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# Danville to host substitute training program

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**By Joe Sylvester**

*jsylvester@dailyitem.com*

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DANVILLE — Lauren Parker has worked as a teacher's aide in the Danville Area School District for about three years.

In September, she took part in guest teacher training through the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit so that she could substitute teach.

"I liked it," Parker said. "I wanted a little more flexibility."

Parker, who has a degree in journalism, was subbing on Thursday for teacher Sarah North in her autistic support class at the Danville Primary School. She previously substituted as a secretary, teacher or aide in all of the Danville schools.

The guest teacher program allowed her to work as a substitute teacher — a position Danville and other districts struggle to fill — without getting her Pennsylvania teaching certificate.

"I have my bachelor's, but I feel I'm too far along in my life to go back to school," said the mother of a ninth-grade boy and seventh-grade girl.

CSIU trains the guest teachers in order to fill the great need for substitutes in districts throughout the Valley. Danville Area will host the next training Jan. 10 and 11 at the primary school. Anyone who has a four-year degree can register online for the CSIU training.

"We are in dire straits for substitute teachers," Superintendent Jason Bendle said. "I encourage any parent or any community member who wants to substitute often or even once a month (to apply)."

Substitute teachers in Valley schools are paid about \$100 per day.

"We will be promoting the training with our families and on our website, however, I am unsure who or how many may choose to attend," said Warrior Run School District Superintendent

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# Danville to host guest substitute teacher training program

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Alan Hack. "We could always use more substitutes."

School districts across the country have experienced substitute shortages for a number of years. They need substitutes who can fill in, many times with just a few hours notice, when full-time teachers are out sick or take personal days. The reasons for the shortages vary — fewer students going into education, districts competing for substitutes and substitutes leaving education to find jobs in another field.

Carol Gentilucci, filling in on Thursday for first-grade teacher Maddie Ernest at the Danville Primary School, did the guest teacher training 16 years ago and has been substituting ever since.



Joe Sylvester/The Daily Item

**Guest teacher Lauren Parker, seated right, works with autistic support students in Sarah North's classroom at the Danville Primary School on Thursday. Pictured, from left, are Levi Shope, Inaho Dimatulac, Draven Brown, support staff member Tammy Kashner and Parker.**

"I started because my kids were in school, and I love be-

ing with kids," said Gentilucci,

whose sons are now 27, 24 and 21. The veteran substitute, who has a degree in art, said she doesn't want to teach full-time because she likes the flexibility so that she could be home when her kids are there. She has substituted in grades kindergarten through 12th.

Bendle said years ago about 11 percent of college students were education majors. That has fallen to 5 percent, he said.

The CSIU interactive training sessions will provide strategies for effective instruction, as well as management of traditional, non-traditional and special education classrooms, according to CSIU literature. The applicants also must complete classroom observations arranged by CSIU staff.

Upon successful completion of the training, candidates can apply for a day-to-day substitute teacher emergency permit with the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The permit allows guest teachers to work as substitute teachers in the participating school districts of the Central Susquehanna Regional Guest Teacher Consortium and also within CSIU educational programs.

CSIU spokeswoman Jennifer Spotts said Danville's hosting of the training session is a first. It's usually held at CSIU's building in Montandon.

"We've been offering the training twice a year for as long as I can remember," Spotts said. "Now we're offering it three times a year."