

ORIENTATION TO THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

New instructors need a working knowledge of the school's people and places when seeking assistance throughout the year.

STEPS TO SUCCESS

1. Explore the school and community and collect information about school personnel, departments and buildings.
2. Collect other local school information. Note the names, levels, addresses and key personnel of other schools in the district, from elementary through postsecondary.
3. Conduct a school tour on your own or with other new teachers.
4. Identify and meet people who can be important to your success. Some examples might be science teachers, transportation staff and office workers. Use the contacts forms to guide your explorations.
5. In each situation, do your best to create a favorable first impression.

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EXPLORE THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

While exploring the school and community, make sure to obtain the following information.

- Personnel Directories**
Obtain personnel directories for your school and school system that include employees' names and phone numbers. Save important phone numbers, such as those of your administrators, in your phone.
- School Tour**
Ask your administrator to walk through the school building with you. This will help you "get the lay of the land" and have a better understanding of the day-to-day functions of the school.
- New Teacher Resources**
Many school districts provide new teachers with digital or printed resources that will help you become better acquainted with the school district. Keep these resources to reference later.
- Mentors**
Work with your administrator to see if the district will assign a mentor to you for your first few years of teaching. You may also want to work with your state agricultural educators' association to see if they offer a mentorship program as well.
- Local Community**
If time allows, get to know the following people; businesses in the area, farmers and agriculturalists, county extension agents, philanthropic groups, social workers/supports for students in crisis, etc.
- Access to School Facilities**
Make sure to obtain the right keys, codes, and cards to access all necessary school facilities, including those specific to the agricultural education department.

SCHOOL TOUR GUIDE

Find and familiarize yourself with these areas and the people who staff them.

- Administrative Offices
 - Superintendent
 - Principal/Vice Principal
 - Dean of Students
 - CTE Director
 - Activities Director/Athletic Director
 - Business Manager
 - Front Office Staff
- Agriculture Facilities
- Cafeteria and Kitchen
- Nurse's Office
- Copying Room
- Guidance Office
- Library or Media Center
- Mail Area
- Music and Art Facilities
- Science Facilities
- Special Education Department/
Resource Teacher
- Supply Room
- Teachers' Lounge
- Transportation Department
- School Board
- Technology Coordinator
- Maintenance

- Other CTE Facilities (list):

- Other classrooms (list):

- Other areas (list):

COLLABORATING WITH OTHER SCHOOL CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

It is important to have a healthy and supportive relationships with other club advisors in your building. You are all working with the same group of students and want the best for them. Working together to identify ways you can collaborate and maximize student engagement. Having overlapping meetings times only limits your potential member pool.

Take some time to introduce yourself to other club and organization advisors.

Things you might discuss with these advisors includes:

- Timing of events (meetings, competitions, etc.)
- Fundraisers (types and timings)
- Potential Collaborations

COMMON SCHOOL CLUBS AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS:

- Business Professionals of America
- DECA
- Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)
- FCCLA
- FFA
- HOSA - Future Health Professionals
- SkillsUSA
- TSA

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

All that paperwork! It is probably not why you chose to become a teacher. Still, your career success depends in part on upholding policies, following procedures and keeping up with important dates. Here are some administrative matters to keep in mind as you navigate your new place of employment.

- Obtain a copy of the school handbook and/or other materials containing policies and procedures.
- Obtain copies of procedures followed by your school's accountant. There may be different procedures for working with program funds; FFA chapter funds; grants; school-based enterprises; and local, state and federal funds.
- Obtain copies of all policies that relate to the use of school facilities including science labs, greenhouses, animal science facilities, computer lab, animals on campus, etc.
- Work with your school administrator to understand the purchasing process for materials. Some district may provide you with a school-issued credit card, while others may require you to work directly with an individual to purchase items.
- Obtain access to a district calendar, school building calendar, and a calendar for staff and/or department meetings.
- Understand your various budgets (consumables, capital projects, FFA)
- Work with other teachers to determine how you obtain classroom supplies such as paper clips, staplers, paper, etc.
- Ask your administrator what school committees exist and if you will be required to serve on a committee. This is a great opportunity to learn more about your new school district.
- Be sure to understand how attendance is taken and how tardies and absences are documented. Most school districts rely on a digital school management system.
- In the event of an emergency, what procedures should you follow? Make sure you have a working knowledge of what to do if an injury occurs in your classroom or elsewhere in the school.
- Work with your school administrator to gain information about handling emergencies that are weather related. Most districts will provide physical copies of procedures for each classroom. Understand what you will do if you need to escape the building or shelter in place with your students.
- Work with your administrator and/or state staff to know what is needed to keep your licensure and/or teaching certificate up to date.
- Understand expectations of the ag teacher as a bus driver. Is your CDL recommended? How is time and money allocated to earn your CDL?
- How is FFA transportation handled? Who pays for it?
- What is the school's learning management system (LMS)?