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## **Alabama State Department of Education launches recruitment campaign to attract next generation of Alabama teachers**

*Multi-faceted, long-term effort to combat growing teacher shortage statewide*

**MONTGOMERY, Ala. (July 27, 2021)** — The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) has launched the first wave of its Alabama teacher recruitment campaign, a long-term advertising and public relations effort aimed at recruiting the state’s next generation of teachers and highly qualified people wanting to receive or maintain a valid Alabama teaching certificate.

“Like many other states, Alabama is experiencing a growing teacher shortage and needs a new focus on the recruitment of new talent to fill an ever-expanding pipeline. We need young people who want to make a difference in their community and our state by teaching,” said State Superintendent of Education Dr. Eric G. Mackey. “From kindergarten to graduation, our focus is helping prepare students to become more productive citizens through subjects including reading, math and science – and teachers are the key. We must recruit more high-quality teachers to help prepare our state for the future in a high-tech economy. This campaign will encourage young people to answer their calling and join a valued community that makes a difference in countless lives.”

Currently underway to support overall campaign objectives are multiple efforts targeting high school and college students via social media, YouTube, pre-roll, streaming radio and display advertising. Additionally, the state’s updated [WeTeachAlabama.com](http://WeTeachAlabama.com) website not only provides how-to and explanatory resources for those considering careers in education, but also gives current teachers a platform to share their own stories and encourage others to pursue teaching as a career path.

Additional highly targeted campaign elements will be announced in the coming months.

“Our intent with all of our collective campaign efforts is to raise perceptions of the teaching profession overall, stressing how vital teachers are to both the input and outcome of public education,” added Dr. Mackey. “We want to arm interested students with information to prepare them for life after high school as they make their career choices while instilling knowledge of the importance teachers have on literally every person – and ultimately every other profession.”

According to the Alabama Teacher Shortage Taskforce, 123 of 144 school districts in Alabama have turned to hiring teachers on emergency or provisional certificates – a majority in rural areas – indicating shortages are being broadly experienced statewide. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education reports a 40% decrease in students completing teacher education programs since 2010, meaning open positions will be unfilled without action.

ALSDE’s teacher recruitment campaign comes on the heels of Governor Kay Ivey’s May signing Act 2021-330 increasing Alabama teacher pay scale, as well as the Teacher Excellence and Accountability for

Mathematics and Sciences (TEAMS) salary schedule program – an aggressive piece of legislation to combat the estimated 3,000 unfilled math and science teacher positions in 6-12 grade classrooms across Alabama with the potential addition of \$20,000 in annual pay.

“We want to show those in our state and beyond how much Alabama values its teachers and that if someone chooses to answer this calling, we will be here to support that person in every way possible,” said Dr. Mackey. “Teachers are vital to the future of Alabama’s workforce, and so our focus on recruiting this career sector is equally paramount.”

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