

Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Gwen L. Rudney, President
rudneygl@morris.umn.edu 320-589-6402

Bob Utke, Executive Assistant
bobjutke@gmail.com 612-759-7878

MACTE 2016 Legislative Priorities

Meeting the Needs of Minnesota Students and Schools

Minnesota students deserve fully licensed teachers who have the depth of content knowledge essential for the subject(s) they teach; possess a deep understanding of child development, evaluation, academic planning, and learners with special needs and limited English proficiency; and are reflective of the student population. Further, teacher development should be seen as a continuum that begins with initial licensure and continues throughout a teacher's professional practice with 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 groups 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.
- As one means to respond to growing teacher shortages, the state should consider strategies to help attract and retain quality teachers, including more competitive salaries and better working conditions.

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 for all candidates.

How Minnesota Should Respond:

- The Board of Teaching should lead a process to revisit the Standards of Effective Practice, working to reduce them to a smaller set of critical standards that are comprehensive, yet manageable and appropriate, for initial licensure and aligned to the new INTASC Standards. This process should also include recommendations to the legislature for standards that should be removed from statute. The results of this process will make it easier to assess the preparation of candidates prepared outside Minnesota while putting candidates prepared both within and outside the state on comparable footing.
- 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.
- Any state-level 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.

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 Board of Teaching should continue to assess the purposes, 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 and any racial or cultural bias reflected in test items.