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Backing for temporary teachers

The state's new education commissioner said she supports a proposal to let college graduates teach without the usual apprenticeship in a teacher training program.

"I say teachers are born, and I really believe that," Shirley Neeley told a crowd Wednesday at the Texas Public Policy Foundation's second annual Policy Orientation for the Texas Legislature. "I really believe this will work. Give us a chance to prove it to you."

The State Board for Educator Certification passed a rule in November that would let anyone with at least a bachelor's degree get a temporary certificate to teach eighth through 12th grades if the person can pass the state teacher exam.

Supporters say the rule would help ease a state teacher shortage; opponents contend that it would put unprepared teachers in classrooms. The State Board of Education will review the rule Feb. 26-27 and can veto it or let it become state policy.