



MARIN COUNTY
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To Potential Teacher Candidates:

If you are considering becoming a teacher, I am writing to urge you not to be deterred by the current budget crisis and related news about California public schools. It is true that the cuts will result in funding reductions in our school districts including some teacher layoffs. Ironically, it is also true that retirements and other changes will provide openings in many districts and ultimately California will need to find 100,000 teachers in the next ten years.

As you think about entering the teaching profession, it is important that you truthfully ask yourself "Why?" Successful teachers are those who are in the profession because of an unswerving personal commitment that there is nothing they would rather do. I will be honest—teaching is hard work. It is not the highest paying job in the world. It is a profession that requires a level of uncommon vision, creativity, commitment and flexibility. The rewards come in an intangible form—seeing the "light go on" in the eyes of a student when he/she finally understands the concept or masters the skill. It is in seeing former students, who use what you have taught them, go on to make their mark as human beings, family members and positive, self-fulfilled, productive citizens.

In the final analysis, the decision to teach is a decision to make a difference in the lives of students. It is about deciding to devote your life to changing a future that you will never see. It is about doing the most important work in the world. With that as your mission, you must not, should not and, hopefully, will not let the exigencies of the moment in California deter you. Go for it. TEACH! We will be honored and grateful to welcome you to the greatest profession in the world.

Sincerely,

Mary Jane Burke
MARY JANE BURKE
Marin County Superintendent of Schools