

Twin Cities Campus

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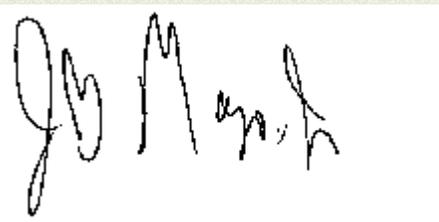
Dear Members of House and Senate Education and Higher Education Committees,

I am writing on behalf of the Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Martha Bigelow, in offering our strong support and endorsement of the 2021 Increase Teachers of Color Act (ITCA). Each year, our department supports hundreds of teacher candidates across a wide range of academic program areas along their path to licensure. We make our best efforts to recruit, retain, and matriculate teachers of color across all program areas through our Teacher-Scholars of Color (TSOC) initiative and believe the Increase Teachers of Color Act will provide a great opportunity to address and remove barriers that consistently suppress the number of teachers of color in Minnesota classrooms.

The disparity between the number of students of color in classrooms across Minnesota (approximately 34%) as compared to the number of teachers of color (about 5%) is well-documented and has persisted for many years. While the percentage of students of color continues to rise, the percentage of teachers of color remains stagnate. Meanwhile, Minnesota has one of the largest racial and ethnic achievement gaps in the United States, and research indicates that an increased number of teachers of color leads to positive academic outcomes for students of color, including higher academic achievement, increased graduation rates, and higher likelihood of attending college.

We urge you to support the 2021 Increase Teachers of Color Act. The need is dire and our students of color and the communities that support them have waited long enough. Our students of color deserve better and this Act will move us in a positive direction toward educational equity for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.B. Mayo, Jr.", is displayed within a white rectangular box.

J.B. Mayo, Jr., Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Associate Department Chair
Faculty Lead, Teacher-Scholars of Color
Department of Curriculum & Instruction