



## Academic and Student Affairs

**DATE:** May 5, 2020  
**TO:** Alex Liuzzi, Executive Director  
**FROM:** Ron Anderson, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs  
**SUBJECT:** Pre-education Programs (Two-year Education Transfer Pathways)

I'm writing in follow-up to discussions between yourself, other PELSB staff, Marta Mohr (Interim System Director of Transfer and DARs), and Satasha Green-Stephen (Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs) regarding Minnesota State's two-year pre-education programs that serve as transfer pathways to our university teacher preparation programs.

As I believe you are aware, the transfer pathway programs developed at Minnesota State in 26 distinct disciplines are the culmination of an innovative attempt to benefit students at Minnesota State and reduce time and tuition costs as they move from our two-year colleges to our four-year universities. The transfer pathways were developed by committees comprised of faculty, staff and administrators from across the system and are now being implemented at colleges and universities throughout the state.

These transfer pathway programs have been approved by the Academic Programs unit, added to the official Program Inventory, and are open for student registration. However, full implementation of the four Education Transfer Pathway programs has been delayed because of the admittedly ambitious plan to have the two-year college pre-education programs meet PELSB unit and program standards which were designed for four-year teacher preparation programs that recommend graduates for licensure. We have concluded that the associate degree pre-education programs do not fit the framework of PELSB, which has, appropriately, been created to assess four-year teacher preparation degree programs that lead to teacher licensure. Despite all our best efforts to address this difference in focus, our campuses, faculty, and staff have grown frustrated with shifting expectations and requirements that are not designed for pre-teacher preparation programs.

The Minnesota state legislature mandates that the Minnesota State board of trustees review and approve or disapprove campus proposals for adding, deleting, or substantially changing programs of study (MN Statutes 136f.30) which includes the Education Transfer Pathways. Minnesota State has in place Board of Trustees policies and procedures not only for new program review and approval, but for quality assurance of existing college and university programs. As a mechanism for strengthening the quality of all our programs, including education transfer pathways, we have also created a cross-sector workgroup consisting of two-year and four-year education faculty to address ongoing program review, assessment and alignment consistent with the transfer pathways structure.

We recognize and appreciate the work of PELSB and Minnesota State faculty and administrators over the past few years to try to create an approval process for Minnesota State two-year pre-education programs.

However, due to the miss-fit between pre-education programs and university teacher preparation licensure standards and requirements, as well as the time and resources required trying to fit a square peg in a round hole, Minnesota State college pre-education programs will no longer pursue PELSB unit or program approval. Our universities will, of course, continue to work closely with PELSB to ensure full compliance with PELSB standards and requirements for four-year teacher preparation programs.

On another note, Minnesota State would like to continue engaging with PELSB to explore opportunities for two-year career technical education associate degree programs that would lead to licensure in high-need career technical program areas.

Please accept our sincere gratitude for your work and support over these past few years as we have worked together to review Minnesota State's two-year pre-education programs. We have learned a great deal in this process and are stronger as a result.

If you have any questions about this decision or the deeper thinking behind it please don't hesitate to reach out to me or Satasha Green-Stephen.

cc: Brian Rappe, Chair of PELSB Board  
Satasha Green-Stephen, Associate Vice Chancellor  
Marta Mohr, Interim System Director of Transfer and DARS