

**MACTE Weekly Legislative Update, 2.16.20**  
**Prepared by Cyndy Crist, MACTE Legislative and Policy Liaison**

**2020 Session Underway.** The Minnesota Legislature opened its 2020 session on Tuesday, February 11. As in all even-numbered years, this shorter session will focus on a bonding bill as well as other policy and funding issues it may choose to address. It seems likely that many of the policy issues that were included in omnibus bills last year but ultimately not enacted because of the deep divisions between the House, Senate, and Governor will be brought up again this year. This could include many of the preparation and licensure issues of interest to us in 2019, including changes in the tiered licensure structure and measures to increase the diversity of teachers in our state. In addition, the predicted budget surplus will be much on the minds of legislators as they decide whether to use or save surplus dollars and/or cut planned spending to reflect the additional funding.

The committee structure from 2019 remains unchanged, although two new legislators have now been sworn in. In House District 60A, DFLer Sydney Jordan won a special election to fill the seat left vacant by the death of Diane Loeffler. House District 30A will now be represented by Republican Paul Novotny who was elected to fill the seat left vacant by the resignation of Nick Zerwas. Since the new members are of the same party as the incumbents they are replacing, there is no change in the balance between the two parties in the House. It is also worth noting that all members of the House and Senate are up for election this year, and to date, approximately 14 current members have announced that they will not be seeking re-election. Since this is a Presidential election year, turn-out is expected to be high. In one more significant change, Senator Susan Kent was elected as the minority leader in the senate, replacing Senator Tom Bakk in a major shake-up. Senator Kent has been a strong supporter of teacher licensure changes and high quality teacher preparation programs.

**MACTE Changes in Legislative Activities.** As I continue to reduce my hours and move toward actual retirement, I will not be spending time at the Capitol in 2020. I will continue to track bill introductions and committee hearings, help shape policy statements and testimony, coordinate our efforts to inform legislators about those policies on which we take positions, and provide you with weekly updates. We are fortunate that Laura Mogelson from the University of Minnesota is again going to help represent us at the legislature, and we may rely more on submitting written testimony this year than in offering it in person. I am hopeful that some of you will be willing to help shape testimony and/or testify on bills in your specific area(s) of expertise, and ask that at our meeting later this week you let me know if you would be willing to help us, when available, and on what issues.