

3.10.17 MACTE Weekly Legislative Update
Prepared by Cyndy Crist, MACTE Legislative and Policy Liaison

Busy Week at the Legislature.

As the legislature approached its first committee deadline on Friday, 3.10, committees were busy getting bills moved on toward their final approval. That was very true for bills involving teacher preparation and licensure.

In the House, HF 140, the bill to revamp teacher licensure (governance, tiered licensure, etc.), passed out of the Education Finance Committee on 3.09. MACTE was ably represented by our former colleague, Louise Wilson, who testified about the value and importance of having a higher education representative on the Board, and Misty Sato, who focused on issues and concerns about the proposed Tiered Licensure structure. I had intended to testify about the need to hold all preparation programs, including alternative providers, to the same standards, but an author's amendment made those changes so my testimony was quite brief. While it is encouraging to see important changes for which we have advocated addressed as the bill is revised and moved forward, there are still problems from a MACTE perspective and we may be calling on all of you to contact your legislators once the bill is ready to be taken up on the floor of the legislature. This will happen after it is heard and approved by the Ways and Means committee next week.

Also in the House, the policy omnibus bill, HF 1376, was passed out of committee on 3.09. Its only provision related to teacher preparation adds the reporting of disaggregated data on the basis of race/ethnicity within the provisions regarding teacher preparation program data reports as noted in last week's update. The bill's **Senate Companion, SF 1222**, does not contain a comparable provision.

In the House Higher Education and Career Readiness Policy and Finance Committee, HF 1409 was heard on Tuesday, 3.07 and laid on the table for possible inclusion in the omnibus higher education bill. This is the Coalition bill that would provide funding for student teacher shortage grants and teachers of color stipends. The **Senate Companion bill, SF 1585**, was also heard on 3.07.

On the Senate side, the Coalition's K-12 bill, SF 1555, the Increase Teachers of Color Act, was heard on Monday, 3.06, in the Senate E-12 Finance Committee. A long list of testifiers shared personal stories about how important it is for the state to provide support to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers of color and American Indian teachers. Among other provisions, the bill encourages teacher mentoring, induction, and retention programs; encourages the offering of "introduction to teaching" and "introduction to education" courses to high school students via concurrent enrollment; funds a teacher shortage loan forgiveness program; and expands funding opportunities for Grow Your Own pathways to licensure and collaborative urban and greater Minnesota educators of color programs. Its **House companion bill, HF 1903**, has been introduced but not yet given a hearing.

On Thursday, 3.09, the **Senate E-12 Policy Committee took up SF 1756**, a bill focused on modifying alternative teacher preparation program requirements and establishing an alternative teacher preparation grant program. Misty Sato joined me in expressing some concerns about this bill. As was the case with HF 140, the concerns I was going to express about how proposed language would treat alternative providers differently from all other program providers were addressed in an author's amendment. As a result, our testimony focused on the possibility of allowing all program providers to compete for this funding, since its focus is on addressing teacher shortages (both diversity and licensure areas), and on providing a clearer picture of the extent to which higher education institutions already have developed and offer a wide variety of innovative programs beyond what is often considered "traditional." This bill was referred to E-12 Finance.

MACTE Day at the Capitol?

To date, I have only heard from three MACTE members about their interest in participating in a Day at the Capitol on Wednesday, 4.05. Although I can obviously schedule meetings for this small group, a larger presence is desirable. Please let me know ASAP if you would like to participate on April 5. I obviously need some lead time if I am going to be able to schedule meetings with appropriate legislators. Thanks.