

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

**Governor, and Governor's Budget, Talk of the Week.**

By now I'm sure you're all aware that Governor Dayton fainted as he was giving his State of the State speech on Monday, 1.23. It was a dramatic moment that temporarily transported legislators beyond the usual partisan divides. At this time, it appears that he is doing well and that there will be no need for him to leave office before the end of his term just under two years from now.

Various documents outlining his budget proposals are beginning to be released, but so far all that I've been able to find are fairly general. Commissioner Cassellius presented the education budget in both House and Senate education finance committees this week. She reported that the total E-12 budget request is for \$604 million and that no new programs are being proposed. Nothing that I have seen addresses the Board of Teaching or related licensure matters, although a summary document on the Governor's website notes a \$5 million investment "to train and attract more than 800 potential teachers by 2021." It is worth noting that although budget requests are obviously not unconnected from policy, many policy-related issues will be addressed elsewhere.

**Vouchers Dominate Discussions in Education Committees This Week.**

Much of the focus this week in both policy and finance committees, as well as discussions following the Commissioner's budget presentations, was on a new scholarship program that in effect amounts to a new attempt to enact vouchers in Minnesota. Several bills have been introduced and debated on this subject. Although it is obviously too soon to know what will happen, at present it would seem that the bills will have a good chance of passing, at least in committees, but it seems unlikely that Governor Dayton would support such a program. That said, we're far from the "finish line" and there will be lots of need for give and take before a final omnibus education bill is passed and signed into law.

**A Quiet Week Regarding Teacher Licensure.**

There is little to report this week regarding teacher preparation and licensure. A bill introduced in the House (HF 494, Wills) would, it appears, allow the renewal of an ABS license after five years without the add-on credential, but the language of this bill is very general and since the bill has not yet been scheduled for a hearing, no supporting documents or descriptions by staff are available yet. Questions and concerns about the ABS license have been raised in both policy committees, and on Monday, 1.23.17, Lucy Payne, Sue Severson, and I met with Senator Greg Clausen, at his request, to help him better understand the ABS license and related issues. We expect to have an opportunity at our upcoming MACTE Winter Collaboration to discuss this and other policy issues further.