

2009 Teacher Preparation Survey Executive Summary and MN Education Job Outlook

During the spring of 2009, the St. Cloud State University Career Services Center surveyed MN school superintendents to determine school district hiring plans for the coming school year. The survey also assessed the most important skills sought in teaching candidates and the skills upon which teaching candidates most need to improve. The superintendents were also asked what they would most like to see colleges do better or differently in their preparation of teachers.

Four hundred sixty-two school superintendents received the survey and one hundred sixty responded, a response rate of 34.6 percent. The survey was conducted by Sarah Wuotila and Andrew Ditlevson, SCSU Career Services Center.

What skills and qualities sought in teaching candidates would be most important for teaching candidates to possess: Scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = not at all important and 5 = extremely important

Ability to connect with students	4.86
Work ethic	4.79
Willing to learn/improve	4.76
Classroom management	4.58
Professionalism	4.56
Flexible/adaptable	4.55
Teamwork/team player	4.55
Energy/enthusiasm	4.54
Communication- verbal	4.52
Differentiated instruction	4.31
Communication- written	4.25
Time management	4.20
Realistic expectations	4.20
Subject/content knowledge	4.25
Data driven instruction	4.06
Assessment	4.03
Technology	3.58

What skills and qualities sought in teaching candidates would be most important for teaching candidates to improve on: Scale of 1 to 5, with 1 = not at all important and 5 = extremely important

Classroom management	4.32
Differentiated instruction	4.22
Data driven instruction	4.06
Work Ethic	3.95
Assessment	3.94
Professionalism	3.83
Willing to learn/improve	3.73
Communication- written	3.72
Time management	3.71
Ability to connect with students	3.69
Realistic expectations	3.69
Teamwork/team player	3.64
Flexible/adaptable	3.59
Communication- verbal	3.46
Subject/content knowledge	3.30
Interviewing	3.22
Technology	3.22
Energy/enthusiasm	3.17
Resume writing	2.87

Like to see colleges do better or differently in their preparation of teachers:

More classroom experience	31%
Give more realistic expectations (time, commitment, quality it takes to be good teacher)	15%
Spend more time how to use data to drive instruction	13%
Encourage good candidates toward more in demand areas (math, science, SPED)	11%
More training on differentiated instruction (to meet different learning needs/styles)	10%
More classroom management training/experience	8%
More training on use of technology	7%
Screen out candidates (and early on) who lack skills/qualities to be great teacher	6.5%
Better understanding of diversity and special needs of students	6%
More training on assessment	4%
More emphasis on “practical” vs. theoretical training	4%

Other responses listed by less than 4% of respondents

School Districts by Size (155 respondents)

0-500	37.3%
501-1000	32.9%
1001-2500	18.7%
2501-5000	11.0%
5001-10,000	5.8%
More than 10,000	0.6%

School District Hiring plans as compared to 2008:

Plan to increase hiring:	13.2%
Plan to maintain hiring:	32.1%
Plan to decrease hiring:	45.9%
Too soon to estimate:	8.8%

Recommended month for candidates to begin submitting applications:

May	38.5%
June	30.8%
April	19.2%
March	3.8%
July	3.8%
August	3.8%

Teaching disciplines most difficult for school districts to fill:

Math	24.0%
Science	23.0%
Special Education	22.0%
Foreign Languages (<i>12 respondents mentioning Spanish, 7 mentioned Chinese</i>)	8.0%
Industrial Tech/Tech Ed	5.3%
Communication Disorders	3.4%
Music	2.8%
English/Language Arts	2.0%

No other teaching disciplines were listed by more than three districts