	Ineffective Representative Response (1 Point)	Needs Improvement Representative Response (2 Points)	Effective Representative Response (3 Points)	Highly Effective Representative Response (4 Points)
1. Planning & Preparation 1.a. Selecting Instructional Goals 1.b. Designing Coherent Instruction 1.c. Demonstrating Knowledge of Content & Pedagogy	1.					
1.d. Demonstrating Knowledge of Students 1.e. Designing Student Assessments	2.					

Critical Components and Criterion Based on DPAS-II	Initial Questions to be Asked	Follow-up Questions to be Asked	Ineffective Representative Response (1 Point)	Needs Improvement Representative Response (2 Points)	Effective Representative Response (3 Points)	Highly Effective Representative Response (4 Points)
2. Classroom Environment 2.a. Managing Classroom Procedures 2.b. Managing Student Behavior	3.					
2.c. Creating an Environment to Support Learning 2.d. Organizing physical Space	4.					

Critical Components and Criterion Based on DPAS-II	Initial Questions to be Asked	Follow-up Questions to be Asked	Ineffective Representative Response (1 Point)	Needs Improvement Representative Response (2 Points)	Effective Representative Response (3 Points)	Highly Effective Representative Response (4 Points)
3. Instruction 3.a. Engaging Students in Learning 3.b. Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness	5.					
3.c. Communicating Clearly and Accurately 3.d. Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques 3.e. Using Assessment in Instruction	6.					

Critical Components and Criterion Based on DPAS-II	Initial Questions to be Asked	Follow-up Questions to be Asked	Ineffective Representative Response (1 Point)	Needs Improvement Representative Response (2 Points)	Effective Representative Response (3 Points)	Highly Effective Representative Response (4 Points)
4. Professional Responsibilities 4.a. Communicating with families 4.b. Recording Data in a Student Record System	7.					
4.c. Growing and Developing Professionally 4.d. Reflecting on Professional Practice	8.					

Critical Components and Criterion Based on DPAS-II	Initial Questions to be Asked	Follow-up Questions to be Asked	Ineffective Representative Response (1 Point)	Needs Improvement Representative Response (2 Points)	Effective Representative Response (3 Points)	Highly Effective Representative Response (4 Points)
5. OTHER (Identify areas)	9.					
	10.					
Total Scores:						

NOTE: Final Performance Levels will need to be determined based on total number of questions asked and points.

Ineffective	Needs Improvement	Effective	Highly Effective
(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):
Example: 0-10	Example: 11-20	Example: 21-30	Example: 31-40

Appendix H Template Letter: Example of Interview Invitation

[District/School Letterhead]

[Date]

Name of Applicant

Address

Dear Mr./Ms. _____,

Thank you for your interest in the position of [position title]. Based on our screening process, we would like to interview you for the above position. The interview information is as follows:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Name and Phone of Contact:

Directions to Interview Location:

[Note: Use this letter to also inform applicants of any other aspects of the interview, e.g., that there will be an interview committee, that a demonstration lesson may be requested, etc.]

Please contact me at [phone] if I may provide you with additional information.

Sincerely,

[Name and title of personnel]

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Questions should be determined prior to the interview and may be customized for each applicant to clarify any questions/concerns that have arisen from the previous screening phases. The number of questions per component will vary dependent upon the decision of the Team. (This document is a template and meant to be adjusted accordingly).

Be sure to record any follow-up questions asked and a candidate's responses.

Component 1: Planning and Preparation

1. Question #1 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

2. Question #2 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

3. Question #3 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

Component 2: Classroom Environment

4. Question #4 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

5. Question #5 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

6. Question #6 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

Component 3: Instruction

7. Question #7 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

8. Question #8 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

Component 4: Professional Responsibilities

9. Question #9 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

10. Question #10 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

11. Question #11 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

Other

12. Question #12 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

13. Question #13 [Insert]

Response:
Follow-up Question(s) Asked:
Follow-up Response:
Rating: 0 1 2 3 4
Justification:

Final Comments/Reflections:

DPAS II Components	Question Nos.	Ratings				
		4	3	2	1	0
1. Planning and Preparation	1-3					
2. Classroom Environment	4-6					
3. Instruction	7-8					
4. Professional Responsibilities	9-11					
5. Other	12-13					
TOTAL Rating Scores:						
Performance Level(s):						

NOTE: Final Performance Levels will need to be determined based on the number of questions asked and total points assigned.

Ineffective	Needs Improvement	Effective	Highly Effective
(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):

Rating Scale for Each Question		
4	Highly Effective	Responses indicate evidence of exceptional performance and strong knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
3	Effective	Responses indicate evidence of solid performance and strong knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
2	Needs Improvement	Responses indicate evidence of mediocre or developing performance and fundamental knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
1	Ineffective	Responses indicate little or no knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, indicators and/or competencies within a DPAS II component.
0	Unable to Evaluate	Responses missing sufficient information for rating.

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Appendix J

Template: Final Team Rating Form for an Interviewed Candidate

[District/School Letterhead]

Candidate Name:		Applied Position:		Date:	
Team Members:					
<p>Directions: Transfer each interviewer's competency ratings onto this form. A consensus discussion should occur with each team member justifying his/her rating. Any changes to the individual ratings during consensus discussion should be initiated by the team member. A final team consensus rating should be entered for each component as well as complete the justification.</p>					
<p>Recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Highly recommended for next step in selection process <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended for next step in selection process <input type="checkbox"/> Not recommended for next step or position <input type="checkbox"/> Other: 					

DPAS II Components	Question Nos.	Team Member #1 Ratings	Team Member #2 Ratings	Team Member #3 Ratings	Team Member #4 Ratings	Team Member #5 Ratings	Consensus Group Rating
1. Planning and Preparation							
2. Classroom Environment							
3. Instruction							
4. Professional Responsibilities							
5. Other							
TOTAL Rating Scores:							
Performance Levels:							

NOTE: Final Performance Levels will need to be determined based on total number of questions asked.

Ineffective	Needs Improvement	Effective	Highly Effective
(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):

Comments/Justification for Consensus Ratings:		
Rating Scale for Each Question		
4	Highly Effective	Responses indicate evidence of exceptional performance and strong knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
3	Effective	Responses indicate evidence of solid performance and strong knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
2	Needs Improvement	Responses indicate evidence of mediocre or developing performance and fundamental knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
1	Ineffective	Responses indicate little or no knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, indicators and/or competencies within a DPAS II component.
0	Unable to Evaluate	Responses missing sufficient information for rating.

Adapted from U.S. Office of Personnel Management (2008)

Appendix K
Template: Final Team Ratings for All Interviewed Candidates
 [District/School Letterhead]

Candidate Name:		Position:		Date:	
Team Member(s):		Rank Order of Candidates: 1. 2. 3. 4.			

Directions: Enter the final team consensus ratings for each component, question number, and candidate. Then rank order the candidates (from the highest total score to the lowest total score).

Components for Competencies	Question Numbers	Candidate #1 (name)	Candidate #2 (name)	Candidate #3 (name)	Candidate #4 (name)
1.Planning and Preparation					
2. Classroom Environment					
3.Instruction					
4. Professional Responsibilities					
5. Other:					
TOTAL Rating Scores:					
Performance Levels:					

NOTE: Final Performance Levels will need to be determined based on the number of questions asked.

Ineffective	Needs Improvement	Effective	Highly Effective
(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):	(Insert Range of Total Number of Points):

Comments/Justification for Rank Order:

Rating Scale for Each Question		
4	Highly Effective	Responses indicate evidence of exceptional performance and strong knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
3	Effective	Responses indicate evidence of solid performance and strong knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
2	Needs Improvement	Responses indicate evidence of mediocre or developing performance and fundamental knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, competencies, and/or indicators within a DPAS II component.
1	Ineffective	Responses indicate little or no knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, indicators and/or competencies within a DPAS II component.
0	Unable to Evaluate	Responses missing sufficient information for rating.

(Adapted from U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2008)

Appendix L
Template Letter: For Unsuccessful Candidate(s) After On-site Interview

[District/School letterhead]

[Date]

[Name of Candidate]

[Address]

Dear Mr./Ms. _____,

Thank you for taking the time to interview for the position of [position title].

The selection of a final candidate was a difficult task given the many applications the district/school received from individuals with strong backgrounds in this field.

We regret to inform you that the position was offered to another candidate.

Again, thank you for your application for this position and interest in employment with [name of district/school].

We wish you well in your career.

Sincerely,

[Name and title of personnel]

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