

## Essay

Please write and title a 500-700-word essay on the following theme:

***School districts throughout Missouri and the nation are facing a shortage of teachers. In your essay, identify and explain how best to recruit students to pursue a teaching career. Reflect upon those teachers whom you consider to be excellent teachers. What skills are needed to be a high-quality teacher? Please provide examples of how high-quality teaching inspired you to succeed as a student.***

The current teacher shortage is affecting students everywhere. It is important for schools to find a way to end the shortage before it is fatal for students' educations. I personally feel like the major problem with the number of teachers is that the government is not giving schools enough funding to sufficiently pay their employees. Another issue is that places like McDonald's are paying \$15 an hour for light work. The mindset of young kids is that they can go work in fast food straight out of high school and make more than they would for any college career because they would not have a debt to pay for. The problem with this is that fast-food restaurants do not provide the benefits and stability for the future that jobs like teaching do. Our schools need to teach students about the long-term effects of having a job in fast food versus a job like teaching. Teachers are able to have the summers off to raise their children. They also get to have snow days and breaks off with their families. It is very important to notice just how rare that is. No other business allows for parents to spend such quality time with their children and families and to me, that is more important than any salary one could be offered.

To recruit students, schools need to share views from current teachers. Social media is a great way to encourage students. Tiktok is a great platform that allows for short 1-3 minute videos to be posted that can get the word out about the joys of teaching. I have personally seen videos like this on social media. I follow teachers who take viewers through a "day in the life." They show how they decorate their classrooms, make them unique, and interact with the students. These videos offer a unique perspective on the sides of teaching we usually do not get to see.

The teachers that affected me the most have all shared one common characteristic, positivity. The encouragement I have received from my past teachers is what has stuck with me the most. It is important for young students to hear that they can do whatever they put their mind to and that they are needed. Hearing constant encouragement from a teacher will instill a sense of self-motivation in the students and encourage them to push themselves to achieve great things. The fondest memory I have from elementary was when my fifth-grade teacher told me I was an exceptional student who would accomplish great things. Everything I

did after that moment was to push myself to make her proud and show her that she was right to put her trust in me.

We as a society need to teach the younger generations that each career path is necessary. In today's world, some people feel as though the teaching profession is not as important as other things, like healthcare. However, I feel the opposite. Teachers are the ones in charge of our future. They are in charge of shaping and educating our youth. Being in healthcare is a great thing, but those healthcare professionals would not be where they are today without their teachers who shaped them. We need to inspire our youth to want to make a difference in the world, and that difference starts in the classroom.