

Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

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Dear Chair Chairs Fateh and Pelowski and members of the Higher Education Conference Committee,

As a consortium of higher education teacher preparation providers, we are grateful to you and the work of this committee for the major investments you are recommending for higher education.

Our first recommendation is to support the House investment in **Underrepresented Student Teacher Grants**. Unpaid student teaching is the biggest barrier to the profession. People may complete all of their coursework requirements and then not complete the required student teaching because of the financial burden. Student teaching is a minimum of 12 weeks. Many people may take out a loan for both tuition and cost of living. As a beginning teacher, paying off this loan may take 15 years or more. Teachers should enter the field encumbered by debt.

Neither House nor Senate is proposing any funding for the **Aspiring Teachers of Color Scholarship** program although the Increase Teachers of Color Act proposed \$18.5 million per fiscal year for the program. This funding would support approximately 1,850 BIPOC teacher candidates with scholarships. Please consider allocating at least \$3 million per fiscal year for these scholarships.

Finally, there is the **Teacher Shortage Loan Repayment** program. We recommend shifting the House's proposed increased investment of \$3 million per fiscal year for the loan repayment program to the **Aspiring Teachers of Color Scholarship** program. Grants and scholarships are more impactful to increase the percentage of BIPOC teachers in MN.

Thank you for reading this feedback and thank you for your service.

Respectfully,

Laura Mogelson, MACTE Legislative Liaison
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