

Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

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MACTE Minute – January 2020

MACTE is excited that PELSB is currently reviewing Rule regarding the Special Education High Incidence License. We received input from our membership and they have some concerns. One is that there are currently several rules open and this requires members of IHEs to review documents, participate in discussions, and provide feedback on numerous iterations of the various standards. To be thoughtful with each standard/Rule is time consuming and we are concerned some efforts may not be given the attention needed. Second, there is quite a bit of redundancy between core skill standards and license specific standards; it is requested that revising be purposeful to clarify, remove redundancy, and align with national (CEC) standards and best (evidence-based) practice, thus removing out-of-date standards. Third, there are several of our members that would respectfully request the Board explore licenses based on student need; meaning the severity of disability, and not the probability of occurrence. Currently, there are approximately 108,000 students with disabilities in the state of MN, with 94.8% of them being categorized as “high incidence”. However, not all students with these high-incidence disabilities have the same needs and require the same level of services. Nor does each of them require a teacher specializing in one specific disability. A better solution for the majority of Minnesota’s students with disabilities is a teacher that can implement multiple evidence-based strategies to address needs and advance student outcomes. We believe the initiation of the ABS license was a move in the right direction for delivering specialized instruction, creating a license for teachers who can address students across multiple categorical areas but presenting with similar needs. Nevertheless, the ABS license is aligned with the needs of a student with Mild/Moderate disabilities. A teacher with an ABS license cannot serve the entire 95% of students identified with high-incidence disabilities. For a practical example, a student with Autism may present with mild learning and social behavior needs that can easily be met by a teacher with an ABS license, while another student with Autism may be non-verbal and have severe learning and behavioral needs that require a different set of strategies. Each of these students is “categorized” as a student with a high-incidence disability, but each has very different needs. The same can be said for students with DCD and EBD. Similarly, students with different *categories* of severe disabilities can be served together, and do not require a disability-specific licensed teacher or categorical settings. Research has demonstrated positive results for multiple evidence-based practices across categorical labels. Creating a similar license to serve students with more severe disabilities would be prudent while investigating the high-incidence disabilities licenses. We are not advocating for removing disability-specific licenses that would be considered low-incidence, nor the Early Childhood Special Education Teacher. Clearly a teacher trained to work with students with sensory impairments would continue to need special training and retain a specialized license. However, the vast majority of MN students with disabilities require a teacher trained for either mild/moderate or moderate/severe levels. We respectfully request the high-incidence disabilities license stakeholder discussion include more IHE members to further investigate removal of categorical labels and move to two licenses that can focus on specialized strategies that best meet these students’ needs.

We have had extensive discussion of proposed SEP rule changes, and we’ve heard from many constituents. We again request that the Board consider adopting the INTASC Standards in lieu of revising MN SEPs. The accountability of these standards falls on units when preparing candidates and when being considered for unit approval. We have heard the Board’s concerns regarding INTASC standards. However, as units, we are accountable for INTASC Standards with our national accreditors. The INTASC Standards are research-based, and include learning progressions across three developmental levels that are not possible with the current draft of SEPs. The INTASC Standards have already had a crosswalk done with the edTPA as well, and would allow for more portability of SEPs between states. Likewise, it was stated that it is the desire of the Board to make the approval process more streamlined for units in the future, and as such, schedule Board visits with national accrediting bodies. However by using two different sets of standards it will not streamline the process, but instead, will make it more cumbersome on units to provide evidence of meeting two different sets of standards. We look forward to working with the Board to find common ground in the review of Minnesota’s Standards of Effective Practice.

MEMBERS: Augsburg College ▪ Bemidji State University ▪ Bethel College ▪ Bethany Lutheran College ▪ Capella University ▪ College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University ▪ College of St. Catherine ▪ College of St. Scholastica ▪ Concordia College ▪ Concordia University ▪ Crown College ▪ Gustavus Adolphus College ▪ Hamline University ▪ Martin Luther College ▪ Metropolitan State University ▪ Minnesota State University, Mankato ▪ Minnesota State University Moorhead ▪ Normandale College ▪ North Central University ▪ University of Northwestern – Saint Paul ▪ Southwest Minnesota State University ▪ St. Cloud State University ▪ St. Mary’s University of MN ▪ St. Olaf College ▪ University of Minnesota–Crookston ▪ University of Minnesota–Duluth ▪ University of Minnesota–Morris ▪ University of Minnesota–Twin Cities ▪ University of St. Thomas ▪ Walden University ▪ Winona State University