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CALIFORNIA TEACHER CORPS: INTERN PROGRAMS A CRITICAL PART OF SOLVING THE TEACHER SHORTAGE

Calls on the Legislature to Invest in Alternative Pathways to Credentialing

SACRAMENTO – Today, [California Teacher Corps](#) President Patricia Pernin called on the Legislature to recognize the importance of alternative pathways to credentialing through internship programs when investing in solutions to the state’s teacher shortage problem.

The need for teachers increased 25 percent this school year yet preliminary credentials issued to fully prepared new teachers increased by less than 1 percent – leaving many districts scrambling to hire educators without training to lead classrooms filled with our state’s neediest students. In the midst of this crisis, the California Teacher Corps has prepared over 60,000 teachers through the more than 100 alternative certification programs in the state – a solution that’s glaringly absent from proposed legislation recently passed by the state senate education committee and under consideration by the appropriations committee.

“Our students need quality teachers now. Senate Bill 933 offers a solution that will take years to create. In the meantime, the bill fails to support the successful alternative certification programs that train thousands of new teachers in California each year,” said Pernin. “Elected officials must support the addition of alternative certification programs to any legislation that’s expected to ensure our students have access to qualified teachers. To meet the needs of our students, we must invest in and expand programs that are working.”

Just this year, California had 3,900 open teaching positions posted two months into the school year – double the number of listings at the same time in 2013. The teacher shortage is especially acute in special education, but alternative certification is increasingly filling this need with more than 3,500 special education teachers trained through internship programs in California in recent years. Among those special education teachers is Jasmine Allen-Matora – the 2016 winner of the Michael McKibbin Outstanding Educator Award – who decided to pursue her credential during her third year as a special education assistant.

A kindergarten teacher at 24th Street Elementary School in Los Angeles, Allen-Matora is known for empowering her students to try, no matter what, to solve problems independently. She encourages them to support one another if they are stumped, teaching them both the independence and teamwork needed to be self-directed learners.

“My goal is to create a classroom environment where students are excited, every day, to learn because they feel like they have a team behind them,” Allen-Matora said. “I want them to be lifelong learners who know how to support each other and find the answers from their own experiences and knowledge.”

As part of the Los Angeles Unified School District Internship program, Allen-Matora is able to dig deeper each week and self-evaluate her teaching. The program provides classes, instruction and support relevant to her students’ current needs.

About the California Teacher Corps

The California Teacher Corps is a nonprofit organization established in 2009 with the goal of placing 100,000 highly-qualified teachers in California’s communities by 2020. The Teacher Corps provides a unified voice for the state’s alternative certification programs, effectively and proactively addresses teacher preparation issues facing California and recruits the best and the brightest professionals to teach in the public schools that need them most. California Teacher Corps membership trains second-career teachers, and others committed to working in hard-to-staff schools, who have deep subject-area expertise and who remain in the teaching profession. For more information, visit the California Teacher Corps at www.cateachercorps.org.

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