



‘Critical shortage,’ Kentucky working to find, recruit 5,000 thousand teachers

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FRANKFORT, Ky. (WKYT) – Trends come and go within the walls of any school, but one trend that includes teachers has remained and become a problem for leaders in Kentucky’s Department of Education.

The Department says as of January 2019 more than 5,000 teaching positions were available across the Bluegrass. It's a problem that has been going on for years, but state leaders are now calling it a ‘critical shortage’ of teachers.

With college students pursuing degrees in education down 13%, the department is building a new campaign to fill the void that is impacting Kentucky classrooms.

“The reason it's so serious is not just in the numbers,” said Education Commissioner Dr. Wayne D. Lewis, Jr. “If I think about this from a parent’s perspective, how serious would it be for me if it were my kid that didn't have a qualified, well-certified teacher in her classroom.”

Dr. Lewis says the shortages come across the board, but there are major shortfalls in special education, languages and career development.

He says the new campaign will focus on ways to recruit and retain teachers in the field. Some of the ideas include using programs like Teach for America, working with universities to find alternative certification routes and hiring based on real work experience.

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