

## MACTE Minute: February Update

In a [recent story](#) in the Minnesota Star Tribune by reporter Peter Warren, many MACTE clinical coordinators and teacher candidates shared those experiences and their reflections on the impact of the pandemic to their preparation. Here are a few more details:

**- In response to how the pandemic has changed how MACTE providers support student teacher and field experience placements, we shared that:**

- MACTE institutions developed and made publicly available targeted professional development (e.g., UMN's [remote instruction in K-12 contexts](#)) to support school partners and teacher candidates).
- Working with school district partners, teacher preparation programs identified what needed to be in place (e.g., access to LMS systems, technology, support, training) for student teachers to best support the E12 learners and co-teach virtually.
- Teacher licensure programs utilized flexibility in [PELSB's resolutions](#) and variances to shift their placement models and timelines. During COVID, many candidates have been able to complete these expectations utilizing virtual teaching with school partners. Examples of shifts include: placing candidates with a mentor teacher [earlier](#) in the academic year to provide consistent support for teaching in virtual, hybrid, and (when approved) in person modalities; shifting the role of the U clinical supervisor to provide virtual mentoring and observations, with nearly all instruction during fieldwork done by faculty online as well.

**- What are some challenges the pandemic has created for student teachers?**

The most common challenges identified by student teachers are:

- housing/food insecurity
- unemployment
- limited technology and/or stable internet access
- costs and access to MN required tests ([MTLE](#))
- access to the school's learning management systems
- need for human connection
- lack of spaces to teach virtually when they can't be at the school site
- family illnesses/caretaking
- access/inclusion in vaccination plans
- anxiety about exposure (particularly with potentially impacting vulnerable family members)

Some candidates have experienced exposure to COVID, actual infection, or mandated quarantines which led to spending two weeks or more in an isolated room while still engaging in student teaching.

**- How are student teachers working to make the most out of their experiences?**

This generation of teacher candidates has many skills with technology, and they are often fluent at navigating various digital and web-based interfaces. School partners tell us that our student teachers have been essential and important assets with student learners this year.

To find out more, we invite PELSB board members and staff to join us for a Zoom panel discussion at 2 PM with six current teacher candidates at MACTE's winter meeting on Friday, February 19th. Simply email us at: [mactecommunication@gmail.com](mailto:mactecommunication@gmail.com) for the Zoom link.

As always, we are grateful for our strong school partnerships and collaborative work with the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) during the pandemic to provide opportunities for teacher candidates to enhance the learning of the E-12 students during their preparation for teaching. We look forward to the upcoming SEP Stakeholders meeting, and will be sharing our member feedback on Draft 2 of the SEPs later this month.