

Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

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Representative Pryor and members of the House Education Policy Committee,

We are writing to express our strong support for HF 3803. Below is some contextual information about student teaching in Minnesota and reasons for supporting this bill.

Current Student Teaching Requirement:

- Candidates must complete a minimum of 12 weeks of full-time student teaching
- For most teacher candidates¹ student teaching is an unpaid experience

History of Unpaid Student Teaching:

- Our current student teaching expectations began when student teachers were predominantly full-time undergraduates, often supported financially by their parents
- Unpaid internships were common in undergraduate studies across content areas
 - We now recognize that such unpaid expectations disadvantage students from mid to lower financial brackets
 - Due to this recognition, unpaid internships are now less common overall
 - The Department of Labor and Industry classifies student teaching as work in registered apprenticeships and should be compensated

Current Student Teacher Demographics:

- Student teachers are both undergraduate and graduate students
 - 33% of teacher candidates in Minnesota are at the post-baccalaureate level
 - Many undergraduates are nontraditional adult students
 - Adult student teachers often come into the profession as career changers or as non-licensed school professionals with or without bachelor's degrees

¹ Teachers on a Tier 2 license are able to fulfill the student teaching requirement in their own classroom with university supervision and district mentor. Tier 2 student teachers would not receive stipends.

Financial Stability for Students:

- Both undergraduate and graduate student teachers frequently report experiencing extreme financial distress during the student teaching
- Many teacher candidates do not complete their programs because three months without an income is not a viable option for them or their families
- When student teachers have to work evenings and weekends to support themselves or their families during this time, they are unable to participate fully, learn less, and often experience burnout

Improved Teacher Preparation:

- Financial support enables student teachers to dedicate more time and energy to the required tasks (e.g., needs of students, lesson planning, assessments) and become more skilled teachers
- A student teacher is a second trained adult in the classroom

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we urge you to support HF 3803 and thank Representative Norris for his work on the legislation.

Sincerely,

Laura Mogelson, Legislative Liaison
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