

Sample Interview Questions

The Miami-Dade County Public Schools Recruitment and Staffing Departments have sample interview questions available for principals. These questions were developed by selected exemplary principals and curriculum specialists. During oral interviews, attention should focus on pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and knowledge of pedagogy and subject matter.

It is also suggested that principals request an applicant to complete a written response to a specific question. The written sample should be evaluated on the following criteria: syntax, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and legible handwriting.

Sample subject specific interview questions (with sample answers):

Biology

Oral

What types of labs would you have the students perform? Students must actively participate in scientific investigations and use the cognitive and manipulative skills associated with the formulation of scientific explanations. Students can understand that experiments are guided by concepts and are performed to test ideas. Instructional strategies include: small group discussions, labeled drawings, writings, and concept mapping. Teachers can use the ideas of students in their class, ideas from other classes, and ideas from texts, databases, or other sources for class explorations, examinations, and discussions.

Written

How would you incorporate technology into the biology classroom? Use of calculators, computers, laser discs, microscopes, and research via the internet

Elementary

Oral

How can a teacher develop a good relationship with parents? A teacher should make every attempt to contact all parents at the beginning of the school year. This initial contact should be positive. At the beginning of the year, a teacher should send a letter home introducing themselves, giving the parents the students' schedule and telling them about expectations - especially for student behavior, classroom assignments, and homework. Teachers should reply to all parent communication within a two-day period. Teachers should answer parents' notes with either another note or phone call. Teachers should prepare the classroom for Open House in such a way that parents feel welcomed and happy to have their children taught by that teacher.

Written

What steps would you follow in order to help a student that constantly disrupts your class? Highlights that should be included: Talk to the student individually; develop a behavior contract with student (a set of rules and consequences for breaking the rules); inform parents of the situation and solicit their assistance; refer to school guidance counselor, if needed; and work with guidance counselor and parents to help student modify behavior.

Gifted**Oral**

Describe some of the critical thinking objectives. Follows a premise; statement shows adequate evidence; determines reliability of observations/statements; determines if a hypothesis is warranted; determines if an argument is ambiguous; determines if an argument is vague or specific; and determines relevancy.

Written

How would you differentiate your curriculum in a class for the gifted? Each child has their own educational plan with goals and objectives and a stated timeline. Tasks need to be aligned to the specific goals/objectives for each student.

Guidance**Oral**

How would you identify the needs and determine how to address those needs of your assigned student population? Conduct needs assessment; establish priorities; and use variety of strategies to address the needs of student population such as: individual, group, and classroom guidance activities.

Written

What skills do you possess that will make you an effective guidance counselor? The response should focus on positive interpersonal and organizational skills.

Language Arts**Oral**

How would you accommodate students with special needs in a language arts program? Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are required to have instruction by classroom teachers who have the ESOL endorsement, or are within timelines to acquire the ESOL endorsement, to provide the additional reading/language arts/ESOL instruction. LEP students who have been in an approved program for less than two complete school years will be exempt from having to attain grade level benchmark requirements. This exemption does not preclude teachers from providing LEP students the necessary instruction to prepare them to meet all requirements after the two-year exemption period.

Written

Describe how portfolios are part of the assessment process and the issues to consider. Review curriculum to see what can be omitted or limited. Let students know what you are doing and why. Establish ground rules for the whole class and be firm about them. Make groups and individuals responsible for their own behavior. Have the groups work on an engaging problem. Have students make booklets or wall displays of their work. Allow students to be independent of adult supervision by having them work side by side purposefully and cooperatively with others.

Mathematics**Oral**

According to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' Curriculum and Evaluation Standards, what mathematical strands/or components are essential to the curriculum? Number sense and operations; measurement; geometry and spatial sense; algebraic thinking; data analysis and probability.

Written

Explain the components of a good mathematics instructional activity. Goals of the activity; include standards and/or benchmarks; instructional strategies; assessment; and materials.

Middle Grade Science**Oral**

What type of activities can be used to exhibit the science process skills? Students must actively participate in scientific investigations and must use the cognitive and manipulative skills associated with the formulation of scientific explanations. Students can understand that experiments are guided by concepts and are performed to test ideas. Instructional strategies include: small group discussions, labeled drawings, writings, and concept mapping. Teachers can use the ideas of students in their class, ideas from other classes, and ideas from texts, databases, or other sources for class explorations, examinations, and discussions.

Written

Describe safety equipment and requirements that should be standard in a middle grade science classroom and/or laboratory. Refer to the district Secondary Science Chairperson's Safety Resource Manual. Check chemicals, goggles, and appropriate storage of materials. Rooms should have proper ventilation and proper flammable storage cabinets. The equipment would depend on the level and science lesson/objectives. General equipment must include goggles. It is important to know what to do if an accident occurs during class. If applicable, fire extinguisher, eye wash, fire blanket, etc.

Sample general interview questions:

- Tell me about yourself and your teaching experience.
- Do you accept constructive criticism and feedback? How do you handle receiving feedback?
- Describe what your classroom would look like.
- Tell me about your favorite lesson.
- How do you use data in your classroom?
- How do you differentiate instruction in your classroom?
- Have you ever had an opportunity where you co-taught? How do you feel about teaching with another person in the room?
- Are there any extracurricular activities or sports that you are interested in sponsoring/coaching?