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Oklahoma's Dire Need for Teachers Puts Uncertified Educators in Classrooms

OKLAHOMA —Oklahoma schools are in such desperate need of teachers that over 700 emergency certificates have been approved by the State Board of Education since May of this year.

This disservice to students of uncertified and not necessarily qualified teachers leading their classes can be avoided thanks to national non-profit the American Board, which provides an affordable pathway to certification approved by Oklahoma's Department of Education.

"Our program is a great fit for professionals who always wanted to teach or want to take what they learned from years in a different career to benefit students in a classroom," said Executive Director Lisa Howell. "Principals appreciate our candidates because they normally have real-life experience in the subjects they teach."

The American Board created an online and self-paced certification program specifically for career-changers who may not have the time or funds to go back to school. This alternative route to certification is an ideal fit for anyone looking to get into the education field on a flexible timeline at nearly one-third the price of a graduate degree.

"I've been teaching for a year now and I love it, it's very fulfilling. It doesn't feel like work. It's not to say I'm exhausted some days, you're exhausted because you're putting a lot into it," said Beth Powell, an Oklahoma teacher. "I actually feel like I'm making a positive contribution now. I didn't feel like that before even though I felt like I had a good job."

The emergency-level need for teachers paired with various proposals to increase teacher salaries state-wide signals for the perfect time to begin the path to teacher certification. Completers of the American Board's program typically take seven to 10 months to become certified with some candidates achieving certification in as little as two months.

About the American Board

The American Board is a non-profit, non-partisan 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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