

Suggestions for Persons applying for Educational Leadership Positions

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[CIDEL admin appl & interviewing]

This is a professional service project intended to improve the quality of educational leadership applications and interviews. This is a joint project by **CIDEL** (Committee to Identify and Develop Educational Leaders, a WNY collaboration of professors of educational leadership and representatives of WNY superintendents, principals, and other administrator associations) and **WNYASPA** (WNY Association of School Personnel Administrators). This developed from conversations about *How can applicants' applications and interviews be improved?*

EDL Professors: You might use this with your students and graduates.

HR Administrators: When posting vacancies, you might invite interested applicants to request this from your office before applying for leadership positions.

Applicants: You might have better success being hired by following these suggestions.

- Address the application to the correct person and carefully proofread materials.
- Always be accurate, truthful, and real about yourself, your experiences, and what you know.
- If invited for an interview, be prepared to:
 - ✓ During an interview, portray the intangibles like passion, lifelong learning, interpersonal skills, humor, engagement, etc.
 - ✓ Engage with the interview committee, make eye contact, dress professionally.
 - ✓ Be prepared to demonstrate your professional presentation skills in a public forum.
 - ✓ In your current or former position, what building and district committees were you a member of and what are some important learnings you experienced?
 - ✓ Demonstrate your knowledge of the school district: Strategic plan, number of schools, students, administrators; financial condition; mission & vision.
 - ✓ Discuss your philosophy of education and how it aligns with the district's.
 - ✓ Understand the difference between being an instructional leader and being a building manager. The shift has been clear. Both skills are needed, but leaders should be instruction experts.
 - ✓ What does continuous improvement look like to you?
 - ✓ In the context of continuous improvement, what steps would you take for a school to move "to the next level"?
 - ✓ Describe a time when you told the truth and it hurt you.
 - ✓ What is one important personal or professional goal are you working on now?
 - ✓ Integrate the public data available through NYSED for the district with your comments.

- ✓ Demonstrate your use of imagination and creativity in problem-solving to improve schools, leadership, education for students, professional development, and the district where you are interviewing. Share the problem-solving process that could apply to most scenarios.
 - ✓ Identify and share your communication style and the priority of communication as a leader.
 - ✓ In what ways do you assess your effectiveness?
 - ✓ Be prepared to respond to: What impact have you had and how did it affect students?
 - ✓ Discuss the CRSE framework, DEI opportunities, and why they are important to you, or not.
 - ✓ Be prepared to discuss the needs of diverse students, families, and communities.
 - ✓ As an administrator and leader, describe your preferred ways to identify what areas (challenges, problems, etc.) to work on, how to identify possible solutions, how to select solutions, and how to implement solutions.
 - ✓ Be prepared to share both formal and informal leadership roles, as those translate well.
 - ✓ Describe your educational background including work history in detail and highlight some significant accomplishments.
 - ✓ Identify a person or persons who had a significant impact on your career.
 - ✓ What three books have most influenced you, in what ways, and what prompted you to read them? What is the most recent book you read on self-improvement and why?
 - ✓ Answer the “*Whys?*” *Why* are you here? What’s the *Why* that motivates you? *Why* are you interested in working in this school district?
 - ✓ Why should we trust you with our students?
- Have your resume speak to the impact you have had, not just listing the job duties.
 - Only put relevant items in the resume, e.g. “kept track of late busses” ... what does that align to and why is it important?
 - Be able to answer interview questions with examples. This not only shows you understand the question but have experience with a particular area.
 - Study the school or district you are looking for a position in... and don’t be afraid to say what research you have done on the district or school.
 - Most importantly, it is important that applicants can actually do the job with all these guides so that it is reality and not just an interview skill. They need to be doing it more than talking about it.

The intention of these suggestions is to improve administrator applications and interviews by identifying what the expectations are so applicants may be better prepared. The time interviewing applicants is valuable and hopefully these suggestions will be helpful for all involved.

To recommend changes to this, contact a WNY school district HR administrator or a member of CIDEL in the Educational Leadership program at Buffalo State. Suggestions are welcome. When these suggestions are changed, revisions will be distributed to CIDEL and WNYASPA members.