

Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

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Dear Chair Richardson and members of the House Education Policy Committee:

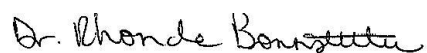
As president of the Minnesota Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, I represent all 31 of the higher education teacher preparation programs in Minnesota, along with some of the two-year Transfer Pathways programs. In that role, I wanted to share our position on some of the provisions of HF 950 that are specific to teacher licensure programs.

MACTE supports the provisions in Section 7, Subd. 2(5) of HF 950 making needed changes in the tiered licensure system to ensure high standards for teacher licensure (lines 45.8-45.11). We believe that the eight years that would still be provided under Tier 1 and 2 renewals to complete a preparation program or earn licensure by portfolio will allow sufficient flexibility for individuals who wish to become licensed teachers to achieve Tier 3 licensure. These pathways ensure that candidates for professional licensure have documented that they have met all licensure standards. Allowing a Tier 2 candidate to move to an infinitely renewable Tier 3 professional license without ever documenting that they are able to meet teacher licensure standards does not ensure that all students will have a highly qualified teacher who has met standards for licensure. MACTE supports measures that require all teachers earning a Tier 3 license to evidence meeting all licensure standards, whether through a traditional teacher preparation program, an alternative teacher preparation program, or via licensure by portfolio.

MACTE also supports the removal of provisions in Section 8, subdivision 1, which require teachers to “demonstrate a passing score on a board adopted examination of skills in reading, writing, and mathematics before being granted a Tier 4 teaching license”. We have found little to no current research that indicates that passing these tests correlates to higher effectiveness as a teacher or to higher student achievement. Substantial evidence exists, however, to indicate the tests are biased against candidates of color and against those who are English learners. Requiring a passing score on these tests has deterred many candidates from seeking licensure. It does not support our goal of increasing the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers to better reflect the diversity of our PreK-12 students. These tests also pose financial barriers for many candidates. We believe far better measures can and should be used to determine whether a teacher with at least three years of teaching experience should be moved to a Tier 4 professional license.

MACTE would like to thank the members of this committee for their time and efforts to elevate the teaching profession and to improve the educational outcomes for all Minnesota learners.

Sincerely,



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