Teacher Portfolios – Q-A’s

What is a portfolio?
- A selective collection of materials that document a teacher’s knowledge, abilities, accomplishments, and creativity

Why is a portfolio important?
- To give the employer a preview of what you have accomplished, what you are capable of, and what distinguishes you from other candidates

How do I begin constructing a portfolio?
- Use a three-ring binder & begin with a table of contents.
- Plastic sleeves should be used to hold your documents. Respect your documents by never punching holes in them!
- Use tabs to organize your materials & use consistent labeling.
- Make sure it looks organized, professional, creative, and attractive.

What types of documents should I include?
1. **Credentials** – Resume, transcripts, clearances, teaching certificates
2. **Awards & Honors** – Certificates, letters, dean’s list, scholarships
3. **Philosophy** of education, discipline, & classroom management
4. **Teaching Samples** – Unit plan, lesson plan, homework, project photos
5. **Student Work Samples** (Caution: Seek permission before using photos of students or documents with students or parent names.)
6. **Student Teaching Evaluations & Recommendations**
7. **Letters of Appreciation from Parents & Students**
8. **Continuing Education & Professional Development** – conferences, presentations
9. **Memberships & Community Service** – volunteer activities, advisory boards

What may school administrators be looking for? (This is not an all inclusive list!)
- Extent of your command of the subject matter you may be teaching
- Your creative abilities relating to curriculum
- Professional & personal qualities
- Beliefs about the teaching profession, students, content areas, instructional strategies, diversity, & culture
- Demonstration of organizational & planning skills
- Examples of involvement, commitment, & enjoyment of your chosen field

Remember:
- NOT to force the interviewer to look at your portfolio.
- You may offer the portfolio to the interviewer, but don’t be offended if they do not wish to look at it. Your verbal and nonverbal communications may be more important to that particular interviewer.
- Never leave your portfolio with the interviewer.
- See the back of this tip sheet for tips on how to use your portfolio in an interview.
How to Use Your Teacher Portfolio in an Interview

DO:
- Place your portfolio in view of the interviewer.
- Use it to provide concrete evidence in responding to a question.
- Select a couple of the most important items & have a copy ready to offer to the interviewer.
- Have the portfolio organized well enough to be able to refer to an example related to an interviewer question.

DO NOT:
- Open your portfolio immediately at the beginning of the interview.
- Be surprised if the interviewer is not familiar with portfolios or is not interested in looking at yours.
- Go page by page through the entire portfolio
- Respond to all the interviewer’s questions with a sample from your portfolio.

Sample Interviewer Questions that May Provide You with an Opportunity to Use Your Portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Section of the Portfolio That May Apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe your teaching philosophy and beliefs about discipline.</td>
<td>Teaching Philosophy and Classroom Management Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe your style of teaching</td>
<td>Teaching Samples Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like to be involved in school activities?</td>
<td>Memberships, Community Service, or Activities Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you get students excited about learning?</td>
<td>Student Work Samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would your students say about you?</td>
<td>Letters of Appreciation from Students/Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever worked as part of a team?</td>
<td>Classroom Project Sample, Work Sample, or Team Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What certifications do you hold?</td>
<td>See Credentials section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>