

# The Educator's Interview

Schedule an appointment in Career Education and Development to practice and improve your interview skills!

# What are administrators expecting from you?

- Assessing student achievement and designing differentiated instruction based on multiple assessments.
- Effective use of technology in the classroom:
  - For teaching, communicating, and managing.
- Ability to adapt lessons for inclusion students and limited English speaking students (ELL, English Language Learners). Also may be referred to as ESL, English as a Second Language.
- Excellent communication skills with parents as well as students.
- Passion to teach all students.
- Knowledge of the subject area and a willingness to learn more.
- Willingness to be involved in the total school community.
- Professionalism:
  - Your conduct, language, dress, and knowledge;
  - Your preparation and teaching ability;
  - You serving as a positive role model for students.

# General\* education interview questions:

Tell us how you assess your students to determine how well they are learning.

What techniques do you use to increase the probability that pupils will behave appropriately?  
(behavior management)

How would you apply technology to enhance daily instruction and increase student learning and achievement?

Please tell me about your most challenging experience while working with children and how you handled it. (behavior management)

What are some methods of communicating student progress to parents other than report cards?

What do you feel is important for you to know about the students with whom you work?  
How do you go about gathering this information? (data-driven decisions)

- You will also be asked questions specific to your academic discipline, the students you will be teaching, and your knowledge of professional educational issues.

## Prepare insightful questions to ask administrators:

What are the immediate priorities that this school is addressing? What are anticipated future ones?

How do you bring out the best in your teaching staff?

What are the traits of your most outstanding teachers?

What are the accomplishments (of this school, of your class) that you are most proud of?

Why do you stay here as an administrator (or teacher)?

If I were to be hired, what advice do you have for me to make a successful transition during my first year of teaching?

If you have questions about the research you have done, ask in the interview! Example – Tell me about the new reading curriculum you started this past year. What have been the successes and the frustrations?

You may write your questions down before an interview and then refer to them when given the opportunity to ask questions.

# Interview Knockout Factors provided by administrators

My comments in (parentheses ).

- Unprofessional dress (dress like an administrator to an interview).
- No research on the school district. (In a job fair that may have hundreds of districts present, you are not expected to research every district.)
- Vague or “cookie cutter” answers. (In other words, worthless!)
- Failure to elaborate on responses or provide specific supports. (Provide specific examples but keep confidentiality).
- Lack of knowledge about instructional methodology or assessment strategies.
- Immature language choice; inarticulate responses; slang; verbal distractions (like, um – you know?).
- Negative comments about former students, teachers, administrators, districts, student teaching.
- Lack of genuine enthusiasm. (Show your passion with a genuine smile and energy in your voice!)
- Inability to create a positive dialog with the interviewer.

## How one western PA school district evaluates candidates during a job fair screening interview of about 20 minutes: (my comments in red)

### Impact

- Creates a favorable initial impression. Professional dress, firm handshake, good eye contact and voice projection.
- Maintains a professional image.
- Exhibits a composed appearance: does not appear overly nervous or anxious. Interviewers understand you being nervous and often will do what they can to help you feel more comfortable.
- Responds openly and warmly when appropriate. Smile!
- Speaks with a self-assured tone of voice.
- Commands attention and respect.
- Shows an appropriate air of confidence. But doesn't drift into arrogance.
- Clearly conveys information and responds to questions in a clear, concise way. Here the interviewer is listening for answers that are specific and that show your knowledge of teaching. This is the most important part of the interview.
- Is attentive and listens carefully.
- Is courteous. Conclude your interview with another firm handshake.

Is willing to sub or serve as an aide. The interviewer completes this bottom part.

Interested in coaching sports – which ones; experience level.

Extracurricular activity interest areas.

Certifications / Minor / Special Ed Certification / Praxis Tests

Recommend for phone interview or do not proceed.

**See the PERC website as well at  
[www.percjobfair.org](http://www.percjobfair.org) for tips and videos  
about preparing for a job fair and the  
educator's job search!**

Talk to your cooperating teachers, administrators, and university supervisors about:

- What makes a resume effective.
- What questions to expect in an interview; **ask for a practice interview!**
  - Use Interview Stream on the CED web page to conduct practice interviews via a web cam that you may watch and critique. The education questions on Interview Stream are excellent!
- The current issues in education.

But **you will make the final decisions** on how to conduct an effective job search from your resume to your portfolio to your interviewing.



# Your interviewing portfolio

- Includes artifacts that support your ability to be an outstanding teacher (lesson plans, examples of student work, pictures on how you organize your room, examples of your bulletin boards).
- Highly visual with succinct explanations about the artifacts you are including – you are not writing a textbook.
- Portable and organized – easy to carry and easy to find specific information.
- Intended to support interview answers – it can be an effective visual aid.
- During an on-site or job fair interview, you may want to prepare a mini-portfolio, brochure, or CD/DVD/ web address that you leave with the interviewers.

**You may create a brochure to provide more visual information for your interviewers. There are no specific rules for a brochure. Use your creativity and have fun designing it.**

**Three brochures created by SRU graduates follow:**

- 1) The brochure created by Sarah Swiger, Elementary Education / Special Education graduate, May 2010.**
- 2) The brochure created by Victoria Kepple, Early Childhood PK-4 graduate, May 2016.**
- 3) The brochure created by Kristi Kubatka, Early Childhood PK-4 / Special Education PK-8 graduate, May 2017.**

## What Professionals are Saying about Sarah Swiger:

"Sarah Swiger is one of the most impressive and well-rounded teacher candidates that I have had the pleasure to encounter. Not only is she knowledgeable and hardworking, but she is personable and easy to work with."

*Dr. James Preston  
Math Methods Professor and Mentor, SRU*

"Miss Swiger is a true professional. She employs a wide-range of instructional strategies, which she utilizes according to the needs of her learners... Her enthusiasm and knowledge make her indispensable in the classroom."

*Ms. Asdra Eberhart  
English LS Cooperative Teacher, Farrell High School*

"I would describe her as extremely responsible, mature, reliable, practical, and very well organized... She is extremely compassionate and caring and it shows in her work with students."

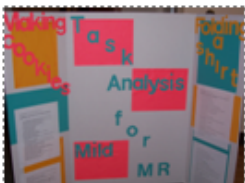
*Mrs. Julie Varnish  
Assistant Director-Center for Student Involvement and Leadership, SRU*

"She has demonstrated an inquiring mind, a heart for helping, and a genuine team spirit. Sarah is an industrious, intelligent, and dedicated person who is committed to working to help children reach *beyond* their potentials... She is interested in lifelong learning, has a real 'teachable spirit', and displays a cooperative attitude."

*Dr. Geraldine Jenny  
Creativity Professor and Mentor, SRU*

"Sarah's design for coherent instruction is evident in the number of well organized, heterogeneous instructional groups she prepared... She fosters positive relationships among the students... Sarah exhibits initiative, originality, and creativity reflective of the community of learners... She ensures that all students receive an equitable opportunity to succeed."

*Mrs. Amy Eyzeman  
3rd Grade Cooperating Teaching, Emily Brittain School*



## Contact Information:

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Sarah Swiger



## Elementary and Special Educator

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.  
...-Nelson Mandela



## Top 10 Lesson Plans and Projects

1. *Combinations: Dressing for a Party*  
-Hands-on Constructivist approach  
-2.1.3.G and 2.8.3.G
2. *Family Math Night Game: Speed Shapes*  
-School-wide family math night game  
-2.9.3.I and 2.9.5.D
3. *Grammar Review Activity: Helping Verbs and Quotations*  
-Hands-on whole class review game  
-1.5.3.F
4. *Matter: Physical and Chemical Changes*  
-Interactive PPT, guide sheet, and hands-on experiments  
-3.1.4.E, 3.2.4. B, and 3.4.4.A
5. *Multiplication and Division Unit*  
-10 lesson unit, formative and summative assessment, and interactive lessons  
-2.1, 2.2, and 2.6  
-NCTM standards 1-10
6. *Presidents' Day Presentation*  
-Interactive PPT, guided notes, and whole class review game  
-8.3.3.A
7. *Reading Small Group: Main Idea*  
-Ability grouping 3 day skill review  
-R3.A.1.4.
8. "Wanted" *Equivalent Fraction Posters*  
-Differentiated instruction  
-2.1.4.B
9. *Water Unit Jeopardy Review Game*  
-Interactive PPT, comprehensive study guide, and whole class review game  
-3.5.4.D
10. *Waterwheels Science Experiment*  
-Hands-on Constructivist approach  
-3.5.4.D and 3.8.4.B

## Top 10 Educational Beliefs

1. **Data-driven** instruction and decision making
2. Creating a classroom **community of learners**
3. Educational philosophy centered around **Constructivism**
4. Incorporation of **technology** into lessons and activities
5. **Differentiated** instruction
6. Clear and frequent **communication with parents**
7. **Alternative** assessments
8. **Classroom management** focused on discipline and respect
9. Clear and frequent **communication with school staff and faculty** to maximize student success and teacher preparedness
10. **Professional development** to utilize current trends, research, and resources

## Top 5 Favorite Classroom Management Techniques

1. Chances  
**Individual Behavior**
2. Behavior Modification Charts  
**Individual Goals**
3. Bells and Clapping  
**Listening Techniques**
4. Classroom Treasure Chest  
**Individual and Whole Class Goals**
5. Group Tally Marks  
**Promotes Teamwork**

## It's All in the Name...

Motivating  
Insightful  
Sensitive  
Sincere



Supportive  
Animated  
Reliable  
Active  
Honest

Text Box



Spontaneous  
Warm  
Interactive  
Goal-orientated  
Engaging  
Responsible



**Sarah Swiger**

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## Polluting Freddy's World: Lesson on water pollution



Teaching 2-year-olds the  
Fundamentals of Reading



Find the Pot of Gold Using  
Our Classroom Map



Earth Day Carnival with all  
Kindergarten students



Walking around classroom,  
assessing kindergartners  
through observation

## Five Adjectives that Describe Me

- Resilient
- Determined
- Organized
- Firm
- Nurturing

Ms.  
Victoria  
Kepple



Slippery Rock  
University

*"You're off to great places.  
Today is your day. Your  
mountain is waiting so get on*

*your way."*  
-Dr. Seuss



## Lesson on Planet Matching



## My Favorite Lessons

### Science:

- Earth Day Carnival
- Planet Match

### Math:

- Shape Attribute Game
- Find the Pot of Gold Using Classroom Map
- Differentiated Addition and Subtraction Game

### Reading/Comprehension:

- There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly
- The Cat in The Hat

### Writing:

- Main Idea and Detail Match
- Where The Wild Things Are

### Social Studies:

- Interactive Abraham Lincoln

## My Goals/Philosophy of Teaching

- Integrate** lessons throughout the day to increase **repetition** and enhance learning

- Differentiate** whenever possible

- Build strong **relationships** with families

- Create a sense of **family** and **community** in the classroom

- Incorporate all **Multiple Intelligences** as much as possible

- Encourage **parent volunteers**

- Demonstrate **proactive** directions

- Even teachers** make mistakes

- Use **reinforcing language** often

- Promote **social skills** among students

**Volunteering at  
Lawrence County Family  
Night.**



**Wacky Science Day at  
SRAE**



**Making Oobleck during social  
skills in AS Room on Dr. Seuss'  
Birthday**

"Kristi exhibits a strong desire to be an educator. She has a tremendous attitude, work ethic, and possesses academic initiative. I am convinced that she is a first-class role model for young children!"

~ Dr. Robert Snyder

*Professor at Slippery Rock University*

## **Fast Facts:**

- Graduated in 2013 from West Allegheny High School
  - Imperial, PA
  - Distinguished Honors
- Graduated in 2017 from Slippery Rock University
  - Slippery Rock, PA
  - *Summa Cum Laude*
  - GPA: 3.875
  - Honors College Graduate
  - Minor: Elementary Mathematics

**My note – Kristi is teaching at  
Trinity Area School District**

**Please feel free to contact  
me. I look forward to  
hearing from you!**

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kkubatka@sru.com

# **Kristi Kubatka**



**Early Childhood  
(PreK-4)/ Special  
Education (PreK-8)**

**Slippery Rock  
University**





## My Philosophy:

I believe all children are different and unique in their own way, and that includes their way of learning. As an educator, I need to be aware of the best way to teach students that is most effective and beneficial for them. I need to design lessons based on each student's needs, enhancing their learning abilities. If several methods need to be used in order for all students to learn, that is what I should do.

I believe in instructing the material in a fun, engaging manner using several examples, manipulatives, and technologies enabling the students in my classroom to be as successful as possible. Educators need to provide students with all opportunities for them to learn and enjoy school. I want my classroom to have a large community of diverse learners with an excitement to learn in a place of comfort and safety.

“You’re off to great places.  
Today is your day. Your  
mountain is waiting so get  
on your way.” -Dr. Seuss



**Trip to Italy to visit 2 international schools.**



**Describing our emotions activity during social skills in the SRAE Autistic Support Classroom**



**KDP Read Across the World event at Ellwood City Schools.**



**Implementation of the use of technology of Liberty Kids videos in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Social Studies.**

## Teaching Experience:

- Slippery Rock Area Elementary School- Autistic Learning Support and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade
- Chicora Elementary School- 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade
- Connoquenessing Elementary School- 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

## Classroom Management Techniques:

### Daily Number Goals

- (Implemented in Autistic Learning Support classroom K-5)
  - Individualized positive reinforcement
  - Encourages appropriate behavior
    - Communication skills
    - Self-monitoring
    - Copying strategies
    - Manners and respect to teachers and classmates

## What You'll See in my Classroom:

- Sense of family and community
- Combination of fun and learning
- Implementation of technology
- Promotion of independence and social skills
- Variety of learning/ teaching techniques
- Diverse environment of learners and abilities