

Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Dr. Rhonda Bonnsetter, President
rhonda.bonnsetter@smsu.edu 507-227-1459

Krista Overby, Executive Assistant
and02975@umn.edu 952-715-1257

February 28, 2021

Good afternoon, Chair Richardson and members of the House Education Policy Committee.

My name is Dr. Rhonda Bonnsetter. I am a Professor of Education at Southwest Minnesota State University, and president of the Minnesota Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, or MACTE. I am here today to testify on behalf of MACTE, which represents all 31 of the PELSB-approved higher education teacher preparation programs in Minnesota.

MACTE is supportive of all paths to teacher licensure that require candidates to meet the same standards required by our state's Professional Educator Licensure and Standards Board. This includes traditional 4-year programs, 2-year transfer pathways to 4-year programs, non-conventional programs, alternative preparation programs, and the licensure-by portfolio-option. In each case, candidates are required to provide evidence that they have mastered the same set of standards for pedagogy and content knowledge. MACTE is in support HF 1376 and in particular, the change in Sec. 36, Subd. 5 that would remove the option of moving to a fully renewable Tier 3 license after teaching for 3 years on a Tier 2 license without evidence of being placed on an improvement plan. Candidates seeking the Tier 3 license via this pathway have not evidenced meeting the teacher licensure standards set forth by PELSB other than by passing multiple-choice tests in content and pedagogy. This would appear to be in conflict with Sec. 11, subd. 4 on Licensing which states, "The board must not delegate its authority to make all licensing decisions with respect to candidates for teacher licensure. The board must evaluate candidates for compliance with statutory or rule requirements for licensure and develop licensure verification requirements." These candidates do not complete the board approved performance assessment nor do they have to show evidence of meeting PELSB teacher licensure standards, as candidates in traditional and alternative licensure programs are required to do. Only their building administrators have evaluated their performance.

We don't allow those seeking a driver's license to obtain their license by taking the written test and showing that they haven't had an accident in the last three years; they are required to pass a 'behind the wheel' performance assessment to show that they have met all requirements for that license. Candidates seeking the Tier 3 renewable license have multiple pathways available to them, from traditional teacher preparation, alternative preparation, and licensure by portfolio, which all provide evidence of meeting the PELSB standards for licensure. Please support this change to the Tiered Licensure system so that all parents/guardians will know that the teachers in their children's classrooms holding a Tier 3 license have met the high standards for teacher licensure that Minnesotans expect and our children deserve.