



March 10, 2025

Re: HF1959, Teacher preparation program grant eligibility modified

Dear Chair Bennett & Members of the House Education Policy Committee,

Great educators are critical to student success, and thankfully Minnesota is home to a variety of programs that help educators prepare for the classroom. This includes traditional higher education programs, as well as alternative teacher preparation programs that are bringing career and technical teachers, special education teachers, and teachers of color to the classroom.

While traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs differ in how they deliver content—for example, more hands-on work or an accelerated timeline—all Minnesota teacher preparation programs must meet the same rigorous standards and go through the same approval processes as overseen by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). Similarly, all teacher candidates must meet the same standards in order to receive their license. The primary distinction is that traditional and nonconventional teacher preparation programs are housed within institutions of higher education, while alternative teacher preparation programs are not.

Unfortunately, some state programs and funding streams leave out alternative teacher preparation, making it more challenging for these programs to reach and serve aspiring educators in the high-need fields they are designed to serve. Making all programs approved through the rigorous process led by PELSB is a common sense measure that can level the playing field and advance programs that recruit and train the teachers our students need most.

We support HF1959 as a means to remove barriers for aspiring educators seeking a variety of pathways to the classroom. Minnesota has made important investments in our teacher pipeline and this bill ensures state funds don't leave out some educators just because of the type of program they choose. Thank you to Rep. Mueller for authoring this educator-focused proposal.

Sincerely,
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