

Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

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Assessment and Accountability

Teacher candidates in Minnesota are required to complete an array of assessments. While it is essential that candidates demonstrate that they have acquired the skills, knowledge, and dispositions articulated in the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice, an over-reliance on standardized assessments can keep fully qualified, committed, and effective candidates out of Minnesota classrooms.

How Minnesota Should Respond:

- The BOT should define multiple means by which teacher candidates can demonstrate proficiency. These should include alternatives to standardized tests.
- The Board of Teaching should continue to assess the purpose, costs, appropriate uses, reliability, and predictive validity of assessments as it develops and implements rules and requirements for teacher candidates, with particular attention to the appropriate uses of assessments used for consequential employment decisions related to licensure.

Meeting the Needs of Minnesota Schools and Students

Minnesota schools must be staffed by fully licensed teachers who have the depth of content knowledge essential for the subject(s) they teach and a deep understanding of child development, evaluation, academic planning, and learners with special needs and limited English proficiency. Teacher development must be seen as a continuum that begins with licensure followed by on-going learning opportunities (mentoring, induction, and professional development).

How Minnesota Should Respond:

- The state should support strategies to recruit, support, prepare, license, and retain a more diverse teaching force for Minnesota classrooms, including financial support and incentives to enable more diverse individuals to complete licensure; targeted funding to enable teacher preparation programs to attract, prepare, and license candidates of color; removal of financial and programmatic barriers to licensure for paraeducators; and outreach and mentoring to middle/high school students as a means to recruit diverse group of high-quality candidates to teacher preparation programs.
- The state should offer incentives and professional support (e.g., mentoring) to attract and retain experienced, highly effective teachers to work in the most racially and culturally diverse and economically challenged schools.
- Policies designed to reduce opportunity gaps should address and fund educational, social, and economic needs as a unified approach.

Pathways to Practice

Individuals seeking licensure in Minnesota currently have an array of pathways available to meet the state's rigorous standards and demonstrate that they have acquired the knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential to supporting effective teaching and learning. What needs to remain constant is adherence to the rigorous standards articulated by the Board of Teaching, guarding against hasty efforts to "shortcut" pathways to licensure that might yield quick responses to immediate needs but that lack the rigor and quality needed to meet student needs.

How Minnesota Should Respond:

- All pathways to licensure in Minnesota should be required to meet the same, high standards; provide the same extensive documentation about candidate performance; and complete the same rigorous and regular approval process.
- Alternative licensure programs approved to operate in Minnesota should be required to be actively partnered with an approved Minnesota college or university.
- Any agreements designed to expedite licensure for candidates prepared outside of Minnesota should include requirements that those states' standards have been determined to be fully comparable to Minnesota's Standards of Effective Practice.
- The Board of Teaching should lead a process to revisit the SEPs, working to reduce them to a set of comprehensive, yet manageable and appropriate, standards for licensure.