

Sign In | Register now

Home Delivery **The Boston Globe**



Cambridge, MA
Mie. Higashimoto
Upscale Hair Salon on Newbury St

Local Search Site Search
 GO

Yes

HOME TODAY'S GLOBE NEWS BUSINESS SPORTS LIFESTYLE A&E THINGS TO DO TRAVEL CARS JOBS REAL ESTATE LOCAL SEARCH

Technology Healthcare Markets Personal finance Columnists

HOME / BUSINESS



ADVERTISEMENT

Teaching has appeal for workers ready for change

Schools offer on-site training for new role

By Ann Carms

Globe Correspondent / January 10, 2010

E-mail | Print | Reprints | Yahoo! Buzz | ShareThis Text size - +

When Gwyn Swanson graduated from college with a math degree more than 20 years ago, she jumped directly into the booming computer industry and stayed there for most of her career. But several years ago, after realizing how much she enjoyed volunteering in her children's schools, she began thinking about becoming a teacher.

Now, Swanson, 46, is teaching math full time to middle school students in the Blackstone Millville Regional School District.

"I had always thought of teaching, ever since high school," she said.

These days, many professionals are rethinking their career paths due to the tight job market and slow economy - and some are finding more opportunities in teaching.

To be sure, no profession offers a guarantee of steady work, and public school districts are vulnerable to budget cuts and layoffs during tight times. But the number of teaching jobs is expected to increase over the next decade as baby boomer teachers retire and younger educators leave challenging urban districts. Prospects are greatest for those specializing in high-demand subjects such as math, science, and special and bilingual education, as well as those willing to work in urban or rural districts.

Nationally, the number of teaching jobs in kindergarten through grade 12 is expected rise about 13 percent between 2008 and 2018, or about as fast as the average for all occupations, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Massachusetts Department of Labor, for its part, projects that the state's teaching and instructor and other related jobs, excluding special education, kindergarten, and pre-kindergarten, will grow by 3 percent between 2006 and 2016.

The earning potential for teachers also is better, with the labor bureau noting a "large increase" in education funding at the federal level, especially for the hiring of teachers in low-income areas. Nationally, the average salary for full-time teachers topped \$50,000 for the first time during the 2006-2007 school year, the latest data available, according to the American Federation of Teachers. In Massachusetts, the average teacher salary for 2007-2008 was

Discuss
COMMENTS (0)

LOCAL BUSINESS NEWS ON TWITTER

Investors place \$16.5 million bet on MicroCHIPS' implantable devices - <http://is.gd/63V2X> 24 minutes ago

A different vibe - <http://is.gd/63V2R> 24 minutes ago

Boston University archeologist's digs uncover clues to Egyptian mariners - <http://is.gd/63V2F> 24 minutes ago

Putting their faith into the foreclosure fight -

FOLLOW GLOBEBIZ ON TWITTER

[Follow other Boston.com Tweets](#) | [What is Twitter?](#)

INSIDE BOSTON.COM

about \$64,000, up from \$58,257 over the previous school year, according to the state education department.

While some cities and towns face tight finances when federal stimulus funding runs out, teacher advocates are urging Congress to pass additional funding to help protect teaching jobs from projected state and local budget shortfalls in the next two years.

In Massachusetts, public school teachers must be licensed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, a process that varies in time and cost, depending on the applicant's initial education and experience.

Generally, for a career changer who holds a bachelor's degree but lacks specialized teacher training, it will take at least four years and cost several thousand dollars to achieve full licensure. But a career changer can apply for a "preliminary" license, which enables them to learn on the job. In addition to a bachelor's degree, those seeking a preliminary license must pass both parts of the Massachusetts Tests For Educator Licensure exam, known as the MTEL.

Such a license lets one work as a teacher for up to five years, while taking a state-approved course of study to qualify for the next step up, an "initial" license, which is the traditional entry-level permit for those who have already had teacher training. Further experience or education - such as a master's degree - is necessary to advance to a full or "professional" license that renews every five years as long as the holder meets ongoing professional development requirements.

Nora Todd, a licensure specialist with the Massachusetts Teachers Association, recommends that career-changers enroll in approved training courses as soon as possible while teaching, rather than waiting until the end of their five-year preliminary license period. "There are a lot of things they are unprepared for," she said.

About 40 districts offer structured programs for new teachers who are working toward initial licensing on-site. Such programs typically assign the new teacher a mentor and require that certain courses be taken at the same time the teacher is gaining classroom experience.

One such program, geared toward producing quality teachers for urban school systems, is offered at City on a Hill, a small public charter high school in Roxbury. Prospective teachers apply for one-year fellowships at the school, which offers a small stipend as well as discounted tuition on education classes that they take concurrently at Simmons College.

Fellows begin by observing in the classroom, gradually taking on more responsibility until they are teaching at the end of their year. When they complete the fellowship, they have classroom experience plus credits toward a master's degree. They must agree to teach for two years in an urban system.

Laura Quilty, 27, completed her fellowship at City on a Hill last year and now teaches English at the school full time.

Quilty worked in marketing and communications after graduating from college in 2004 with an English degree, but decided teaching would be more fulfilling.

At City on a Hill, Quilty started out helping in the classroom before moving to teaching with a mentor instructor present, then finally to teaching classes on her own. Now she has just one more course to take before earning her master's

10 RESUME MISTAKES



How to make sure you resume doesn't turn off employers

NEW GADGETS DEBUT



Some devices appearing at Las Vegas electronics trade show

THE INK TANK



A roundup of editorial cartoons

2010 RED SOX STARTING LINEUP



Ellsbury at left, Martinez behind the plate, and more changes

PLUS...

[Blogs](#) | [Crossword](#) | [Comics](#)
| [Horoscopes](#) | [Games](#) | [Lottery](#)
| [Caption contest](#) | [Today in history](#)

The Economist

Special Online offer!



* Get 12 issues of *The Economist* for \$12.

SAVE NOW.

MOST E-MAILED

1. [10 resume mistakes that turn off employers](#)
2. [The beat goes on](#)
3. [In the end, they're mere mortals](#)
4. [Orchestrating a victory in N.H.](#)
5. [Providing quality care, and a human touch](#)
6. [The college admissions scam](#)
7. [Boston prods NU on student numbers](#)

RECOMMENDED SEARCHES

- [Weather](#)
- [Sudoku](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Horoscope](#)
- [Best garden books](#)
- [RECIPES Slimming dishes](#)

degree.

[ABOUT THIS LIST](#)

“I feel like I finally figured out what I want to be when I grow up,” she said.

Swanson, the middle school math teacher, had initially been hired as a substitute teacher, after getting her preliminary license.

But just two weeks later, a sixth-grade math teacher moved out of state, and she was hired for the job with no formal classroom experience. “It was terrifying,” she said, “but I had lots of support.”

A year ago, she began taking a teacher-preparatory program offered by Catherine Leahy-Brine Educational Consultants Inc., a state-approved provider which offers an 18-credit program that leads to an initial license in as little as one year.

The courses can be taken as a stand-alone program, or as part of work toward a master’s degree in education with Leahy-Brine’s partner, Fitchburg State College. Swanson just completed the course and received her “initial” license, which is good for another five years.

For more information, visit the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at www.does.mass.edu. ■

© Copyright 2010 Globe Newspaper Company.

Start your week off right with in-depth coverage. [Subscribe now to the Globe.](#)



READER COMMENTS »

[View reader comments \(0\) »](#) [Comment on this story »](#)

Ads by Google

[what's this?](#)

Teacher Certification

Earn your teacher’s certification or license online. Fast & flexible.

www.Online-Education.net

3,4,5 Day Toddler Program

Stoneridge Montessori Spaces for Toddlers in 2010

www.stoneridgecms.org/progra

Teaching Degrees Online

Get your teaching education online. Accredited programs only.

www.EducationDegreeSource.com

[Home](#) | [Today's Globe](#) | [News](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Lifestyle](#) | [A&E](#) | [Things to Do](#) | [Travel](#) | [Cars](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Local Search](#)

[CONTACT BOSTON.COM](#) | [Help](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Work here](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [Mobile](#) | [RSS feeds](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [Make Boston.com your homepage](#)

[CONTACT THE BOSTON GLOBE](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Manage your subscription](#) | [Advertise](#) | [The Boston Globe Extras](#) | [The Boston Globe Store](#) | © 2010 NY Times Co.

[Post Job](#)

[Mortgage Rate](#)

[Health Insurance](#)

[Help Small Businesses](#)

[College Admissions](#)

[Scott Brown](#)

[Car Deals](#)

[Homeowner](#)

SNAP LINKADS