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### Job Search Guide for Teachers: A Comprehensive Overview

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## Creating Your Credentials File and Ensuring Its Accuracy

### What is the purpose of a Credentials File?

- A credentials file provides a school district with crucial information: it documents your professional training, including your certification. For legal and practical reasons we have created guidelines governing the appropriate content of a file and procedures for releasing your file which contains confidential material.

### How do I create a Credentials File?

- Registration and general release authorization forms necessary to establish your file are located at the end of this document. Return them to the Career Center in Old Main 013 to establish your file.
- You are solely responsible for ordering and compiling your credentials file and for monitoring the contents of your file to ensure that your credentials are accurate and current.

### What are the Career Center requirements for the content of a Credentials File?

- Your file should contain high quality copies of original documents. (Transcripts and confidential letters of recommendation are exceptions to this rule.) Your originals should be kept safely in your own files.

Please include the following documents in your file to ensure that an employer can fully evaluate your professional and legal ability to accept a position.

- **Proof of Certification.** Public schools cannot hire you without certification. As a student at Canisius, you will be working with the Education office to file for NYS certification, so be certain to contact the School of Education and complete the necessary state forms. Once you receive your NYS certification, place a good copy of it in your file. If you are a new teaching professional still waiting for your certification you will want to include the form letter available from the School of Education verifying that you are about to be certified. The School of Education provides this form letter but you must request the letter and have it sent to your file.

- **NYS Certification Tests (optional)**. Submit copies of your test scores, including LAST, ATS-W, ATS-P or other certification tests, and submit them to us as soon as you receive them.
- **Unofficial Copies of Your Transcripts**. Submit your request to the Registrar's office. We do not accept official transcripts. If an employer requests an official transcript, it is your responsibility to contact the registrar's office to have your official transcripts sent directly to the school district(s) to which you are applying.
- **Letters of Recommendation**. We recommend that you include 3-5 letters of recommendation. Ideally, letters should be provided by supervising and co-operating teachers, school administrators, college faculty, and employers or advisors **who are familiar with your teaching background, your academic performance in your subject area(s), and your overall rapport with students.**
- Letters written by your co-operating teachers or other teaching colleagues and written on school or district letterhead are particularly authoritative. Your supervising teacher may ask that you provide a recommendation form. If so, recommendation forms are available for your convenience in the Career Center. **If you choose to use these forms, you will need to decide whether you'll want to retain or waive your right to read those recommendations.**
- When updating your file, you need to include letters which offer the most recent evidence of your professional abilities and determine which letters are most important to your candidacy. Remove letters that are over 3 years old unless they are extraordinary testaments to your abilities as a teacher or counselor.
- **Resumes**. We ask that 1 copy of your resume be kept in your credentials file for reference. On some occasions, an employer may ask us to review our files and submit resumes for candidates with a particular certification area. **Any time you update your resume include the new version in your file. We cannot be responsible for discriminating between old and new resumes or various versions of your resume.**

#### **How do I ensure the accuracy of my credentials file?**

- Once you have completed the registration forms and ordered all your credentials from various sources, **it is your responsibility to visit the Career Center to review your file and verify its accuracy.** (If the file contains confidential letters, which you have waived your right to read, a Career Center advisor can review these recommendation letters for you and determine that they successfully support your candidacy.)
- If your job search takes place over an extensive period of time, you should periodically review the file to ensure its accuracy.
- If you request any changes to the contents of the file, you should again review the file for accuracy.

#### **Authorizing Release of Your File and File Fees**

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Once we receive your written authorization to send your file, it is mailed within two business days. Consistent with the Federal Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA), effective September 15, 2001 our policy on releasing credentials files is as follows:

- **You must sign a general release form.**
- **You MUST issue a request in writing and sign the request each time that you have your credentials file sent to an employer.** Your request must include the full contact name to ensure that your confidential documents are sent to the appropriate authorities.

- Please note that we cannot accept email requests as an email is not currently recognized as a legal signature.
- In the event of a documented emergency we will make every effort to facilitate the release of your file through the use of an **emergency release**. Your written request still must be sent to us within one business day.
- For your convenience please note that you may drop off requests at the Career Center office in Old Main 013 or mail requests to us at the following address:

Career Center  
Canisius College  
2001 Main Street  
Buffalo, New York 14208

- **Fees:** At your written request, the Career Center will send out your credentials file for a fee of \$5 per U.S. referral and \$7 per international referral. **New graduates will be able to mail their first five (5) credentials files at no charge.** Fees can be paid by cash, check, or money order payable to Canisius College. We reserve the right to suspend mailings of your file if you have a delinquent balance on your account. Your balance should not exceed \$25.00 and should not remain unpaid for longer than one month.
- **Scanned Credentials:** Many school districts currently use an electronic application process and require that you scan your credentials. Please contact the career center for additional information on scanning your file.

**NOTES:**

## Developing an Education Resume

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The most important aspect of writing a resume is to keep in mind its purpose. A resume is a marketing tool used to promote your skills and abilities. **It is intended to help you obtain interviews.** Your purpose is to demonstrate your abilities as a teacher, so focus on evidence you can give the employer that you will be a first rate educator. You will also want to stress transferable skills and strong work habits, etc. **An effective resume is a clear reflection of your unique skills.**

Keep in mind that there are certain resume conventions you need to be aware of in order to be taken seriously. For example, note that the tone is objective, there is a balance of print and blank space, headings are in boldface, lengthy entries take the form of bulleted lists, font is no smaller than 10 pt., etc.

### Length of Resume

- The resume **does not** have to be only one page in length. Your resume may need two pages to fully list your relevant background (i.e. student teaching/practicum, observations, relevant work experience, clubs and organizations, areas you are interested in coaching or advising, etc.).

### Contact Information

- Name, address, telephone (with area code), e-mail address should be placed at the top of your resume.
- Avoid nicknames in your name as well as in your e-mail address (**cutiepie@aol.com** is **NOT APPROPRIATE**).
- Have a proper message on your voice mail; this may be the first impression the employer has of you.

### Certification

- A resume written for education differs from a resume written for business. No objective statement is necessary as it is obvious from your certification and your application which position you want. After your contact information, begin your resume with **Certification** rather than Objective.
- **If you are about to be certified, say so.**  
For example: Candidate for New York State Initial Certification in Childhood Education.
- **If you are already certified**, the wording is even simpler:  
New York State Initial Certification in Childhood Education.
- **Canadian** candidates will need to use similar language: Candidate for Ontario Letter of Eligibility.

### Education

- List your most recent educational information first.
- Include your degree, (A.S., B.S., B.A., etc.), major, college name, city and state, minor/concentration.
- Add your GPA if it is higher than 3.0. You may want to calculate your GPA in your major and list that if it is higher than 3.0.
- List academic honors, awards, scholarships, etc.
- List study abroad experiences.

**Experience** This section will differ from other resumes in that you may want to categorize your experience into specialized sections. For example, you might use the captions: **Teaching Experience**, **Related Experience** and **Other Experience**.

- **Teaching Experience** will include any full-time teaching, substitute teaching, student teaching, education related internships, and tutoring positions.
- **Related Experience** will include experiences related to working with children such as camp counseling, summer recreation jobs, coaching, nannying, etc.

- Don't assume the reader knows exactly what you did during your student teaching or practicum's, tutoring, or observations. Make your unique experience come alive on the page by describing:
  - grades you taught, type of classroom (i.e. inclusion), type of district (i.e. rural, urban)
  - subject areas you've tutored
  - experience with students who have special needs
  - particularly effective lessons or units you designed and implemented
  - technology utilized in the classroom
  - classroom management techniques developed and utilized
  - learning theories practiced
  - extracurricular activities (class play, field trips)
  - involvement with parents
- Don't become so detail-oriented that you have nothing left to share in the interview. However, **give the reader enough information** so they can decide whether they should bring you in for an interview.
- **Additional or Other Experience** will include positions not directly relevant to education. Why include these? They illustrate other areas of knowledge you have as well as show your work ethic and transferable skills.

### Areas of Interest

- This section can be included in the resume to highlight your ability and willingness to advise student clubs, coach, and otherwise add to the school community.
- In what areas do you have enough experience and/or interest in that you would consider advising student groups? You might have the background necessary to assist with the yearbook, school newspaper, drama, debate, intramurals, band, etc.

### Professional Development

- List seminars attended and any professional organizations of which you are a member. This indicates your commitment to lifelong learning and represents a shift from student to professional.
- Not sure which professional organization to join? Ask faculty, your cooperating teacher, and supervisor what organizations they recommend or belong to themselves. A list of NCATE constituent organizations can be found at the Washington State University George B. Brain Education Library - Guide to Information Resources in Education, whose URL is, <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/educ/guide/organizations.htm>.

### Special Skills

- List any special skills that you may have such as language or technology skills. You do not have to be bilingual or a computer expert to list these skills; just be accurate, honest and truthful about your level of expertise, i.e. "basic conversational ability in Spanish", "working knowledge of PowerPoint".

### Other Sections

- Other sections of your resume could be entitled, "Extracurricular Activities", "Community Service", "Athletic Experience", "Additional Certifications", "Conferences Attended", "Presentations", etc.
- Create sections to highlight your own unique experience, and order your sections based on their relevance to teaching.

### The Final Presentation

You've completed your resume. Now it is time to **edit, edit, edit! Proofread, proofread, and proofread!** Nothing says more to an employer than typographical errors and poor grammar. Your resume and cover letter are examples of your writing ability, and if it contains errors, you may be sending a message to the employer that your

work tends to be careless and will need to be checked constantly. To ensure resume quality, have your resume reviewed by the Career Center. You can also take the following steps to ensure a perfect resume:

### **Content**

- Spell check, but don't rely on spell check to find misplaced or misused words!
- Have someone review your grammar
- Have another person proofread. Remember, the more people that check it over the better!

### **Design**

- Choose white or cream resume paper, 8 1/2 x 11 inches
- Create an attractive heading including your name and contact information
- Print on one side of paper only
- Use a 10 to a 12 point non-decorative font. Suggested fonts include Times New Roman, Garamond, Book Antiqua no smaller than 11pt) or Arial (no smaller than 10pt).
- Choose one font and stick to it
- Do not staple your resume. Districts may be making multiple copies of it and do not want to have to remove the staples.
- Leave one inch margins at the top and left side at a minimum. You can sometimes cheat on the bottom and right margins - try using .75 or .50 in a pinch.

### **Ten and a Half Ways to Improve your Resume:**

1. Use a bulleted format.
2. List information in the order that is most important to the reader.
3. Eliminate the word "duties" and other similar language from your resume. Focus on your accomplishments.
4. Cut the clutter. Eliminate unnecessary words such as "the", "and", and "a".
5. Use action oriented, strong verbs such as: "engaged, developed, taught, assisted, achieved".
6. Describe past activities that highlight the skills needed for the new position.
7. Don't get hung up on cramming everything on one page. You have a great story to tell, tell it!
8. Focus, Focus, Focus. Sharpen the focus of your resume.
9. Use appropriate education-related jargon, but be aware that some jargon may be unique to you.
10. Read, Re-Read and Edit.
- 10 ½. A Tool - Your resume is but one tool to be used in your job search. Using it in conjunction with networking will lead you on a successful path to obtaining your ideal teaching job.

### **Cover Letters: Making a Good First Impression**

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Your cover letter is an opportunity to provide an employer with some insights into who you are and what you can do for him/her. It demonstrates that you can organize your thoughts and express yourself clearly and concisely. This is particularly important for educators, as your cover letter is often viewed as a writing sample. Your cover letter reveals to an employer:

- How well you communicate
- Your level of professionalism
- Insights into your personality
- Your accomplishments and qualifications
- Your attention to detail

Typically, the cover letter is one page. It has a beginning, middle and end. The beginning states the purpose, or indicates the position for which you are applying. The middle is your story and describes what you can do for your

employer. It should include quantifiable accomplishments and examples of your experiences as they relate to the position for which you are applying. Next to your resume, your cover letter is the single best opportunity you have to demonstrate to an employer that you are worthy of further consideration.

### Preparation:

Before you put pen to paper, or mouse to computer, there are some steps you should take which will enable you to present the best possible impression on your future employer. Consider the following:

- **What is the district looking for?** Which skills, experiences and accomplishments will be an asset to this particular district?
- **What are the qualities you bring to this district?** Research the district and analyze what specific skills, abilities, and experiences match the goals or vision of this district.
- **Match your experience to the job.** Mention accomplishments that give credence to the qualities that you mentioned above.
- **Why do you want to work for this district?** What do you know about their mission, values and goals that relates to your own background and objectives?

### Cover Letter Format:

- **Opening Paragraph:** should introduce who you are and why you are writing. Are you writing to apply to a specific position within the district? If so, how did you hear of the opening? If this is a referral, mention that in your opening paragraph (with the referral's permission).
- **Middle Paragraph (or two):** Sell the reader on why you are a viable candidate. "Working part time developing unique lessons for children with special needs has provided me with a variety of experiences and reinforced my desire to pursue a career in instructional design." Connect the dots: show off your knowledge of the district and highlight experiences from your educational and/or professional background that "match" the vision, needs, or goals of the district. Don't rehash your entire resume, simply point out the things that make you a good fit for the district.
- **Last Paragraph:** This is where you let the reader know that you are available at *their convenience* for an interview, and let them know how to reach you. Thank them for their time and consideration. Indicate that you are looking forward to hearing from them soon and are excited about discussing your qualifications in person.

### Rules of the Road:

- Tailor your letter to the position and district. Address the letter to the appropriate official (i.e. superintendent, director of human resources). Spell their name and title correctly, use Mr. Ms. or Dr. appropriately. If you are not sure, call the district to find out.
- Talk more about what you can do for the district than what they can do for you.
- Convey focused career goals.
- Be positive. Use clear and concise language. Don't ramble.
- Provide accomplishments. Use examples.
- If this is a networking contact, be sure to mention the contact's name in the letter, i.e. "Dr. Jones recommended that I contact you regarding potential opportunities in the Williamsville School District."
- One page only, unless the employer directs you to provide more information than can be contained on one page.
- Check and recheck your work. There is no room for typos and misspelled words.

# Margaret McNeill

1927 Belfast Street • Buffalo, New York 14215 • 716-333-3333 • mmcn@wzrd.com

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## CERTIFICATION

Candidate for Initial New York State Certification in Childhood Education (1-6)

## EDUCATION

### **Canisius College, Buffalo, New York**

*Master of Science in Education*, expected January 2006

QPA 3.6/4.0

### **Buffalo State College, Buffalo, New York**

*Bachelor of Arts in Broadcasting*, May 2001

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### **Sweet Home Central School District, Amherst, New York**

*Per Diem Substitute Teacher - Elementary (K-6)*, January 2005-Present

- Successfully administer daily lessons such as mathematics and English language arts in a clear and effective manner
- Maintain goals and standards established by the school and teacher; enforce classroom management plan

### **Willow Ridge Elementary School, Amherst, New York**

*Student Teacher - Grade 5*, March-May 2005

- Successfully taught math, reading, science and social studies in a class with three international students
- Created a currency system for use in an economics unit
- Developed and implemented a behavior modification program that rewarded positive behavior
- Effectively used Everyday Math in the classroom
- Initiated art and writing project which established a pen pal relationship with deployed members of 914<sup>th</sup> Airlift Reserve Unit at Niagara Falls, NY Air Force Base
- Organized and created an interactive learning center and bulletin board that incorporated many mnemonic reading and writing strategies
- Engaged parents in students' learning through development of classroom newsletter

### **Public School 17, Buffalo, New York**

*Student Teacher - Grade 3*, January-March 2005

- Developed and implemented a Healthy Kid Nutrition Unit with daily lesson plans addressing NYS standards
- Prepared students for New York State Exams in ELA, mathematics, social studies and science
- Initiated contact with parents and provided written progress reports
- Facilitated and monitored a guided reading group focused on writing, vocabulary and phonics which incorporated many effective reading, writing and listening strategies for regular education, special needs, and at risk students
- Organized and created an interactive learning center and bulletin board that incorporated the 4 step scientific process with hands-on experiments and an art and writing project

## OTHER EXPERIENCE

M&T Bank, Buffalo, New York, *Customer Service Manager*, July 2001-January 2005

Enterprise Rent-a-Car, Cheektowaga, New York, *Sales Associate/Assistant Manager*, October 2000-July 2001

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Western New York Food Bank, collect and sort donations, 1999-present

Habitat for Humanity, laborer and builder, 2001-2004

St. Peter's Church, youth group leader, 2000-2001

*Please list your references on a separate page.*

Margaret McNeill  
1927 Belfast Street  
Buffalo, New York 14215

March 1, 2005

Mr. John E. Smith  
Director of Human Resources  
Sweet Home Central School District  
1901 Sweet Home Road  
Amherst, New York 14228

Dear Mr. Smith:

I am writing to express my interest in a position as an Elementary Teacher in the Sweet Home Central School District. I have enclosed my resume for your review and consideration, including a list of references who would welcome your inquiry about my qualifications.

I am familiar with the quality of the educational system in your district and your commitment to consistently provide innovative instructional approaches which respond to students as individuals. I am confident that I can maintain those high standards as a member of your faculty. My resume details the experience and education that have prepared me for a career in teaching, including a Master's degree from Canisius College and a unique background in broadcasting and media.

I recently completed my student teaching experience at Willow Ridge Elementary School, and I am currently working as a substitute teacher in the Sweet Home district. As a student teacher and substitute teacher, the excellent interpersonal and communication skills I developed from my background in broadcasting have proven to be a valuable asset in the classroom, and in my working relationships with colleagues, administrators and parents. My experience in the use of media technology helps me create a fresh and exciting learning environment for the students and allows me flexibility in responding to different learning styles.

The foundation of my philosophy as a teacher is the belief that every child has the ability to learn in a supportive educational environment. My goal is to create a positive classroom experience that communicates with multiple learning styles, and nurtures the unique gifts and potential of each student. As a result, students will gain knowledge, self-esteem, responsibility and independent thinking skills.

I would like an opportunity to meet with you to discuss my qualifications for this position. Please contact me at your convenience at 716-333-3333 or [mmcn@wzrd.com](mailto:mmcn@wzrd.com). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Margaret McNeill

Enc.

# Nancy Jeanne Carson

158 Oak Court • Port Colborne, Ontario, L3K 6B6 • (905) 835-1987 • E-mail: carsonn3@inter-pc.com

## CERTIFICATION

Candidate for Letter of Eligibility, Ontario College of Teachers

## EDUCATION

**Candidate for Teaching Certificate in Childhood Education (1-6) QPA 4.0/4.0**

Canisius College, Buffalo, New York

**Honours Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Commerce**

Laurentian University, Sudbury, Ontario

May 2004

**Ontario Secondary School Diploma**

Port Colborne High School, Port Colborne, Ontario

June 1995

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Pleasant Valley School, Dundas, Ontario**

March 2005 – Present

*Student Teacher (8 weeks) – Grade 3*

- Prepare lessons for all subject areas and taught both independently and cooperatively with the classroom teacher
- Developed a unit on static electricity and magnetism, successfully utilizing bulletin boards and hands-on experiments
- Work cooperatively with classroom teacher and music and arts teachers with lessons relating to the book *Prairie Born*, stressing music and images of the Canadian prairie
- Created and implemented a unit on “Community Helpers”, which included organizing an emergency room physician’s visit to the classroom.

**Our Lady of Grace, Ridgeway, Ontario**

January – March 2005

*Student Teacher (8 weeks) – Grade 2*

- Observed classroom instruction and daily routines, worked interactively with teacher and students to develop classroom rules
- Assisted classroom teacher with literature circles, working side by side with students needing additional help
- Developed interactive bulletin boards on various children’s books such as *The Snowy Day* and *Polar Express*
- Tutored students in basic reading and writing skills, using site words and flashcards
- Assisted classroom teacher with running records
- Attended school board-sponsored reading workshops on guided reading, questioning strategies and literature circles

**Catholic Central School, Buffalo, New York**

September – December 2004

*Practicum (90 hours) – Grade 5*

- Observed classroom instruction and daily routines
- Developed and implemented a six week Canadian culture unit with daily lesson plans
- Instructed Thanksgiving art lesson, utilizing multi-media including computer images
- Introduced two-week unit on Olympic Games
- Introduced co-operative learning to the class

## RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

**Volunteer, Hamilton Health Sciences Corporation, Special Needs Program**

November 2000-June 2003

- Worked one-on-one with ten year old special needs child
- Provided individual tutoring to improve literacy in reading, writing and listening skills
- Assisted with social development through games and sports activities

## OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Royal Bank of Canada

January 1996-October 2000

*Executive Account Manager*

- Supervised wide range of branch operations
- Provided mentoring and training for employees at all levels
- Managed multiple projects and priorities

## REFERENCES

Available Upon Request

# Jean M. Lynch

500 Vanderbilt Ave., Buffalo, New York 14214  
716-123-4567 / jml@aol.com

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## CERTIFICATION

New York State Initial Certification in Childhood Education (1-6)  
New York State Certificate Provisional Certification in Reading

## EDUCATION

**Master of Education in Reading, 2003**  
Canisius College, Buffalo, New York  
GPA 3.9/4.0

**Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, 2000**  
Ohio University, Athens, Ohio  
GPA 3.5/4.0

## STUDY ABROAD

**London Metropolitan University, Summer 1998**  
Extensive courses in education and reading  
Volunteered at Community Service Center as a reading tutor  
Backpacked throughout eastern and western Europe

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### **Teacher, Grade 6**

*St. Gregory's School, Williamsville, New York September 2003-present*

- Facilitate instruction in mathematics, reading, writing, spelling, and science
- Successfully prepare students for New York State exams in math, science, and English/language arts
- Provide biweekly written evaluations to parents; organize bi-monthly parent-teacher meetings
- Initiated kindergarten/sixth grade reading partnership program to promote literacy within the school
- Design and supervise service projects, including a district-wide recycling program and food drive
- Organize and create interactive learning centers and bulletin boards in order to engage students in learning about world events and cultures

### **Title I Reading and Math Long Term Substitute, Grade 3 and Grade 6**

*Follow Through Urban Learning Laboratory, Buffalo, New York February-May 2004*

- Facilitated whole group instruction in reading and math; adapted lessons for special needs and at-risk students
- Identified and assessed academically challenged students, developed reading and math buddies program to connect challenged and gifted students
- Designed and implemented small group and individual enrichment programs
- Directed school-wide Celebration of Literacy including a school-wide read-a-thon, solicited prize donations from local businesses

## RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

### **Swimming Coach**

*Tonawanda Aquatics Center, Tonawanda, New York June 1996-present*

- Design and implement training program for swimmers, ages 5-12
- Establish and maintain written and oral communication with parents through weekly newsletter
- Organize and facilitate athletic and social events

### **Tutor**

*North Bailey Community Center, Buffalo, New York September 1999-present*

- Provide tutoring in all subject areas for elementary, middle and high school students
- Facilitate learning in mathematics, social studies, science, reading and writing

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- St. Vincent DePaul Dining Room, volunteer food server, 1996-1998
- Greater Buffalo YMCA, tutor and mentor for afterschool program, 1997-1998
- Habitat for Humanity, spring break trip planner and worker, 1993-1995

## HONORS

- Rhodes Scholar Nominee 1996
- Division I swimming scholarship recipient 1992-1996

## ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

- American Red Cross CPR, First Aid, Lifeguard, and Water Safety Instruction
- United States Swim Coach

*List your references on a separate page.*

# Mark Carson

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123 Anywhere Lane • Kenmore, New York 14217 • 716-111-2222 • carson@aol.com

**CERTIFICATION:** Candidate for New York State Certification in Physical Education, September 2005

## EDUCATION AND HONORS

**Bachelor of Science in Physical Education** GPA: 3.3/4.0

Canisius College, Buffalo, New York. May 2001

- Deans List: Four Semesters.
- Course highlights include: Adapted Physical Education, Teaching Cooperative Activities, and Teaching Wellness and Fitness.
- New York State Certified in CPR, First Aid and Lifeguarding.
- Participated in various workshops on Child Abuse and Drug and Alcohol Awareness.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Student Teacher. Lafayette High School, Buffalo, New York 14213. April-May 2004**

- Designed and facilitated a unit on Cup Stacking, where students engaged in hands-on activities that improved hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills.
- Assisted teaching staff with unit on volleyball; facilitated age-appropriate skills on passing, setting and serving.
- Modified activities for students with special needs; assisted occupational therapists with activities.
- Assisted health teacher with student research project on Communicable Diseases through internet research which helped students become aware of healthy lifestyle habits.

**Student Teacher. Early Childhood Center, Public School 17, Buffalo, New York. February-April 2004**

- Assessed abilities and developed Physical Education lessons for first grade children.
- Videotaped and reviewed each lesson with college professor to adapt and revise lessons.
- Assisted with after-school programs.
- Created bulletin board on Sports and Good Health. Designed and instructed related lessons; adapted lessons for students with special needs.
- Participated in Parents Night.

## COACHING AND RELATED EXPERIENCE

**Coach. Midget Baseball League, Lockport, New York. February 1998-present.**

- Coached 13-14 yr. old youths in the fundamental skills of baseball, emphasizing fair play and sportsmanship.
- Assisted with scheduling games and promoting league to community.

**Lifeguard and Swimming Instructor. YMCA, Tonawanda, New York 1998-present.**

- Supervised Olympic size pool, 12-15 hours per week.
- Taught introductory swim classes to youths, ages 12-15, and adults.
- Taught watercise classes for seniors.

## ATHLETIC AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

- Member, Canisius College Baseball Team, 1997-2000
- Canisius College Physical Education Majors Club, 1999-present.
- Volunteer, Special Olympics, 1997-present.

**AFFILIATIONS:** Member, Association for Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. 1998-present.

## Mark Carson

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123 Anywhere Lane • Kenmore, New York 14217 • 716-111-2222 • carson@aol.com

### REFERENCES:

Dr. Greg K. Reeds  
Chair  
Physical Education  
Canisius College  
2001 Main Street  
Buffalo, NY 14208  
716-888-2952

Dr. James Sylvis  
Associate Professor  
Physical Education  
Canisius College  
2001 Main Street  
Buffalo, NY 14208  
716-888-2953

Mike Smith  
Aquatics Director  
Belmont YMCA  
Tonawanda, NY 14150  
716-111-2222

Sandra Smith  
Physical Education Teacher  
School 17  
Buffalo, NY 14207  
716-999-9999

Orlando Perez  
Physical Education Teacher  
Lafayette High School  
Buffalo, NY 14207  
716-666-6666

### **Complete credentials file available upon request from:**

Canisius College Career Center  
2001 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14208  
716-888-2475 (phone), 716-888-3212 (fax)

# SUSAN JOHNSON

123 Park Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14214

(716) 845-9582 ♦ sjohn@aol.com

## CERTIFICATION

New York State Provisional Certification in English and Spanish

## EDUCATION

CANISIUS COLLEGE, BUFFALO, NY

**Master of Science Candidate in Secondary Education**, May 2003

**Bachelor of Science in English Education**, May 2000

Participated in workshops on ESL, Whole Language, Child Abuse, and Conflict Resolution

## HONORS

**Sigma Tau Delta**, *International English Honor Society*, February 2003

**Kappa Delta Pi**, *International Honor Society in Education*, March 2000

**Alpha Sigma Nu**, *National Jesuit Honor Society*, February 1999

**Dean's List**, Eight semesters

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lafayette High School, Buffalo, New York March - May 2003

**Student Teacher. 10th grade English.**

- Developed and utilized own lesson plans for Honors and Regents students on the Victorian novel.
- Assisted with annual musical, *Anything Goes*, and with Gospel choir.
- Created engaging activities to improve and expand test-taking strategies.
- Provided supplementary tutoring for at-risk students to prepare them for final examinations.
- Acted as advisor for after-school reading club.
- Selected reading material to reflect the economic and ethnic diversity of the school population.

Iroquois Middle School, Elma, New York January - March 2003

**Student Teacher. 7th and 8th grade Language Arts.**

- Worked within a team teaching situation.
- Provided instruction in Math, Language Arts, and Social Studies.
- Implemented review sessions and peer learning groups.
- Used *School Island* internet-based review and assessment tool to prepare for Regent's exams.
- Engaged students in writing process by creating and implementing unit based on Six + 1 Traits of Writing

Canisius College Tutoring Center, Buffalo, New York 1999-2000

**Tutor for college students.**

- Provided assistance with all phases of the writing process.
- Tutored Spanish language and culture.

## RELATED EXPERIENCE:

Park School of Buffalo, NY Summer Day Camp

**Camp Counselor**, Summers 1998-2000

- Head Counselor, 2000
- Assistant Counselor, 1998-2000

**AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

Tutoring: English, Social Studies, and Mathematics  
Advising: Yearbook, Newspaper, Drama Club, and Debate Club  
Coaching: Volleyball, Field Hockey

**COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Volunteer with Buffalo and Erie County Girl Scouts  
Volunteer, Literacy Volunteers of Buffalo and Erie County  
Actress and Set Designer, Theatre of Youth (local children's theatre group)

**EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

The Griffin, Canisius College Undergraduate Student Newspaper 1996-2000  
•**Managing Editor**, Spring, 2000  
•**News Editor and Writer**, 1998-1999  
•**Feature Writer**, 1996-1998  
\*Willing to assist in any related school activities or clubs

**OTHER EXPERIENCE**

Kaufmann's, Cheektowaga, New York 1996-Present.  
**Sales Associate**

**ATHLETICS**

Canisius College Volleyball Team, 1997-2000  
Amherst YMCA Women's Field Hockey League, 1997-1998

*List your references on a separate page.*

# LORI P. CLAXTON

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## CERTIFICATION

Candidate for New York State Provisional Certification in Chemistry (7-12) and General Science (7-9)

## EDUCATION

Canisius College, Buffalo, New York

Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education (Chemistry), May 2000

QPA 3.8/4.0

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Hoover Middle School, Tonawanda, New York

**Student Teacher**, March-May 2000

- Taught 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade science classes units on animals and plants
- Utilized a team teaching model to facilitate interdisciplinary learning

Niagara-Wheatfield High School, Sanborn, New York

**Student Teacher**, January-March 2000

- Developed and implemented own lesson plans for Regents Chemistry
- Presented lessons on Covalent Bonding, Electronegativity, and Molecular Shapes
- Supervised Chemistry labs using experiments to support Regents curriculum requirements
- Held after school review sessions for the Chemistry and Biology Regents

LaSalle Middle School, Niagara Falls, New York

**Pre-Student Teaching**, September-December 2000

- Observed and assisted teachers in two science classrooms
- Tutored students and graded assignments
- Participated in open house, team meetings, and PTA meetings

## OTHER EXPERIENCE

Dick's Sporting Goods, Amherst, New York

**Sales Associate**, August 1998-December 1999

Country Kitchen Family Restaurant, Amherst, New York

**Waitress/Hostess**, July 1996-August 1998

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Canisius College Women's Volleyball Team, 1996-2000
- Alternative Spring Break, Christian Appalachia Project, 1997 & 1998
- Canisius College Little Theater, 1997-2000

## AREAS OF INTEREST

- Coaching volleyball, basketball, track
- Drama, music, performing arts

*List your references on a separate page.*

## The Job Search: Contacting School Districts (U.S.) or School Boards (Canada) and Related Job Search Issues

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- It's a good idea to visit websites or phone or write to the districts to learn about each individual application process and when necessary request an application. In the United States, some schools will require that you send them a resume and request for application while others will first want an application - **every district is different**. The Career Center has a complete list of addresses for WNY School Districts or visit [www.wnyric.org](http://www.wnyric.org) and click on Districts/BOCES. The Career Center can help you in locating similar web and print resources for other areas of the country.
- Each year, Canisius participates in **Teacher Recruitment Days (TRD)** which is held in April. Information and details are generally available by mid-late January on the TRD web site, [www.trd.org](http://www.trd.org). Two additional and very useful sites include [www.wnyschooljobs.org/](http://www.wnyschooljobs.org/) which was established and intended to serve school districts in all eight counties of WNY as well as the New York State education job search site [www.EdJobFair.org/](http://www.EdJobFair.org/).
- **Canadian educators** may attend the **Annual Canadian Teacher Fair** which is held in December. Information and details are available at the Career Center or on the Career Center website, [www.canisius.edu/career](http://www.canisius.edu/career). Canadian educators will find job search resources at The Ontario Ministry of Education website: [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/distoff/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/distoff/index.html). Likewise, Canadian educators will want to see the comprehensive job search site, Education Canada Network, at [www.educationcanada.com/](http://www.educationcanada.com/), which describes itself as Canada's largest, most comprehensive and up-to-date educational e-recruitment network resource. A complete handbook for new members of the Ontario College of Teachers is available at [www.oct.on.ca](http://www.oct.on.ca).

Please see the "Resources for Educators" section of this document for other resources.

## Networking and the Hidden Job Market: An Essential Part of Your Job Search

We've discussed how to contact school districts and school boards, teacher recruitment fairs, and web-based job postings in relation to your job search. But that is only about 20 percent of the story. Did you know that about 80 percent of positions are typically filled **BEFORE** they are ever advertised? These jobs are in what is called "the hidden job market", and that is why developing strong networking skills is essential in any job search for educators.

### What is Networking?

- Networking is defined as the ongoing process of **building and maintaining personal and professional relationships** through reciprocal communication and sharing information with individuals and groups of individuals.
- Networking is **NOT** about using people to find a job. It is about **CONNECTING** with others to promote yourself. Networking is a source of gaining information.

Want to learn more about developing your network? Read the Career Center's Guide to Networking included in this packet.

## Developing an Interview Portfolio

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### Portfolios as a Job Search Tool and Means of Professional Development

- Educators have discovered what professionals in a wide variety of fields ranging from the arts to journalism, photography, public relations and architecture have long understood. A well-prepared portfolio can create a clear image of who you are as a professional. Whether it contains art work, writing clips, photographs-- or lesson plans, rubrics, and examples of student work-- a portfolio can be an extremely effective tool for documenting any professional's experience, growth, and accomplishments. As a result, it can also be a tool for marketing yourself successfully, for getting the job or promotion. (Kimeldorf, *Portfolio Power*, 11-16) Educators, who have come to understand the value of portfolios for authentically assessing student achievements, have learned to use portfolios to assess their own achievements, to reflect on how to continue to grow as educators, and to advance their careers.
- Many educators running job searches put significant amounts of time into preparing an interview portfolio.<sup>1</sup> Yet many educators have also discovered that sometimes even in the most competitive and thorough of interviewing processes they are never asked for, or even allowed to display, their portfolios. Other educators, overwhelmed by the demands of student teaching and other responsibilities, never compile portfolios, only to find themselves in the unfortunate situation of not being able to present a portfolio when a potential employer asks. Still others will say, literally, "My portfolio got me my job."

**So, why should you put time and effort into building an interview portfolio? What if it won't necessarily be reviewed during your interviews? Consider the following rationale:**

- Portfolios are far more than just marketing tools to get a job. In fact, if you approach your portfolio simply as a job search tool the results are far less likely to be successful.
- The process of assembling a well-developed and organized portfolio is one which enables you to assess your professional identity, to build a complete, fully integrated perspective on who you are as a self-aware practitioner of your craft. In collecting and organizing the artifacts in your portfolio you will be practicing self-assessment. The result should lead to a stronger professional identity, increased confidence, and stronger performance in interviews and other interactions with potential employers.
- Even if you literally don't get the chance to "show" your portfolio, the process of creating it will show in your ability to answer interview questions with specificity and precision.

**Once you commit to creating a portfolio, what makes a portfolio successful? What should it contain, how should it be organized, and what should it look like?**

### The Content of an Effective Interview Portfolio

The content of an effective portfolio includes documents or artifacts of all kinds. The following are examples of what you might want to include. Please keep in mind that these are suggestions. Every portfolio is unique, and may contain artifacts in addition to those noted here. And of course, no one portfolio can or should present everything you have ever done. Instead, think of your portfolio as an integration of those documents which best

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<sup>1</sup> Please be aware that there are many types of portfolios in addition to Interview Portfolios. For a representative discussion of different types of portfolios see in particular *Developing A Professional Teaching Portfolio* (Costantino and DeLorenz, University of Maryland, College Park, 1998.) For additional information see the source list included in this handout.

help to communicate your professional self, your goals, philosophy, methods and successes. Some possible materials or artifacts for inclusion in your portfolio include.<sup>2</sup>:

- Teaching Philosophy: a statement of your teaching goals and approaches.
- List of Lessons/Units taught and Lesson plans.
- Rubrics and other assessment tools.
- Exams and quizzes, graded and ungraded.
- Handouts, problem sets, worksheets.
- Examples of visual aides: charts, graphs, diagrams, flowcharts.
- Descriptions of uses of computers and other technology in teaching.
- Samples of student work including students' papers, essays, or creative works.
- Graded work from students of varying abilities.
- Examples of your written feedback on student work.
- Student feedback on their learning experiences.
- Case studies.
- Self-Reflective entries which reveal your plans for further improving a lesson or unit
- Unsolicited letters of appreciation from parents and students.
- Credentials: Resume, Certification(s), Teaching Evaluations, Awards, Recommendations, etc.
- Photographs with captions.

<sup>2</sup>The ideas for portfolio entries included in this list are based on standard practices but also drawn from suggestions from various sources, in particular *Developing A Professional Teaching Portfolio* (Costantino and DeLorenzo, University of Maryland, College Park, 1998.) and Iowa State University's Center for Teaching Excellence.

**Not only should the reader find interesting artifacts in the portfolio, you need to help the reader appreciate the relationships between the artifacts within the portfolio.** Consider the relationships between your artifacts. How can you make them clear to your reader? For example, lesson plans can be presented in combination with samples of student work; a sample of an assessment tool for student's work and descriptions of the assessment process can be combined to give the reader an overview of the learning process. And all these artifacts may lead to a reflective piece in which you offer an assessment not only of what your students learned, but what you learned as well. What worked and how do you know? What could you do next time to assure even better results?

### **The Appearance and Organization of an Effective Interview Portfolio**

Of course, the success of the portfolio is determined not only by the specific documents or artifacts you put in it, but by the organization of the documents within the portfolio. This, in combination with the general appearance of the portfolio, will say a good deal about your professional standards.

- In terms of **appearance**, your portfolio needs to be assembled in an attractive binder. It isn't necessary to spend a fortune on an Italian leather folio, or a binder enhanced by silk-screened art. Focus on creating a neat, functional, visually attractive document.
- **Neatness, logical organization and attention to details of format can make all the difference.** Most office supply stores offer a wide variety of binders in many price ranges as well as other organizational tools to make your portfolio easy for the reader to use. A quick list of strategies to help create organization and aesthetically appealing appearance includes, but is not limited to:

- **A specifically worded, logically ordered table of contents for the portfolio.** Your portfolio and corresponding table of contents maybe organized in a number of ways, but one approach is to structure the portfolio around **teaching performance categories** that are consistent with state and national standards. These categories typically include:
  - Knowledge of Content Areas and Educational Theory
  - Planning Delivery and Assessment of Instruction
  - Classroom Management and Organization
  - Human Relationship Skills
  - Professional Qualities
- **Labeled or numbered dividers to define the sections of the portfolio noted in the table of contents.** Your dividers may have clearly labeled tabs and/or color-coded labels and numbering. Office supply stores offer preprinted, blank tables -- you can type in the information in a space provided -- and corresponding tabs.
- **Consistent layout and format of artifacts and samples.** Many of your classroom materials and handouts will have unique typefaces, artwork, etc. designed to get the student's attention. There will be a good deal of visual appeal as a result. But you can have too much of a good thing. So, when it comes to writing the special materials intended to pull the portfolio together, be consistent and simple. In writing introductions, explanations of lessons, captions for pictures, self-reflections, etc., use uniform margins and use the same font in all these documents. Avoid using too many typographical special effects in a document. Too much boldfacing, italics, and underlining can distract the reader from your content rather than highlight it.
- **Paper and graphics appropriate for subject and grade level.** The cute stationary with the ABC's may be a fine choice for first grade materials, but the paper with the children holding hands is not the best choice for a handout for high school business education materials.

### Mini-Portfolios

What can you leave behind after an interview to underscore your professional abilities? Try creating a mini-portfolio: two pages which offer a condensed version of a lesson or unit. Can you offer the lesson plan, major handout, student work sample, and assessment tool for the science unit on photosynthesis? The reading unit on *The Polar Express*? The math unit on fractions? Take those six pages and with the aide of a good copy machine or a computer program like MS Publisher reduce the materials so you can fit two or three pages on one page in a visually interesting but still readable layout. You can leave this with an employer to further showcase your abilities. Some students have burned CD versions of a mini portfolio to leave with interviewers. **The Career Center Library has many additional resources for learning about and creating portfolios.**

### Interviewing Tips

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All of your painstaking efforts on your resume and cover letter have paid off and you've landed an interview! Here is where some students tend to ignore a crucial piece of an effective job search. Some students think that they can go into an interview and speak about their experiences without extensive preparation. Actually, this is the time when **PREPARATION IS CRITICAL!** The more prepared you are, the more comfortable you will feel demonstrating your talents and expertise to a school district. The following are some tips to help you prepare for that all-important interview:

- Make an appointment to conduct a **PRACTICE INTERVIEW**. A career counselor will videotape a mock interview and will then review the tape with you. You can practice your interviewing skills as often as you want (which should be until you are satisfied with your interviewing style). This is beneficial for you to see what you do well and what you need to improve during interviews.
- When preparing for interviews, try to view yourself from the employers' perspective. They will want to know about your teaching or counseling experiences, creative approaches you may have developed, and how you've integrated your learning into your work. If you have examples of your work, bring them.
- Teachers, be sure to talk about your classroom management style. Tell them about your interest in coaching or advising various student clubs.
- If you were involved in extra-curricular activities while student teaching or during your practicum, tell the interviewers about it. They want to hear what you can bring to their districts and community overall.

### Sample Interview Questions

For extensive discussions of interview questions please see the AAEE Job Search Guide and the Teacher Recruitment Days website at [trd.org/](http://trd.org/)

Here are some very brief examples as well:

- Why do you want to teach/be a counselor?
- What is your teaching philosophy?
- What aspects of the NYS Standards seem most important and why?
- Tell me about your classroom management style.
- Describe your rapport with students/clients.
- Are you creative? What examples can you offer?
- How would other teachers you have worked with describe you? How would your students describe you? How would school administrators describe you?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- Why do you want to work for us?
- What teaching styles/counseling methods do you use? Why?
- How would you communicate with parents and on what topics? Why?

One of the best ways to answer interview questions is to use the "STAR" technique. Use the technique to give the interviewer specific examples of how you work with students, faculty, parents, etc.

- First, state the specifics of a particular **Situation**.
- Then tell what **Action** you took.
- Finally, give the **Results** of that action. This will allow you to tell an interviewer a story that demonstrates your qualities, and will make you a much more memorable candidate than one who simply speaks in generalities.

## **How to Introduce Your Portfolio During the Interview:**

- You can mention that you have a portfolio in the reference section of your resume and in your cover letter. Always bring your portfolio to interviews.
- While describing one of your accomplishments, use a sample from your portfolio to add impact.
- If you do not have the opportunity to show samples of your work during the interview, offer to send copies as a follow-up and send along with your thank you note. Or, leave a mini-portfolio behind.

Finally, keep in mind that looking for a job in education will require some time and effort; rarely do individuals find positions "overnight." The broader your search and the more options you allow, the better your chances at securing the position you want. Should relocation become an option, we'll be happy to assist with referrals, and contact information as much as possible.

## **Resources for Education Majors**

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The Career Center has many printed resources in its library that are available to Education majors as they develop their career plans and implement their job search. The Career Center staff is available to help students and alumni with their questions or use of these resources.

### **Electronic Resources:**

#### **General information, articles and resources**

- [www.education-world.com](http://www.education-world.com)
- [www.teachersplanet.com](http://www.teachersplanet.com)
- [www.teachers.net](http://www.teachers.net)
- [www.thegateway.org/](http://www.thegateway.org/)

#### **US Department of Education**

- [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

#### **Professional Development, Licensing, Certifications**

- [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)

#### **Praxis Series - State by State Requirements**

- [www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis)

### **Western New York Information**

#### **Teacher Recruitment Days**

- [www.trd.org](http://www.trd.org)

#### **WNY School Jobs**

- [www.wnyschooljobs.org](http://www.wnyschooljobs.org)

#### **School Districts**

- [www.wnyric.org](http://www.wnyric.org)

### **New York State and Other State Departments of Education**

- [www.ed.org](http://www.ed.org)
- [www.ed.gov/Programs/bastmp/SEA.htm](http://www.ed.gov/Programs/bastmp/SEA.htm)
- [www.nyeducationjobs.com](http://www.nyeducationjobs.com)
- [www.olasjobs.org](http://www.olasjobs.org) (on line application system for several regions in NYS)

### **EdJobFair**

- [www.edjobfair.org](http://www.edjobfair.org)

### **Middle Atlantic Association for School, College and University Staffing (MAASCUS)**

- [www.udel.edu/CSC/maee](http://www.udel.edu/CSC/maee)

### **National and International K-12 Job Search Sites**

- [www.academploy.com](http://www.academploy.com)
- [www.k12jobs.com](http://www.k12jobs.com)
- [www.uky.edu/education/tep/usajobs.html](http://www.uky.edu/education/tep/usajobs.html)
- [www.teachersplanet.com/script/lksearch.asp](http://www.teachersplanet.com/script/lksearch.asp)
- [www.teacherjobs.com](http://www.teacherjobs.com)
- <http://greatteacher.net>
- [www.teachers-teachers.com](http://www.teachers-teachers.com)
- [www.teachersatwork.com](http://www.teachersatwork.com)
- [www.teachers.net/careers](http://www.teachers.net/careers)
- <http://careers.education.wisc.edu/projectconnect/teacher/jobsearch.htm> /  
username: teacher  
password: aswan (*username and password must be entered in lowercase letters*)
- [www.teachforamerica.com](http://www.teachforamerica.com)
- [www.tropicalteachers.com](http://www.tropicalteachers.com)
- [www.tieonline.com](http://www.tieonline.com) (The International Educator, contact career center for username and password)
- [www.pecentral.com](http://www.pecentral.com) (Physical Education jobs)
- [www.quintcareers.com/teaching\\_jobs.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/teaching_jobs.html)

### **Canadian Education**

- Canadian Education on the Web  
[www.oise.utoronto.ca/~mpress/eduweb/eduweb.html](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~mpress/eduweb/eduweb.html)
- Education Canada  
[www.educationcanada.com/](http://www.educationcanada.com/)
- Ontario Ministry of Education  
[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/speced.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/speced.html)
- Canadian Education Research Information system  
[www.oecth.com/canada/canadian\\_education\\_system.htm](http://www.oecth.com/canada/canadian_education_system.htm)

Don't forget the annual Canadian Teacher Career Fair which is held the first week of December. Contact the Career Center for information.