

Erin Brill

Mr. Speice

Independent Study and Mentorship 3B

20 October 2017

Interview Assessment #2

Name of Professional: Catherine Parker, SSPY, LSSP

Profession/Title: Licensed Specialist in School Psychology

Business/Company Name: Frisco Independent School District

Date of Interview: 10/17/17

On Wednesday, October 17, I met with Catherine Parker for an interview. Catherine Parker is a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) that works through FISSD. This was my second interview, so I was more confident about conducting the meeting.

Prior to the interview, I did not know very much about school psychology. Ms. Parker was able to give me a bit of information about her job. As an LSSP, Ms. Parker conducts assessments on special education students, consults with colleagues, writes reports, and occasionally counsels students. According to Ms. Parker, the hardest part of the job is communicating difficult news to parents that the parents do not want to hear, such as the results of an assessment that recommends the child be placed in the special education program. While some aspects of the job may be difficult, Ms. Parker claims that she loves every aspect of the job, especially conducting assessments because she gets to work with kids. This information from

Ms. Parker was interesting to me because I had not previously considered or looked into school psychology. Throughout the interview, Ms. Parker seemed very passionate about her job. This was inspiring to see a professional that loved her work. Often, many adults feel burned out in their career, so it was refreshing to meet with a professional who seemed excited about going to work in the morning.

Even though she does not work in my specific field of study, Ms. Parker was able to provide some useful information and tips regarding the general field of psychology. I asked Ms. Parker about the personal traits and qualities that were most useful to someone going into the field of psychology. According to Ms. Parker, those who are self-motivated and have strong communication skills are often very successful. In a laboratory setting where I can conduct research, I will need to be self-motivated in order to complete my projects and analyze the data. I will also need strong communication skills when I need to discuss my findings with my colleagues and other scientists. Ms. Parker also recommended that I begin to research colleges that have reputable psychology programs, and to begin looking into the courses required for the major and minor that I am interested in. She stated that it was important to keep an open mind when considering college options. As a junior in high school, I need to begin looking at colleges that I can start applying to over the summer. This advice was useful to me because I can start to apply it to my life right now, rather than as an adult.

Ms. Parker was kind enough to recommend another LSSP that she thought may be interested in talking to me in an interview setting. She gave me the contact information for Dr. Russell Vaden, a licensed school psychologist that has taught at a college level. I will contact

him and try to arrange an informational interview with him in order to gain more insight into the field of psychology.

In my opinion, this interview was a lot smoother than my first interview. During my first interview, I was nervous and we experienced some pauses throughout the course of the interview. However, this interview was similar to a conversation in which information and friendly small talk flowed together to create a comfortable atmosphere. In the future, I will try to work on my small talk skills, as they come in handy when there is lull in the conversations. I will also contact Dr. Russell Vaden for a possible interview opportunity. Overall, I am very pleased with the results of this interview, and I am looking forward to similar opportunities in the future.

Interview Notes

1. What are your primary responsibilities as a school psychologist?
 - Conducting assessments (cognitive and academic)
 - Work with students with emotional and/or behavioral disabilities
 - Counseling

2. Can you describe your typical work day?
 - Report writing
 - Working with kids
 - Consulting with colleagues
 - Meetings

3. Do you have a routine or do you consider this job to be more spontaneous?
 - More spontaneous

4. What is your favorite aspect of the job?
 - All of it
 - Especially enjoys assessments

5. What is your least favorite/hardest part of the job?
 - Telling parents hard truths

- Job is stressful around state testing

6. What qualities do you think are important in someone going into the field of psychology?

- Independent
- Self-motivated
- People person
- Strong communication skills

7. What can I start doing now to prepare myself for a career in psychology?

- Research colleges with strong psychology programs
- Research classes required for major
- Keep an open mind

8. Do you specialize in any specific area?

- Mainly students with autism, emotional disturbances, and ADHD

9. How do you determine if a child is no longer in need of counseling?

- Mostly educational counseling (solution focused)
- Goal based
- Over fairly quickly

10. How is HIPAA dealt with?

- All involved must sign confidentiality forms
- Parents sign consent forms before any evaluation or assessment

11. Do you have any advice in regards to my resume?

- Liked that I had my LinkedIn and Twitter on the resume
- Liked the personal and professional skills

12. Would you happen to have any references for me?

- Dr. Russell Vaden
- Ph.D., LSSP
- Taught at a college level
- vadens@friscoisd.org