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# BVI Looking to High-Schoolers to Fill Teacher Shortage Gaps

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**BVI school students. By. BVI NEWS**

Struggling with a chronic teacher shortage for years, northern Caribbean territories have employed various strategies including heightened pay and relaxed immigration requirements to attract and retain educators. Now, the British Virgin Islands is planning to implement a unique recruitment strategy by actively targeting graduating high school students, according to the BVI Minister of Education, Sharie de Castro.

Ms. de Castro revealed her ministry's intentions in an interview with BVI News. The initiative aims to revive a previous teacher-trainee program that gave interested high school graduates an opportunity to experience the teaching profession as a trainee for one to two years before

proceeding to further studies.

"We used to have a teacher-trainee program way back where persons who were graduating and had an interest in teaching had the opportunity to come into the profession as a teacher-trainee for a year to two years and then go off to study," de Castro explained. "We believe it could be an opportunity where we could recruit the requisite talent right out of high school and give them the professional development, certification and degrees necessary to grow in the profession."

In addition to graduating high school students, the Ministry of Education will also seek fresh college graduates for recruitment. "We're about to launch a program as well called 'Let's Teach VI'...where we can get them in the door as well, because they would have an Associate or Bachelor's in a content area," de Castro added.

To bolster these recruitment efforts, the Ministry, in collaboration with the H. Lavity Stoutt College, is developing an initial training program for new graduates.

The need for this innovative approach arises as the BVI grapples to compete with other territories for the limited pool of trained teachers. Currently, the starting salary for teachers in the BVI is a mere \$31,000, leading many to opt for positions in the U.S. Virgin Islands, where teachers can earn [a starting salary of over \\$50,000 per year](#), or the Cayman Islands, where starting salaries can reach up to \$70,000 annually.