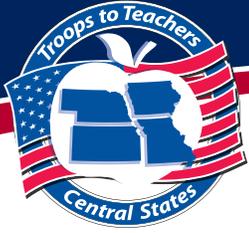


# TROOPS TO TEACHERS



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## AppliTrack-Tips for Successful Essays- National Louis University

### ONLINE APPLICATIONS: KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Answer all questions (it's surprising how many people don't think this is necessary). When in doubt about what a question means, ASK!
- Answer the question that has been asked. If the question is "Describe how you would address a wide range of skills in the classroom," begin the response with "I would address a wide range of skills in the classroom by..."
- Answer the questions fully. Don't start out well, then wander off in some different direction.
- Use simple, clear, direct sentences. How you respond will give the reader an idea about how you will express yourself to your students. Remember, this is not a academic paper!
- Avoid redundancy. Repeating a point doesn't make it more valuable.
- Eliminate extra, unnecessary, empty words, such as "various," "numerous," "a few," and "several."
- Omit tag-ons, like "etc.," "and so on," and "and more." These give the reader the idea that you became bored with your own answer. They provide NO useful information.
- Keep the tone of your answers positive. Focus on your successes!
- Demonstrate enthusiasm and creativity. Use BRIEF, concrete, specific examples when possible (but use them selectively – responses can become bogged down with too many examples). Make sure that the examples are relevant.
- Create your responses as Word documents, then cut and paste them into the appropriate spot on the application. Online applications are created with that idea in mind.
- Use a readable font (Arial or Calibri work best), and don't use a font size that is smaller than 10 points.
- Avoid ALL SPELLING AND GRAMMATICAL ERRORS!
- Have someone read your answers before you submit them. Someone else may catch your spelling and grammatical errors - and text that makes perfect sense to you may be confusing to someone else.
- SAVE EVERY ANSWER YOU CREATE, since it's likely that you will be answering the same questions again on other applications. Most application questions are created by an outside vendor (AppliTrack), so they are the same on each application.

### FINAL THOUGHTS - Remember:

- The goal is to demonstrate how you are unique, to illustrate what you have done that separates you from others - not what makes you the same.
- Creative responses can work well, if they answer the question that has been asked.
- Creativity, however, is not the primary consideration. You don't have to spend hours trying to win the Nobel Prize for Literature when you write your responses. It is far better to have a well-written, error-free response than to miss a deadline because you are waiting for your muse, or to wander off in some obscure area in an attempt at originality.

### POSSIBLE ELEMENTS TO INCLUDE WHEN RESPONDING TO APPLITRACK QUESTIONS

#### 1] What are your three most important reasons for wanting to become a teacher?

This is something that will differ for each candidate. Typically, people say things such as:

- The ability to be a mentor
- The chance to reach students that others have been unable to reach (to truly make a difference in students' lives) – to help students to genuinely enjoy going to school (e.g., to inspire a love for the subject area and a love of learning)
- To see the excitement and joy in the eyes of a student who has finally grasped a difficult concept
- To work in a career where every day presents different challenges and rewards
- To create a safe and acceptant place for students to grow
- To promote and engage in lifelong learning
- To work in a collegial atmosphere where collaboration and sharing are key components
- To create a better world through encouraging students to be aware and productive members of a community

#### 2] How much do you want to know about your students in order to be most helpful to them?

Again, this will vary with each individual. Here are a few common responses:

- As much as possible
- Only as much as is needed to teach them effectively. People tend to elaborate:
- What sorts of successes and failures they have experienced in prior learning
- What they want to get out of the class
- Standardized test results
- What sorts of barriers to learning they might have (physical, emotional, psychological, learning-based)
- Their specific interests (inside and outside of the classroom)
- The amount of educational/emotional support and assistance they receive in their homes
- Technology available in the home
- The educational backgrounds of their families
- Ways in which parents might be resources
- Socioeconomic barriers to learning
- Other agencies/programs with which the students might be involved
- IEP information

### 3] What three things do you most want to know about your students?

Most common responses:

- Barriers to learning: physical, psychological, emotional, economic, home-based (including experiences with bullying – either as the bully or as the person who has been bullied)
- Learning style (auditory, visual, kinesthetic...)
- Other languages spoken (by the student or in the family)
- Specific interests (so that you can address them in class and use them as motivators) – including unique talents (music, art, sports)
- Experiences with living/traveling abroad
- Standardized test results
- Students' personal goals

### 4] What do you need to know in order to begin your lesson planning for a class?

- Content-area state and national standards to be addressed
- Lesson/course objectives
- Time framework for lessons (e.g., block, traditional...)
- Cross-curricular considerations (opportunities and/or expectations)
- Intelligences/learning styles of the students
- Methodologies to reach specific populations (e.g., ELLs)
- Technological and/or other special resources and materials available/needed
- Specific steps to implement the objectives and proceed with teaching the lesson
- District's (or school's) preferred assessment methodologies
- Formative and summative evaluation procedures

### 5] What four key components do you believe you must include in your lesson plan?

*(Note: these are the components that research has revealed to be essential. They are the most widely-accepted responses.)*

- Objective
- Methodology
- Assessment
- Evaluation

### 6] When you think about your students, in what major ways do you most want to influence their lives?

This one, of course, is very personal. It will depend on your own values. Some ideas:

- Inspire them to love learning and to become lifelong learners
- Help them to find the tools necessary to learn in the best way possible
- Help them to become aware of the community and the world around them, with a focus on the way that they might fit into that world
- Encourage them to find their passion and begin pursuing it
- Help them to see ways in which each one of them is unique
- Provide the necessary building blocks to move on to the next class/level
- Help them to develop a sense of respect for themselves and others – teachers, family, other students, and, especially, those who are different from them
- Encourage them to question – and to learn multiple methods of research to find answers to their questions – to become self-directed learners
- Teach them effective problem-solving strategies
- Help them to understand that there are many ways to approach any problem
- Inspire them to dare to hope— no matter how difficult life may seem
- Encourage them to learn to give— to the community, to those in need, to those whose strengths differ from theirs

### 7] What two core teaching strategies do you most use to achieve this result?

This really depends on the strategies with which you are most comfortable. Thoughts:

- Classroom discussion
- Group work
- Varying teaching methodologies

- Differentiation (attention to varying abilities and learning styles)
- Including outside speakers/resources/field trips
- Peer mentoring
- LISTENING (personally, I think this is one of the most essential. Good teachers MUST be good listeners, too.)
- Story-telling (using narrative methods to illustrate difficult concepts)
- Demonstration (many people learn by watching)
- Collaboration with colleagues and administrators
- Effective classroom management
- Dialogue with parents

### 8] Please describe how you would use technology to improve your effectiveness as an educator.

- Remember that technology ENHANCES teaching; it does not REPLACE it!
- Use technology to heighten interest
- Use technology to simplify difficult concepts
- Use technology to appeal to visual or auditory learning styles
- Teach students to use technology to broaden their learning – to become familiar with common technological resources that will enhance learning
- Stress importance of continuously updating your own technological capabilities and staying current with technological innovations for the classroom
- Don't be afraid or unwilling to learn about technology from your students! Many of them may be familiar with the most current technologies – especially if you are a nontraditional teacher or if you are teaching at the secondary level

### 9] List any additional information which will help in determining your professional qualifications for a position.

This question allows you to bring into focus any other factors (not included on your resume) that might enhance your candidacy. Here are some things that others have mentioned (although there could be many others not included here):

- Familiarity with demands of teaching profession, since parents/siblings/close relatives are teachers.
- Study abroad experience, leading to exposure to and understanding of other countries' educational systems.
- Experience as a parent yourself, which would help you to understand the developmental stages and characteristics of the children you teach.
- Understanding of special needs students developed through having a sibling, close relative, or neighbor who had special needs, or through babysitting/childcare with a child with special needs.
- Personal experience with serious illness or injury that might increase compassion for children in similar situations.
- Completion of unique courses (NOT those that everyone in your program takes), workshops, or trainings that relate directly to issues/problems in teaching.
- Going through the career change process, which might involve extensive reflection or even forsaking a more lucrative career (e.g. law) for the more humanitarian career of teaching.
- Specialized awards or honors that you have been awarded.
- Vast community experience (don't call it "community service," since this is what youths do to avoid incarceration!)
- Previous career that could enhance teaching (e.g. social work/counseling, computer science, accounting, mathematics, editing/proofreading – or anything else that might deepen your understanding of children or of subject matter).
- Peace Corps experience, military experience or public service experience. All these experiences are typically valued by districts.

*These responses were crafted by: Dr. Dawn Jones, Past President of American Association for Employment in Education*



## MISSOURI BAPTIST UNIVERSITY INVITES TROOPS TO TEACHERS CANDIDATES TO BECOME EXCELLENT TEACHERS

Missouri Baptist University (MBU) is proud to welcome the Troops to Teachers program to bring those who have dedicated their lives to serving our country into high-need U.S. classrooms, where they can continue their service in a new and exciting way. MBU's Education Division, which just celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2014, has a strong history of preparing educators for kindergarten through 12th grade classrooms in a broad variety of specialties and environments, and across all phases of their careers. With options ranging from a traditional bachelor's degree in teaching all the way through a doctoral program in educational leadership, MBU is ready to support all learners, whether traditional or adult, full time or part time, face to face or online, in their desire to hone their craft and become teacher-leaders for the next generation of American students.

What makes MBU different? In the words of Dr. Jason Sefrit, principal of Westhoff Elementary School in the Fort Zumwalt School District, Missouri, "Simply put, MBU produces highly skilled, child-centered, well-rounded teachers... As a graduate and now an adjunct professor at MBU, I have experienced, firsthand, the in-depth process MBU education students go through to become successful educators." But your classes will not only give you the skills you need for daily life in the classroom: They will actively engage you in developing your own learning, prepare you to lead in the field of education, and with MBU's faith foundation, guide you to find your role as an agent of social change in a field where you can have a positive, lifelong impact on the lives of the students you touch.

Dr. Melanie Bishop, Dean of the Education Division at MBU, describes the TTT-MBU partnership in this way: "Troops to Teachers is an excellent program that gives troops the opportunity to pursue the field of education. Missouri Baptist University welcomes veterans and offers a variety of military benefits and aid. The Education Division values the leadership skills, wisdom, and experience that military personnel possess. The character and work ethic that troops bring to the classroom can have a tremendous impact on students in K-12 schools. We look forward to working with and preparing troops who are interested in becoming teachers."

MBU offers initial teacher certification in regular and special education concentration areas, including early childhood, elementary, middle school, and secondary (with content area specialization), including specialty fields such as business education, health / PE, music, and speech / theater as well as traditional subject areas. MBU also offers both master's degree and certification-only programs to help TTT personnel who already have a bachelor's degree reach their goal of becoming classroom teachers. Many courses and programs are available both online and face to face, with flexible 8- and 16-week terms which can meet the needs of your schedule.

MBU faculty and staff are dedicated to supporting and guiding you through the process of becoming a successful MBU student. Interested in learning more about programs available to you? Visit <http://www.mobap.edu/academics/teacher-certification-3/> to begin examining which certification area is right for you, and then go to <http://www.mobap.edu/academics/education-division/> to learn more about MBU's education division and how it can help you reach your post-military goals. When you're ready to join MBU, you are able to complete your application online. Questions? Graduate admissions advisor Grace White will be happy to guide you through the process of learning more. Contact her at [whiteg@mobap.edu](mailto:whiteg@mobap.edu) or (314) 744-5381. We look forward to welcoming you to MBU!

Here is a link to a pdf that will outline the full range of Certification Options Available: <http://www.mobap.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Certificate-options-available1.pdf>. For more information, contact Troops to Teachers representative; Grace White, Graduate Advisor & Mentor.

## STATE TEACHER JOB VACANCY SITES

**Looking for a new job?** These are some links that may prove useful for finding certified and substitute teaching jobs. For a more complete listing go to our website:

**WWW.TROOPSTOTEACHERS.MO.GOV**

MO: <http://www.moteachingjobs.com/>

IA: <http://www.iowaeducationjobs.com/>

NE: <http://www.nebraskaeducationjobs.com/>

KS: <http://www.kansasteachingjobs.com/>

## MISSOURI/IOWA/ NEBRASKA/KANSAS

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## TROOPS TO TEACHERS MENTORS

We are pleased to have a list of mentors on our web site. These people have successfully been through the process from start to finish. They are offering their thoughts, insights, and encouragement to others pursuing their goals of becoming teachers.

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO BE A MENTOR?

DESE.TroopsToTeachers@DESE.mo.gov or click here to join us: <http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/TTT-MENTOR%20CONNECTION-%2006-14.pdf>

# VETERAN'S EDUCATION & TRAINING SECTION

## MISSOURI STATE APPROVING AGENCY



### REVISED SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIAL HANDBOOK RELEASED

A revised version of the School Certifying Official Handbook is available for use. The revisions address the expansion of the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship to eligible surviving spouses and modifications regarding the use of Tuition Assistance for Chapter 1606 and 1607 benefits. Additional information on the revisions may be found on page 7 of the handbook. Access the SCO Handbook by visiting:

[http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/job\\_aids/SCO\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/job_aids/SCO_Handbook.pdf)

#### Operation Recognition

<http://dese.mo.gov/adult-learning-rehabilitation-services/veterans-education/operation-recognition>

The Missouri legislature created Operation Recognition in September 2001 to provide honorary high school diplomas for veterans and civilian prisoners of war (POWs) who left high school before graduation to serve in the military.

To date, nearly 1,300 honorary high school diplomas have been awarded to Missouri veterans.

#### Who is eligible for an honorary diploma?

All civilian POWs who are residents or former residents of the state of Missouri and all honorably discharged veterans who are residents or former residents of the state of Missouri who served in the United States military and who did not return to school and complete their education after their term of service shall be eligible to receive an honorary diploma. Family members may apply for the honorary diploma on behalf of a deceased veteran.

#### How do I apply for the honorary diploma?

Candidates must submit an application to the Missouri Veterans Commission. Application forms are available from the commission, veterans' organizations and local school officials. The Missouri Veterans Commission can be contacted by phone at 573-751-3779. Applicants must submit a copy of their military discharge papers or DD-214 along with the application.

After the Missouri Veterans Commission verifies that an applicant is eligible, the application is sent to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Department of Education prepares the diploma for the Governor's signature, then makes arrangements to mail the diploma to the recipient or designated party.

#### How and when is the honorary diploma awarded?

This is up to the individual recipient. Some school districts, schools, communities, and veteran's organizations may choose to host a diploma ceremony on or around Veterans Day. This is a way school districts and the community may express thanks and admiration to those brave veterans who so selflessly sacrificed their high school education to serve our country. Such presentations can be made at any time or location that is most convenient. If a veteran does not want a public ceremony, the diploma will be sent to him or her by mail.

#### Does it matter what school I attended?

No. Veterans and civilian POWs can qualify for the honorary high school diploma regardless of whether they attended public or private schools, and regardless of whether the school still exists or not.

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We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to:

**Jefferson State Office Building, Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act) 205 Jefferson Street, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480p: 573.526.4757 or Relay Missouri p: 800.735.2966.**

# IT IS TEACHER HIRING SEASON!

## HERE ARE THE LINKS TO SOME OF THE BEST SITES FOR EACH STATE

However, the best way to find a job is to go to the district's website.

Not all districts use the "job collector" sites.

Go to the site of the district where you want to teach. Check there often.

If they have the option to sign up for new job posting notification, sign up!



*Here are some national and state specific sites found below. Helpful Links to Search for Teaching Jobs:*

US REAP, Nationwide search <https://www.usreap.net/>

Nationwide Teaching Jobs (Teacher Jobs) <http://www.teachingjobs.com/index.php>

Nationwide Teaching Jobs (K-12 Jobs) <http://k12jobs.com/index.php>

Nationwide Teaching, School, & Education Jobs (School Spring) <https://www.schoolspring.com/>

Nebraska Education Jobs <http://nebraskaeducationjobs.com/>

Iowa Teaching Jobs <http://www.teachiowa.gov/>

Kansas Teaching Jobs <http://kansasteachingjobs.com/>

Missouri Teaching Jobs (SuccessLink) <http://moteachingjobs.com/>

Missouri Teaching Jobs (MoREAP) <http://www.moreap.net/>

# ARE THESE THE BEST BURGERS IN ALL 50 STATES?

By: Kevin Alexander and Liz Childers

The authors set about researching, eating, and fighting about everything from pork belly pastrami-covered burgers in Pennsylvania, to griddled patties in Indiana, to quite possibly the best bar burger in Minnesota. It's sometimes necessary to be properly fueled for your job search. To that end, here is a list of the best burgers in every state. <https://www.yahoo.com/food/are-these-the-best-burgers-in-all-50-states-112531678216.html>

## NEBRASKA

### Dinker's Bar, Omaha

*The burger: Cheeseburger, add sautéed onions*

We wanted to pick Stella's in Bellevue, mainly so I could just write "STELLAAAAAAA" and be done. But Dinker's in Omaha is the one. Though they're famous for their Haystack Burger with American cheese, honey-smoked ham, and a fried egg, we're partial to the normal cheeseburger with sautéed onions on their delicious grilled kaiser bun. Oh, and get the onion rings. Always get the onion rings.



More information about educator preparation in Nebraska can found at [www.education.ne.gov/tcert](http://www.education.ne.gov/tcert)

## IOWA

### Short's Burger & Shine, Iowa City

*The burger: 1006 Melrose*

The Rusty Duck and Coon Bowl have won awards for their burgers. Django in Des Moines goes French with theirs, and it's damn good. Christy Creme and Hamburg Inn have nostalgia and tradition on their side. But the best burger we've had in Iowa was the 1006 Melrose at Short's Burger & Shine. The black Angus beef from local Iowa farmer Ed Smith speaks for itself, and though they've got all sorts of fancified options, we always order the simple cheeseburger and sub out the cheddar for American on our yearly pilgrimage to Iowa. Then we go to the Vine.



More information about educator preparation in Iowa can found at <http://educateiowa.gov/>

## KANSAS

### The Cozy Inn, Salina

*The burger: Sliders*

We like Harry's in Manhattan, and we love The Burger Stand at the Casbah in Lawrence, but we had to go with the legend. Once you just accept the fact that you're going to smell like griddled onions for the rest of the day, and start to own it, you can truly embrace these delicious sliders. Just don't ask for fries.



More information about educator preparation in Kansas can found at [www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org)

## MISSOURI

### Westport Flea Market Bar & Grill, Kansas City

*The burger: Patty melt*

The burger at Five Bistro in St. Louis was hard to beat. But Westport Flea Market, which is really less a flea market (check out the wacky cages in the front!) and more of a bar, just managed to take the top spot with their McGonigle's Market beef burger. I like the patty melt here because it takes 5.5oz of that McGonigle beef and throws it on toasted rye with Swiss and grilled onions. But if you want a challenge, the Super Flea is five 10oz burgers topped with bacon, cheese, and 2lbs of fries. Eat it in 30 minutes and you'll get a T-shirt, your picture on the wall, AND ALSO MAYBE DIE. Which is maybe why, as I said, we're fans of the patty melt.



More information about educator preparation in Missouri can found at [dese.mo.gov/eq/ep/](http://dese.mo.gov/eq/ep/).