

Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

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MACTE Minute – February 2014 MACTE Priority Issues for the 2014 Legislative Session

One of MACTE's goals is to increase participation in legislative and policy-making processes by developing clear and informative statements about issues important to our work in preparing highly qualified professional educators to serve all learners. This year, the MACTE representatives have identified the following four priorities for the upcoming legislative session:

Assessments for Teacher Licensure

In addition to assessments required for admission and continuing progress in teacher preparation programs, teacher candidates currently must complete at least three Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examination (MTLE) tests (Basic Skills, Pedagogy, and Content) and the edTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment), a performance-based assessment. Problems with some tests persist and are preventing teacher candidates who demonstrate competence on other measures from attaining licensure.

Achievement Gap

Analyses of student performance in Minnesota and across the country have demonstrated a gap in the achievement of students on the basis of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, and first language. This gap is represented in several related, but different, outcomes. The outcomes include performance on achievement tests, graduation rates, drop-out rates, and in college and career readiness as measured by rates of application, acceptance, attendance, and completion of some form of postsecondary education. Some have suggested that these issues are better identified as gaps in opportunity than achievement.

Building a Diverse Teaching Force

The success of efforts to close the student achievement gap may depend in part on our ability to attract, prepare, and retain a more diverse teaching force in communities across the country. Several studies highlight the impact on student learning of a teacher cadre that is reflective of the student body.

Alternative Pathways to Teacher Licensure

In recent years, much discussion has focused on the quality of teachers and the type of preparation needed to meet the diverse needs of our nation's students. Policy discussions regarding all pathways to licensure need to focus on research-based components and curricular designs that assure effective preparation in line with Minnesota standards, produce effective student outcomes, and focus on long-term retention of our most effective teachers.

We have prepared statements for each priority that include descriptions of the issue, key points, and MACTE recommendations. We believe that the concise statements will be valuable when discussing the priority issues with partners and other stakeholders.

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