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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Teach4NC Initiative Launched to Attract People to the Teaching Profession**

(Raleigh, N.C.) Gov. Mike Easley, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Business Committee for Education are sponsoring the Teach4NC initiative to recruit qualified educators for North Carolina's public schools. The focal point of NCBCE's statewide campaign is the Teach4NC Web site, [www.teach4nc.com](http://www.teach4nc.com), created in collaboration with DPI. Teach4NC.com is a one-stop resource on how to join the teaching profession in North Carolina through traditional as well as alternate routes such as the lateral-entry program.

"With the tremendous teacher shortage in North Carolina, we must find creative ways to bring qualified teachers into our classrooms," Easley said. "Until now, there has been no single resource explaining the different options available for qualified people who want to be teachers. The Teach4NC Web site is an important part of our efforts to recruit teachers in the state."

Each year, North Carolina must hire 10,000 new teachers. In Anson County, the annual teacher turnover rate is 13.27 percent, higher than the state average of 12.49 percent. According to the North Carolina Education Research Council, the state's public and private colleges and universities graduate about 5,000 teachers each year, with only 3,200 taking teaching positions in North Carolina. "It is time to aggressively recruit qualified teachers through both the traditional and alternate routes," said State Superintendent Mike Ward.

One alternate route the state offers is the lateral-entry program. Qualified individuals can begin teaching while working towards their permanent certification. "Lateral-entry teachers offer a wealth of experience and expertise," said Ward. "They can be a tremendous asset to the classroom."

After working in radio and retail for a couple of years, Kim Colins decided she wanted a career where she could give something back to the community. Colins joined the teaching profession through the lateral-entry program and is now in her fourth year of teaching and will earn her permanent certification this year. Colins teaches English to 11<sup>th</sup>- and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade “at risk” students at Anson Challenge Academy where she was named Teacher of the Year.

“The challenge is to see how much you can improve yourself. I don’t look at teaching like a job or work at all because I enjoy the classroom so much,” said Edwards. “Teaching provides the opportunity to change what you see around you that is wrong through molding the children you teach in a positive manner. You have to be willing to do whatever it takes and love the children as if they were your own, because for some of them this will be the only love they receive.”

For more information about the Teach4NC initiative, contact Joel Harper, executive director of NCBCE, at (919) 715-3535.

The North Carolina Business Committee for Education is an advocate and catalyst for systemic change and continuous improvement in public education. NCBCE, a nonpartisan, nonprofit consortium of businesses from across the state, acts as a resource and business voice in public education to prepare North Carolina students for employment and to enhance North Carolina's economic development.

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