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Study Reveals South Carolina Teacher Shortage is Worsening

South Carolina teacher education programs are graduating fewer students every year and vacancies at public schools are increasing, according to a recent study by the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA).

CERRA found there were more than 481 open teaching positions in South Carolina at the beginning of the 2016-17 school year. Only 25 percent of newly hired teachers for this school year were graduates from a traditional teacher certification program in the state.

Alternative certification programs, such as American Board, provide an efficient path for adults who do not have the time or money to go back to a traditional university to become a teacher. American Board helps adults with a bachelor's degree earn their teaching certification without going back to school or going into debt.

Lisa Howell, executive director of American Board, has seen the struggle in the classroom first hand. Prior to leading the nonprofit, she was a history teacher and witnessed how difficult it can be to recruit and retain teaching talent.

“Current teacher recruitment policies are completely inadequate to address the massive teacher shortage we are seeing everywhere. We need to allow more flexible options for teacher training so we can get qualified, passionate individuals in the classroom and educating our kids.”

American Board candidates are provided with materials to prepare for two exams: one to test their competency in pedagogy, or instructional methods, and one to test their competency in the subject area they wish to certify in. The online, affordable program puts qualified individuals where they are most needed: leading the classroom.

About the American Board

The American Board is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization established by the U.S. Department of Education in 2001 and dedicated to building strong communities by preparing, certifying and supporting teachers. Through a flexible and cost-effective certificate program, the American Board has awarded more than 6,000 teacher certifications across 12 states.

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