

Do your homework before the application



- ✚ **The priorities and needs of a district should drive the focus and content of your application letter, answers to questions that are part of the application package, and what you highlight in your resume.**
- ✚ **Key issues facing the district are likely to be the subject of interview questions.**
- ✚ **Demonstrating extensive knowledge about the district confirms genuine interest in the position.**

Research should include but not be limited to:

- Examining district and individual school websites.
- Reviewing state and national education websites for assessment, budget, and other data.
- Checking local newspaper files online.
- Contacting close friends or colleagues who may be familiar with the district.
- Visiting the district, driving around to see the schools.
- Studying posted information, flyers, and any other materials promoting the vacancy.

It's often very helpful to call the current superintendent for information; however, be sure to check with the application contact person first. It's possible that the consultants or the board may prefer that candidates not speak with the current superintendent for a variety of reasons, particularly in cases involving the superintendent's forced resignation or retirement.

In the event it is an option, most sitting superintendents are only too willing to answer questions about the district, and it can be an excellent way to gain detailed insight. Take care to avoid appearing interested in gossip or "skeletons in the closet."

If you need information you cannot obtain through other sources, request the information from the person in charge of the search.