



NETWORKING TO FIND MUSIC EDUCATION JOBS

For those most passionate about their music, a job in music education is a natural fit. Far from being a case of "those who can't do, teach", those who take music education jobs are talented not only as artists but as teachers who want to pass their love of music on to another generation, to ensure that there is always music in the world.

Once upon a time, a degree in music education was seen as a 'fallback option'- the job that would always be there if a performing or production career didn't work out. That time is long gone now as states have cut funding for enrichment education across the country. While the job outlook for music teachers is still good, the Occupational Outlook Handbook says that jobs for musicians and teachers will grow at about average or a little faster than average rates through 2014 - school departments, private institutions and universities have the luxury of being able to be choosy about whom they hire to fill music education jobs.

One of the best ways to hear about music education jobs and openings is to establish a network of contact within the music education community. While basic networking is good, there are ways to network more effectively to concentrate your focus on finding and improving your chances of being hired for music education jobs.

Network locally.

Lucky you, you actually have three different sources of local networking that can help you narrow your job search focus. As an educator, get involved in local organizations for teachers and get your name out there. If you've made contacts while interning and practice-teaching, keep up with them, and ask their advice and guidance in your career path. By all means, let them and others know that you're looking for a job in music education. Other teachers are often the first to know that one of their own is leaving.

School department contacts are invaluable.

In most cities, the school department must post vacancies internally before advertising them to the general public. Those vacancies are often posted on a bulletin board in each school within the district. Let teacher friends and contacts know that you're looking and ask them to keep an eye out for you. Knowing that a vacancy is posted internally can give you a leg up on the competition and cue you to submit your resume and cover letter for music education jobs before they're advertised.

Network online.

Join national and local music teachers associations online, particularly those that hold regular events, symposiums and have a discussion board. Many of them post job openings for members, and more than a few allow members to post job leads and requests for job leads on their boards. Some organizations that you might consider joining include:

Technology Institute for Music Educators (<http://www.ti-me.org/>)

Music Teachers National Association (<http://www.mtna.org>)

Teachers.net Chat boards (<http://teachers.net/mentors/music/>)

The National Association for Music Education (<http://www.menc.org/>)

Keep in mind that in networking, you get out what you put in. Don't just join a group and start soliciting for music education jobs. Look for what you can offer - the more you become involved the more visible you'll become and the more willing others will be to recommend jobs to you.

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