SAMPLE Entry Survey and Interview Protocol

Purpose of the Resource

The Entry Survey and Interview Protocol are designed to help school districts and administrators gain information to better understand the factors that influence a staff member’s decision to accept the position he/she has been offered. Understanding these factors can direct schools or school districts to identify policies, supports, and resources that can support successful recruitment and retention efforts.

Overview of the Resource

The Entry Survey and Interview Protocol resource is divided into two parts. The first, a short survey, gathers broader demographic information and perspectives on the staff member’s experience entering the school or school district and what drew him/her to seek out and accept this position. The survey is suited for distribution to a staff member electronically, through the district’s human resources department, with the option for the individual completing the survey to remain anonymous. Data collected in this manner could then be shared with appropriate personnel at the district and building levels. Aggregate data might further be shared with other district program and policy stakeholders, such as school boards.

The second part is an interview protocol that can be used to solicit more in-depth and contextual information from staff entering the district. The interview may be conducted by building principals, the district superintendent, or human resources staff, depending on the circumstances, and should be conducted several months into starting the new position. Though utilizing this protocol in concert with the survey is ideal, there may be circumstances under which administrators may determine that an entry interview is neither necessary nor prudent.

Preparing for the Entry Interview

Because the entry interview requires the principal or superintendent to meet face-to-face with the educator who is beginning his or her position, it is important to create a welcoming and safe environment for the discussion. The interviewer should consider the following aspects inherent in creating such an environment:

1. **Set the tone.** Explain to the educators that the purpose of the interview is to gather more detailed feedback on their experience in an effort to help improve the onboarding support process of the school or school district. Let them know that their perspective is important and their openness and honesty is appreciated.
2. **Ensure anonymity.** Share that the information that is collected will remain anonymous and that at no time will the staff member’s name or identifying characteristics be attached to the data when they are shared with others for the purpose of school/district improvement.
3. **Allocate enough time**. Plan a sufficient amount of time for the discussion. Starting and ending on time, as well as moving intentionally and responsively through the interview, communicates the importance of the meeting’s purpose and allows the interviewer to probe further into areas of relevance.
4. **Listen actively and respond objectively**. Actively engaging in the conversation and maintaining an objective stance throughout will help the interviewer develop a better understanding of the staff member’s experience and result in more useful information.

Sample Survey

The questions from this survey can be programmed into an online survey program (e.g., SurveyMonkey), which will allow the district to more easily collect, organize, and analyze the data.

1. First and last name:: (open ended; optional)
2. School(s) at which you worked: (open ended; optional)
3. What grade band most accurately describes the position for which you have been hired?
   1. Elementary (PK–5)
   2. Middle (6–8)
   3. High school (9–12)
   4. Multiple grades/levels
   5. Other
4. Including this year, how many total years of teaching experience do you have?
   1. 0–3 years
   2. 4–6 years
   3. 7–10 years
   4. 11–15 years
   5. 16–20 years
   6. 21–25 years
   7. 26–30 years
   8. 31+ years
5. How would you classify the position you are starting? (If you are holding more than one position, please describe your primary position. In subsequent questions, please refer to that primary position for your answers.)
   1. General education
   2. Special education
   3. Resource room teacher
   4. Student teacher long-term substitute
   5. Short-term substitute
   6. Itinerant teacher (teaches in more than one school)
   7. Clinician (OT/PT/social work/guidance/nurse)
   8. Educational aide
   9. Administrator
   10. Other

**Using the categories below, please indicate whether each item was a major, moderate, minor, or not a factor in your decision to accept this position.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Major Factor | Moderate Factor | Minor Factor | Not a Factor |
| Belief in the vision, mission, and values of the school |  |  |  |  |
| Desirable school culture and climate |  |  |  |  |
| Desirable school community, including collaborations outside of the school |  |  |  |  |
| Desirable working environment, including resources and facilities |  |  |  |  |
| Reputation for having a supportive administrative leadership |  |  |  |  |
| Opportunities for decision-making autonomy |  |  |  |  |
| Opportunities for mentoring support |  |  |  |  |
| Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues |  |  |  |  |
| Opportunities for advancement in the profession, including taking on leadership roles and responsibilities |  |  |  |  |
| Opportunities to be rewarded for performance, professional growth, and/or leadership |  |  |  |  |
| Competitive salary (compared with) OUTSIDE the field of education |  |  |  |  |
| Competitive salary( compared with other positions) WITHIN the field of education |  |  |  |  |
| End of contract/temporary assignment |  |  |  |  |
| Career change |  |  |  |  |
| Desirable commute |  |  |  |  |
| Relocation |  |  |  |  |

Interview Protocol

As noted in the introduction, the entry interview requires the interviewer to create a welcoming and safe environment for the discussion. The interviewer can create this environment by setting the tone, ensuring confidentiality, allocating enough time for the discussion, and actively engaging in the conversation.

Name of teacher:

Years in the school:

Years in the district:

1. How did you learn of this position?
2. What aspects of the hiring process (e.g., advertisement, interview, and follow-up) did we do well? What might we continue to work on to ensure a positive experience for our candidates?
3. I notice from your Entry Survey that you selected [X, Y, and Z] as major factors in your decision to accept this position. Since coming on board, how well would you say your expectations related to these factors been met?
4. What are you most looking forward to in your new position?
5. What are have you found most challenging about your new position?
6. What might we do more of and/or differently to help support your success?