Online Community Project

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For my Professional Online Community, I chose [Alaska Teacher Placement Forums](http://www.alaskateacher.org/forum/). I chose this because I anticipate being qualified to teach in Alaska by the end of the MAT program, and this is an online program that helps prospective teachers find jobs in Alaska. The first thing you do on ATP is complete your online application. This process took me about five days. They allow you to save your application and return to it in less than twenty-five days which was very nice for me. However, the application process was slightly confusing because there were so many parts to it. This is one way that ATP Forums helped me a lot.

From ATP Forums, I learned that in the state of Alaska, there are 56 school districts, all of which use the online Applitrack system for applications. There are six districts who host their own Applitrack system. They used to be known as “The Big Five:” Anchorage, Mat-Su, Fairbanks, and Juneau; but the North Slope Borough School District just got their own this year. This meant that once I submitted my Applitrack file with ATP, I would have to transfer it to the Mat-Su database if I applied for a job with them. This is an easy process however, as these six school districts still use the Applitrack system. Once I fill out one I can use it for any job I apply for, I just need to tweak it as necessary when applying for a job in one of these six districts. After I learned this information I was able to pass it on to another member of the forum.

From ATP Forums I also learned that the Applitrack application is a “live document” and I can go back and edit it. This will be an important thing for me to do toward the end of the MAT program when I can upload documents such as my certification or Praxis results.

I also learned important information about the timing of job openings. The rural districts have employees complete a letter of intent in early February. This means that jobs will pop up in rural districts generally in mid to late February. Jobs in “The Big Five” generally start to become available in May. These are just guidelines I learned, because often hiring continues into July and August for all districts.

Being a part of this community was and definitely will continue to be very valuable to me as the time approaches for me to search for jobs. I have read about teaching for certain schools and the like, and ATP Forums has a wealth of information and firsthand accounts. I look forward to using the community to find out about the schools that I end up applying for.