



2.25.20

To: Commissioner Mary Catherine Ricker
Regarding: Support for arts education policy in HF 3186 and SF 3393

Minnesota Citizens for the Arts supports the Education Policy Bill (HF 3186 and SF 3393) as introduced.

Minnesota Citizens for the Arts' mission is to increase access to the arts for all Minnesotans. One of our public policy goals is to support the arts as a core academic subject in Minnesota schools. For this reason, we support the Education Policy bill as introduced, to clarify that statewide standards in the arts are needed to bring equity and consistency to students to access arts education opportunities across the state.

Unified state standards in arts education provide a goal that all students will receive access to the arts they deserve, but still gives lot of leeway to schools in how they can provide these access opportunities to students.

Polls repeatedly show that Minnesotans have a special relationship with the arts and culture, attending and participating themselves in the arts to a higher agree than the rest of America.

Creative Minnesota (CreativeMN.org), a collaborative research effort that produces hard data about the arts and culture sector for education, advocacy and policy making, has found that Minnesota's 1900 nonprofit arts and culture organizations, 108,000 artists and creative workers and 23 million arts and culture attendees have an annual economic impact of well over \$2 billion annually. These dollars ripple out into the community, supporting the growing economies of cities, towns and tourist areas across the state. Most importantly, they also support the jobs of many Minnesotans. It's important for all students to have access to arts education to gain the skills they need to participate in the modern economy.

Creative Minnesota is also the host of the Arts Education Data Project which offers to community members the opportunity to see if their local school is offering access to opportunities in arts education for all of their students. (<https://www.creativemn.org/mn-arts-education-data/>)

All students deserve equity and consistency in the opportunities and access to arts education, including students moving between districts and schools. We support the Education Policy bill as introduced.

Sincerely,

Sheila Smith
Executive Director
Minnesota Citizens for the Arts

February 24, 2020



Mary Cathryn Ricker
Commissioner of Education
Minnesota Dept. of Education
1500 Hwy 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Re: House File 3186

As president of the Minnesota Science Teachers Association (MnSTA), I am writing in support of the Education Policy bill House File 3186, in particular the changes to the science graduation requirements. The bill supports the implementation of the recently developed 2019 Minnesota Science Standards, which currently are in the Rulemaking process.

This letter of support has been endorsed by the board of MnSTA. Our organization represents over 500 science teachers, grades K - 16, throughout the state. Our organization was actively involved in the development of the science standards by conducting input meetings in regions of the state before the standards were written, and during the feedback periods for both drafts of the standards. The standards committee included five of our current board members. As such, our organization is a strong advocate for the new standards and for actions that support teachers and schools in implementing the standards.

The current language of MN Statute 120B.024 subd 1(4) specifies the following graduation requirement for science.

“three credits of science, including at least one credit of biology, one credit of chemistry or physics, and one elective credit of science The combination of credits under this clause must be sufficient to satisfy (i) all of the academic standards in either chemistry or physics and (ii) all other academic standards in science.”

The 2009 standards have five areas of high school content standards: life science, physical science, earth & space science, physics and chemistry. All Minnesota students complete their life science standards in high school biology and earn one credit in biology. Through the chemistry or physics credit, students meet the requirement that students satisfy either the chemistry or physics standards. Hence, in most schools, the remaining 1 “elective” credit must support students in accomplishing both the physical science and the earth & space science standards. For most schools, this is very difficult and often they are not able to have students accomplish all the high school earth science standards.

Based on public input, (over 1300 comments), the 2019 science standards committee affirmed the importance of earth science content and skills for all students, and by extension, our state’s economy. The committee intentionally strengthened the high school earth and space science standards and benchmarks. They also determined that the physical science benchmarks previously in the high school standards would be more appropriate at 8th grade where they fit better with the 8th grade math standards.

When the 2019 standards are implemented in 2023-24, “all other academic standards ... in other academic standards” will only be the earth and space science standards. As a result, the proposed change in the statute makes this requirement explicit.

“three credits of science, including at least one credit of biology, one credit of chemistry or physics, and ~~one elective credit of science~~ one credit of earth and space science. The combination of credits under this clause must be sufficient to satisfy (i) all of the academic standards in either chemistry or physics and (ii) all other academic standards in science.”

The changes in the science standards and the graduation requirements will benefit our students by making them better prepared for the future of our state, which is highly dependent on wise management of our natural resources.

Sincerely,

Josh Tharaldson

Josh Tharaldson, MnSTA President
Science Teacher, Marshall County Central High School
jtharaldson@mccfreeze.org

COALITION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

February 26, 2020

Chair Cheryl Youakim
House Education Policy Committee
5 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Chair Youakim and Members of the House Education Policy Committee,

The PACER Center and the Coalition for Children with Disabilities appreciate the opportunity to share our views on the nonexclusionary disciplinary practice provisions of H.F. 3186.

We strongly support updating Minnesota's statutes to promote nonexclusionary disciplinary policies and practices, ensure provision of alternate education services, prohibit dismissals of students in public prekindergarten programs, and increase data collection on pupil withdrawals. Students with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by these policies. Research shows that positive behavioral interventions are more effective and keep students in the classroom, so they are able to continue to learn.

We look forward to continuing to work with this committee on improving disciplinary practices to better serve students with disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to share our positions. Please contact Sarah Clarke at sclarke@hyldenlaw.com or 952-201-4654 with any questions. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Gretchen Godfrey
Associate Director, PACER Center
Member of the Coalition for Children with Disabilities

Coalition for Children with Disabilities

Arc Minnesota • Autism Society of Minnesota • Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota
Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota • Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid/Minnesota Disability Law Center
Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance • PACER Center • Prader-Willi Syndrome Association of
Minnesota • Proof Alliance

Dance Educator's Coalition of Minnesota
1376 St. Clair Ave.
St. Paul, Mn 55105

February 23, 2020

Dear Commissioner Ricker,

Please know that our 34 year organization supporting the quality and quantity of Dance in Education in Minnesota has grown. Where we began with 3 high schools in the Metro area in 1986 that included Dance in their Curriculum, we now have 35 schools in Minneapolis/St. Paul and surrounding public schools. All have full time dance teachers. We are very proud. We have 3 Higher Education Institutions that support the Dance License that we crafted in 1990(Hamline University, the University of Mn/Mankato and the University of Mn/ Mpls.)and feel strongly about the continued support by the Legislature to bring about equitable and rigorous Arts Education across the state.

I served on the first Arts Standards committee when it was birthed by "Goals 2000" in the 1990's under President George H. W. Bush and the Department of Education. We have worked tirelessly as a volunteer organization to make sure schools have strong Arts, strong teachers of the Arts and standards that increase the rigor that we know the arts can bring and support.

Please accept Dance Educator's Coalition or Minnesota's request to support " Education Bill HF3186" .

Gratefully,

Colleen Callahan
Dance Educator's Coalition President
Colleen.callahan.5678@gmail.com



February 25, 2020

Dear Chair Youakim and Members of the House Education Policy Committee,

The Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota is very pleased that the Governor's education policy bill (HF3186) includes several important policy proposals that are also included in the 2020 Increase Teachers of Color Act (HF3201) as well as other policy proposals that will support teachers of color and American Indian teachers in remaining in the profession. The proposed language in our two bills was crafted over years by the Coalition with extensive stakeholder feedback; this is consistent with the Governor's vision of One Minnesota for the process of how the state should make policy through extensive community engagement to find solutions that represent common ground.

In particular, the Coalition strongly supports the following sections that are common in our bills:

- Art. 1, Sec. 8. Amending "World's Best Workforce" MN Statute 120B.11, subd 2
- Art. 1, Sec. 13. Amending "Achievement and Integration" MN Statutes 124D.861, subd 2
- Art. 3, Sec. 1. Establishing state goals to increase the percentage of TOCAIT and require a comprehensive summary report of all related state-funded grant programs

The Coalition also supports these additional provisions in HF3186 most related to our mission or 5-point platform for systemic change needed for attracting and retaining racially and ethnically diverse teachers:

- Art. 1, Sec. 4. Amending "Standards Development" MN Statutes 120B.021, subd 2
- Art. 1, Sec. 11. Establishing "Curriculum Policy" statute prohibiting discrimination or discipline for teaching about contributions of persons from protected classes
- Art. 2, Sec. 4. Amending "State Model Policy" MN Statutes 121A.031, subd 6
- Art. 2, Sec. 20. Establishing "Graduation Ceremonies" statute for cultural regalia
- Art. 3, Sec. 4. Amending "Licensure Exams" MN Statutes 122A.185, subd 1
- Art. 3, Sec. 6. Amending "Teacher Evaluation" MN Statutes 122A.40, subd 8
- Art. 3, Sec. 8. Amending "Principals" MN Statutes 123B.147, subd 3

Thank you for your leadership,

Paul Spies, PhD
Coalition Legislative Action Team Lead

Saint Paul, February 26, 2019

Honorable Members of the House Education Policy Committee,

The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs has an important role as a state agency to advise and inform elected officials about our constituent communities and their needs. Over the past several years, our agency has placed significant focus on addressing the chronic and persistent shortage of Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in our state. Based on our work, I write today in support of the policy provisions in H.F. 3186 that serve as foundational policy to address said shortage.

While the percentage of students of color and American Indian students in the state has increased from 24% to 34% over the past decade, the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers has remained stagnant at 4%. Thus, MCLA has taken a leadership role, while joining a robust and diverse group of stakeholders across the state over the previous biennium in highlighting the urgency needed to increase teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOCAIT).

In 2016 adopted state law, several statutes were amended ensuring all students have “improved and equitable access to effective and diverse teachers” who reflect the diversity of students in their schools. Providing all students with equitable access to teachers of color and indigenous teachers is something our state has yet to do in order to narrow our state’s persistent opportunity and achievement gaps, which are among the worst in the country for communities of color and American Indian communities. Despite some progress, one of the key areas that our state has not addressed systemically is the persistent shortage of TOCAIT.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to support the policy language pertaining to TOCAIT in H.F. 3186 that has been informed by feedback from hundreds of members and educators from communities of color and American Indian communities over the past three years and has been vetted and endorsed by more than two dozen important organizations. One critical component in the bill that will intentionally address TOCAIT shortages is requiring districts to have plans to ensure that curriculum as well as learning and work environments are inclusive and respectful of all racial and ethnic groups. An inclusive and respectful school climate and curriculum is imperative to TOCAIT retention efforts as well as to improved engagement of all students and their parents. An additional significant provision of this legislation would establish a state goal to increase the percentage of TOCAIT each year and have a teaching workforce that reflects the diversity of K12 students by 2040. This language would ensure that there is urgency at all levels to intentionally and legitimately address the state’s chronic shortage of TOCAIT.

Thank you for your leadership in supporting provisions that focus on addressing the severe TOCAIT shortage in Minnesota.

Sincerely,



Rosa Tock | Executive Director



Minnesota Earth Science Teachers Association

February 25th, 2020

Mary Cathryn Ricker
Commissioner of Education
Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Hwy 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Regarding: House File 3186

Dear Commissioner Ricker,

As president-elect for the Minnesota Earth Science Teachers' Association (MESTA), I am writing on behalf of our board in support of the Education Policy Bill House File 3186, specifically the changes in graduation requirements in science.

We definitely support the Governor's Education bill. Current language of MN Statute 120B.024 subd 1(4) requires for graduation "three credits of science, including at least one credit of biology, one credit of chemistry or physics, and one elective credit of science". We support the change to "~~one elective credit of science~~ one credit of earth and space science".

Thank you for promoting excellent science teaching in the state of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

K. P. Rosok

Kate Rosok
MESTA president-elect, Physics and Earth & Space Science teacher
Kate.Rosok@mpls.k12.mn.us



Commissioner Mary Catherine Ricker
Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Dear Commissioner Ricker,

The Minnesota Music Educators Association strongly supports the Education Policy Bills (HF 3186 and SF 3393) as introduced.

Minnesota Music Education Association supports 3,000+ music educators from kindergarten through collegiate level towards ensuring high quality music education for all students. As a professional organization, we provide professional development in music education, run honors ensembles for students, and support policy changes beneficial to arts education.

Setting statewide arts academic standards to support equitable, consistent student learning.

Amending Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 120B.018, subdivision 6 and Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 120B.021, subdivision 1

The Academic Standards provide a foundation and benchmarks in each subject area to ensure consistent, equitable instruction for students in every classroom, school, and district. The arts are required in state law, and listed as core in federal law. Yet, Minnesota statute currently allows districts to set their own arts academic standards.

Statewide standards set skills and knowledge benchmarks while allowing significant flexibility. Districts outline their own curriculum, arts educators their day to day instruction. Students and families are increasingly mobile. Moving from one community to another and one school to another is commonplace. Statewide standards provide the foundation for students to continue learning in their new school and classroom.

Seeking input from tribal nations and indigenous communities

Amending Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 120B.021, subdivision 2

MMEA strongly supports inclusion of Minnesota's American Indian Tribes and Communities in development of all standards. MMEA has welcomed indigenous leaders and cultural educators and ambassadors Lyz Jaakola and Kevin Locke to our professional development events. This is ground level support for curriculum and instruction, which would flow naturally from standards development.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Schaeffle", written in a cursive style.

Mary Schaeffle, Executive Director



February 24, 2020

Commissioner Ricker
and Mr. Doug Paulson
Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Rep. Cheryl Youakim
Chair, Education Policy Committee
5 State Office Building
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr
Boulevard
St. Paul, MN, 55155

SUBJECT: HF 3186
POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear Commissioner Ricker, Mr. Paulson and the House Education Policy Chair and Committee,

MNSHAPE - Minnesota Society of Health and Physical Educators - is committed to ensuring all children have the opportunity to lead healthy, physically active lives. As the state's largest membership organization of health and physical education professionals, MNSHAPE works with its affiliates and national partners to support effective school health and physical education programs in all schools. MSHAPE has defined excellence in physical education, and our resources provide the leadership, professional development and advocacy that support health and physical educators at every level - from preschool to university graduate programs.

On behalf of the leadership and members of MNSHAPE, we are writing in support of the governor's education policy bill, HF 3186, containing clarification of physical education requirements. MNSHAPE has been aware of the inconsistency between state standard requirements and credit requirements in physical education and identifies the language in the bill to be a necessary clarification to provide consistent, equitable physical education programs across the state.

Legislation already identifies physical education as a mandatory subject area for all students. MS 120a.22 identifies that physical education is a required content area and that instruction must be provided for all students ages 7 to 16. MS 120b.021 identifies physical education as a required subject for statewide accountability in academic standards.

MNSHAPE has worked hard with advocates over the years to ensure students across the state receive quality and equitable physical education programming from the elementary level to the high school level.

- MNSHAPE supported legislation to adopt the NASPE Physical education standards as our state standards in 2010. There were no grade level expectations with the national standards, so MN local districts were required to develop their own grade level benchmarks and credit requirements. Over the next few years, our membership identified inconsistencies in grade level expectations and credit requirements
- Based on this, in 2013 MNSHAPE and advocates supported legislation that directed the Department of Education to survey schools to determine physical education practices across the state. The 2015 MDE legislative report, “**A Report on K-12 Students’ Experience with Physical Education in Minnesota Schools**”, identified that 61% of MN high schools required 1 full credit or more (credit is equivalent to one academic year), while 39% required less than one full year.
- This inconsistency in credit requirements, as well as other programming inconsistencies K- 12, led MNSHAPE and advocates to support legislation that required the Department of Education to adopt the 2014 Shape America Standards and Grade Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education as the state required physical education academic standards. MNSHAPE believes that by adopting grade level benchmarks for all students, inconsistencies across schools will be diminished, creating equitable opportunities for our students across the state.
- MNSHAPE worked with the Department to develop the 2018 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Physical Education and Grade-Level Benchmarks and are currently assisting in the professional development for schools to be ready to implement the new standards in the 2021-22 school year.

The adoption of the 2018 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Physical Education and Grade-Level Benchmarks, ensures equitable physical education programming for all the students in Minnesota. The final step is to clarify credit requirements as identified in the governor’s education policy bill, HF 3186.

We respectfully ask you to support the governor’s education policy bill, HF 3186.

Sincerely,

Nancy Christensen

Nancy Christensen
MNSHAPE Executive Director

Sue Bremer

Sue Bremer
MNSHAPE Immediate Past President

Lisa Smith

Lisa Smith
MNSHAPE President

Tom Roberts

Tom Roberts
MNSHAPE President-Elect



PERPICH
TEACHING IN AND
THROUGH THE ARTS

February 24, 2020

Ms. Mary Cathryn Ricker, Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113

Dear Commissioner Ricker,

I am writing this letter in support of HF 3186 and SF 3393. Perpich Center for Arts Education is in support of the changes in the bills because a rigorous, consistent, standards-based education in the arts is essential to a complete education for all Minnesota students. The arts have been considered core subject areas, required for accountability, since 2003, when the first Minnesota standards for dance, music, theater and visual arts were developed and implemented.

Academic Standards in the Arts K-12 ensure that study in the arts is focused on what is important for students to learn to be career and college ready and are the points of reference for assessing the results in classrooms or by school districts. The arts standards bring a sequenced, developmental approach to learning, so that no matter where you live in Minnesota, your education is not hit-or-miss, but a thoughtful progression of learning that provides equitable opportunity for all students.

In order to assure equity of access to these high expectations for learning, the arts, like all of the other core subject areas, should have consistent standards statewide. These standards, built on research by the College Board and others ensure a solid foundation for all of our K-12 Minnesota students to achieve their highest potential.

Perpich Center facilitates regional networks of teachers across the state, with a focus on implementing the arts standards with fidelity. Teacher collaboration and conversation about effective practices for standards-based curriculum, instruction and assessment is most effective and efficient when teachers are all operating with the same set of standards. Informed teachers are necessary because if they

Perpich Arts High School
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PERPICH

TEACHING IN AND
THROUGH THE ARTS

collaboratively understand the standards they will offer high quality instruction more uniformly.

Perpich Center also supports the inclusion of media arts as one of the choices for students at the elementary and middle school levels to meet the requirements in the arts. Minnesota has been a national leader in media arts education and has had media arts standards at the high school level since 2003. Today more than half of the states have adopted media arts as one of the arts areas in their state arts standards.

The technical changes and alignment in the bill are improvements for our Minnesota education system to best serve all of our students.

Thank you for considering these perspectives.

Respectfully,

Pam Paulson, PhD
Director, Professional Development and Resource Programs
Perpich Center for Arts Education

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Perpich Arts Outreach
Perpich Arts Library

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