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Teachers Wanted! A Teacher Shortage in America.

BY DESTINEE DOE

FROM STATE TO state and from district to district, the nation is facing a huge teacher shortage. As stated in the Bureau of Labor Statistics, “roughly 300,000 public school educators and staff left the field between Feb. 2020 and May 2022... Jobs remain unfilled as more and more teachers leave the field. Educators are not satisfied with their pay or their working environments. According to a survey, 90% of members say feeling burnout is a serious problem.” Teachers are quitting because they feel stressed and overworked. This situation has only gotten worse since the COVID-19 pandemic. With the increasing workload and low pay, it was only a matter of time before they had enough.

Schools are desperate to find teachers to work in schools. The U.S Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics says that 53% of public school principals said their schools were understaffed for the 2022-23 school year. Some schools have removed some of the requirements for teaching to fill their positions. Gov. Doug Ducey recently signed legislation where educators no longer need a college degree to teach in Arizona. Florida has also gone this route as well. Some say that this could make the teacher shortage even worse. Some argue that this could lessen the value of the profession while others

say that this could encourage more educators into the field. Schools might be forced to place unlicensed and inexperienced teachers in schools. What does this mean for the education system?

What can be done to ensure the security of this vital profession? One solution is to increase the pay for teachers. The U.S. Department of Education awarded \$60 million to address the teacher shortage. “We are treating our efforts to recruit, prepare, and retain a talented and diverse educator workforce with the same level of urgency we brought to reopening our schools during the height of the pandemic,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. According to an article written on U.S. News, “Education Department and Labor Department officials are urging state and local education and workforce leaders to address teacher and school staff shortages by increasing wages and expanding teacher preparation programs, including with registered teacher apprenticeships.”

Another solution is showing respect for educators. Teachers work tirelessly to ensure the education of their students. The hard work associated with little reward is a driving point for those choosing to leave their jobs. These are some of the methods and solutions provided to strengthen and preserve the teaching workforce for years to come.

As more and more teachers leave their profession, the nation needs to realize the importance of teachers. This affects the students the most. There needs to be quality teachers to help cultivate the upcoming generations. This could be catastrophic for the impending school years. Will the students have enough teachers waiting for them when they come back?



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