

## REMOTE RECRUITING & HIRING TOOLKIT:

# Virtual Information Sessions

Content Level: **ENHANCE**


In lieu of in-person information sessions or job fairs, virtual events can cultivate a strong, diverse candidate pool—and help smaller or lesser-known LEAs gain the attention of more candidates. Leaders should consider how to adapt both the content and the logistics of these events to optimally fit a virtual context, while still engaging candidates. Read details on how to do this with specific steps and a timeline for planning a successful remote event.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE	ACTIVITY
<b>4 Weeks in Advance</b>	Begin planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Identify audience</li><li>✓ Identify date, time, platform</li></ul>
<b>3 Weeks in Advance</b>	Plan content and initial communications
<b>1 Week in Advance</b>	Finalize facilitation and attendance
<b>1-2 Days in Advance</b>	Rehearse information session
<b>Week of</b>	Hold event and follow up with candidates


### Begin Planning your Information Session (~4 weeks in advance)

**Identify your target audience.** Determine the audience for your information session. For instance, you may want to target candidates in certain subject areas or grade levels, new or veteran teachers, or candidates who have passed your LEA's initial screening and are preparing to interview with schools. Or, it may make more sense to hold an information session open to all candidates but then split candidates into more focused virtual break out rooms. Either way, determine who your audience will be, gather an initial list of candidates to invite, and begin to think about how you will tailor your content to their interests.

**Identify the date, time and hosting platform.** Set a date and time for your event. It may be helpful to stagger times so that more candidates can join. For instance, if your last information session took place in the early evening, consider holding your next event in the late morning.



**During Covid-19:** Zoom is temporarily offering [free unlimited use to K-12 schools.](#)



Send a calendar invite to any LEA staff who should attend. Additionally, determine the video conference platform you'll use. [Google Hangouts](#) and [Zoom](#) are popular options. Zoom's useful features include breakout rooms, recording, chat, and the ability to join by multiple devices. No matter the platform, ensure equitable access to information sessions. For instance, provide a join-by-phone call option, share the presentation afterwards, and **have an extra team member who is familiar with the platform and available to help with technical difficulties.**

## Plan Logistics and Initial Communications (~3 weeks in advance)

**Invite candidates.** Send targeted messaging to candidates inviting them to RSVP. To reach likely applicants:

- Use any **existing email or text message lists** of interested candidates
- Encourage current staff to share with their networks
- Post details about the session on any social networking or job posting sites you already use
- Reach out to soon-to-graduate candidates via [Handshake](#) or to individual schools of education.

Having candidates confirm their attendance in advance, for instance via a [Google form](#), allows you to monitor attendance and follow up afterwards. Depending on the goals of your session, you may want to cap the number of individuals who can attend and give a deadline for RSVPs. Track candidate RSVPs and be sure to follow up with non-responsive candidates about one week after the initial invitation to remind them to RSVP.

**Plan session content.** Outline your information session and then draft slides and talking points. Reach out to any **other staff members, students, and/or families** you would like to join your information session. Here are some general best practices and ideas for planning engaging virtual sessions:

- Give attendees **opportunities to interact** throughout the session. You can start with a discussion question or fun icebreaker, have participants engage via polls or games (like Kahoot), and invite questions.
- Solicit “live” interaction but also provide alternative ways to engage, like submitting questions or comments via chat, sharing anonymously via a tool like Padlet, and/or submitting questions in advance on the session registration form.
- At the beginning of the session, make sure to share an agenda, session objectives, timeline, and norms for engaging—such as informing participants that they are automatically muted and should unmute themselves to speak.

- Give candidates a sense of your school culture and community. You could invite students, family members, teachers, and/or school leaders to join or share photos and videos from schools or community events.
- If you're using Zoom, leverage the breakout room feature to engage candidates in smaller groups:
  - *Manually set up breakout rooms to create the groups you want (i.e. facilitators with groups and/or grade-level groups). If you're going to do this, plan a time when the facilitator can pause (where participants are working) to allow the facilitator time to get folks into groups.*
  - *Assign staff members to lead discussions in each breakout room*
  - *Use the 'broadcast' feature to re-post the agenda or guidance in chat and/or give time warnings (e.g. '5 minutes until we return to the whole group').*
  - *As facilitator, you can join each breakout room to listen in the way you'd circulate during an in-person session.*



For more online event tips, check out **Zoom's Online Event Best Practices (PDF)** >



For help designing your session, explore TNTP's **Virtual Information Session Template (.PPT)** >

## Finalize Session and Attendance (~1 week in advance)

**Finalize content and facilitation.** Ensure your information session content is complete. Coordinate across all facilitators to also ensure their content, talking points, and timing are final. Send facilitators an invitation to rehearse the session a day or two before the event. Lastly, designate a non-presenting staff member to join who will play point on technology and assist with troubleshooting as needed.

**Confirm candidate attendance.** After the deadline to RSVP, email all candidates to confirm their attendance and include all meeting logistics like when and how to join, as well as any links they'll need in advance (e.g. if you'll take questions on a Padlet, share that link). We recommend creating a simple one pager for your video conference platform candidates can reference.



Example: **How to Join a Zoom Meeting (.DOC)** >

## Rehearse and Hold your Information-Session (≈1-2 days in advance)

**Rehearse information session technology, content, and facilitation.** A few days before your event, have all facilitators, tech helpers, and possibly a demo audience of available staff join a rehearsal call to walk through:

# REHEARSAL

- Is everyone able to log in by phone, tablet/smartphone, and computer?*
- Is everyone able to use their camera, microphone, and speakers?*
- If you're using breakout rooms, are you able to assign groups in advance, split the group up, broadcast to groups, and bring the group back together?*
- Is facilitation clear and compelling? Is hand-off across facilitators smooth? Are breakout group facilitators clear on their roles?*
- Are you able to present all media (e.g. video or photos) smoothly? For instance, test out toggling between sharing different screens or applications.*
- Does your session timing feel right? Do you have enough flex time built in to account for transitions and minor tech issues?*

**Hold your information session.** It's time to host your event! Here are some day-of suggestions for a smooth event:

- Join the meeting early so that when participants start joining, you are there to welcome them.
- To create a more personal environment, have participating staff members join by video and encourage participants to do so as well.
- If using Zoom, consider setting an LEA logo or mascot as the background image for LEA staff, to clearly show video participants who the current staff members are.
- Start the meeting on time. Just like an in-person meeting, setting the expectation that virtual meetings start on time just like in-person meetings is important for participants.
- Use the chat feature to reiterate key messages, dates, and instructions.

- Use the chat feature for participants to ask or answer questions.
- Record the event to share with candidates who can't join the live session.
- Close by thanking attendees for their participation and share any next steps (e.g. application links and deadlines, follow-up communication they can expect, and where to go if they have more questions).

**Follow up with participants.** Within a week of the event, email participants to thank them for their attendance. In the same email, share the session materials (PDF of slides, session recording, etc.) as well as **encouragement and instructions to apply**. Consider **reaching out to high priority candidates** via individualized emails or phone calls, and/or having breakout room facilitators follow up with their small groups to provide more personalized communication. You may consider sending out a short survey to gather quick feedback with questions that ask if the event encouraged candidates to apply and provided helpful information. Follow-up communication can also give candidates another opportunity to ask questions. Be sure to also send the session materials and recordings to any candidates who expressed interest but couldn't join the live session. Lastly, thank any staff members, students, and/or family members who joined the event.

Toolkit Introduction

LEA Employment Web Pages

Online Job Search Platforms

Educator Job Descriptions for Online Posts

Social Media for Educator Recruitment

Retention Conversations with Educators

Staff Involvement in Virtual Recruiting

**Virtual Information Sessions**

Virtual Hiring Activities that Assess Desired  
Teacher Competencies

Best Practices for Remote Interviews

Remote Processes for Hiring Eligibility Forms

Virtual Options for Demonstration Lessons and  
Other Performance Tasks

Consistent Virtual Communication with Applicants

Online Job Application Tracking

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