

**MACTE Weekly Legislative Update, 2.26.18**  
**Prepared by Cyndy Crist, MACTE Legislative and Policy Liaison**

**Legislature Back in Session.** The 2018 legislature was gaveled back into session on Tuesday, 2.20.18. Two new legislators (Senator Karla Bigham of Cottage Grove, replacing Dan Schoen, and Representative Jeremy Munson of Lake Crystal, replacing Tony Cornish, following the resignation of both men in response to claims of sexual harassment) were sworn in. It remains to be seen whether Senator Michele Fischbach will remain in her senate seat and serving as president of the senate now that she has been constitutionally elevated to the office of lieutenant governor as well. The first lawsuit challenging her ability to hold the offices simultaneously has been dismissed but it seems certain another suit will be filed. Other dates of note are an Easter/Passover break from 3.30-4.08 and adjournment on Monday, May 21.

**Committees Begin Meeting.** The Education Finance Committee met on 2.22.18 and heard an array of informational reports from the Office of Higher Education and Minnesota Department of Education. Of interest to MACTE are the following:

- The *Alternative Teacher Preparation Grant* program is about to be launched. A Request for Proposals will be available on 3.05 with a submission deadline of 4.06 and results announced on 5.14. One-time funding in the amount of \$750,000 is available in Fiscal 2018.
- *Minnesota Teacher Candidate Grants* totaling \$3,067,041 have been disbursed to eligible students for Fall 2017 and Spring 2018. Awards of up to \$7,500 have been made to eligible students (those who intend to teach in identified shortage areas and/or who belong to a racial or ethnic group underrepresented in the Minnesota teacher workforce) during the term when the student is completing student teaching. Funding for this program is on-going but at a lesser amount (estimated \$1 million for the next biennium).
- The *Teacher Shortage Loan Repayment Program* provides awards to eligible teachers, up to five annual awards of up to \$1,000 each. A total of 817 awards were made to 2017 applicants. To be eligible, candidates must hold a MN teaching license, be employed by a Minnesota school district to provide direct instruction, teach in a designated shortage area, and have outstanding qualified educational loan debt.
- *Grow Your Own Grants* were expanded in 2017-2018 to include programs designed to encourage high school students to pursue teaching as well as the previously funded nonconventional residency programs. In FY 2018, five teacher residency programs and nine high school student programs received funding for a total of \$1,455,000.

**Day at the Capitol.** At this time, it appears that the best date for a 2018 MACTE Day at the Capitol, based on member interest/availability as reported at our February MACTE meeting and the recently announced holiday legislative break, is the morning of Thursday, March 29 followed closely by the afternoon of Tuesday, March 27. Because things can be very hectic on the last day before a break (in part because this date is often set as a deadline for committee action), we might be wiser choosing March 27. That said, it is never possible to predict what will happen at the legislature, so I would like to hear from members as soon as possible about their interest and availability on both dates.