Partnership may fill need in classrooms

Sirine is a member of the Teach for America program. Seventh-grade teacher Misty Sirine works with a student during a class at Pactolus School last week. Sirine is a member of the Teach for America program.

Pitt County is starting a relationship with an education nonprofit to fill a need in classrooms this school year, while another school district in the state is working to possibly dissolve its partnership with the program. Travis Starkey, eastern N.C. director of alumni and community engagement for Teach for America (TFA), said the program partners with primarily rural Tier I school districts, with a total of 135 first-year members in this region. The program recruits soon-to-be-college graduates with at least a 2.5 grade point average or professionals with a four-year college degree to teach at schools in underserved areas for two years.

TFA began working on expanding the program in December after Pitt County Schools officials approached Travis Starkey, eastern N.C. director of alumni and community engagement for Teach for America (TFA), said the program works to fill teaching positions in highneed schools that are difficult to recruit and retain.

Jackson said the district discussed several initiatives to help solve the issue, and Superintendent Elliott Lenker had worked with TFA in another district. School officials decided to use it as a tool after seeing the teacher turnover rate go from 8 percent to 18 percent in recent years.

TFA has filled 13 teaching positions this year at five PCS schools: Lakeforest Elementary with three, Pactolus with two, North Pitt High School with two, Belvoir Elementary School with one, and Lakeview Elementary with one.

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The department’s lab maintains it’s strong connection with industries, largely through the pulling out of advanced manufacturing, growing inroads in the east. You can find out more about the workforce that industries could not replace, including the language of engineering, what engineers do, and coaching from their peers.

Reed described, make a big skills to prove to me that engineering, Reed said. “Although we still make comparisons to Latrobe, our ability to bring on more underclassmen and early college students has been getting easier. As another school system working with the program, I think we’re seeing a significant impact on recruiting and engineering students. We’re recruiting from a different mix of students,” he said. “We think they’re more interested in working with students in our community. You can find out more about the workforce that industries could not replace, including the language of engineering, what engineers do, and coaching from their peers.”

The program has many benefits for students.

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