

BESO Tip-February 2014

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Interview Questions

You are going on your first interview for a bilingual teaching position. You have your new professional outfit ready. You have researched the school district and the bilingual program by accessing information on the district website. You have practiced answering questions. Your portfolio is ready to share. What else do you need to do to prepare for your interview?

Generally, towards the end of the interview, you will be asked, "Do you have any questions for us?" Being prepared for this question shows the interviewers that you are serious about the position. So, what should you ask?

One common question is "When do you expect to make a decision?" This is a good question because it shows that you are interested in the position and because it gives you a guideline about how long you will need to wait to hear from the district. Another common question is "What type of support is there for new teachers?" You should pay attention to whether there is an organized support system. Are you assigned a mentor? What is the mentor's role? How often will you see your mentor? These are some follow up questions you could ask.

It is also good to ask specific questions about the bilingual program. If the topics of these questions have not been addressed in the interview, here are some questions to consider asking.

What type of bilingual program do you have? Some things to listen for-Can someone answer this question? Do the people at the school know what type of program they have?

How do you implement the _____ program? Listen carefully to determine if the description of the program matches what program they say they have.

What professional development opportunities are there for bilingual teachers? The answer should give you an idea whether professional development is differentiated for bilingual teachers.

What resources do you have for the bilingual program? Listen for whether there are resources provided for you in the students' first language.

One final question you might ask is "What bilingual support services are available for the families?" Some follow up questions are-Does the school have a bilingual family liaison? Besides the bilingual teachers, who else in the school speaks the students' first language? Are adult English classes offered? The answers to these questions will give you an idea of the level of commitment the school has towards meeting the needs of the bilingual education students and families.

Being prepared to ask questions shows that you take the interview seriously. It indicates to the interviewers that you have thought carefully about the potential teaching position, that you are knowledgeable about bilingual education, and that you are committed to students and their families. Answering the interviewers' questions is important, but so is asking your own questions. Prepare your questions ahead of time and your interview experience will be enhanced.