Minnesota children need great teachers. Teacher shortages and educator diversity are challenges facing the state, yet many talented and experienced educators are being turned away due to Minnesota’s onerous out-of-state licensure process. A recent Minnesota Department of Education report looked at teacher supply and demand, unearthing statistics and quotes that should be a call to action.

Streamlining licensure for out-of-state teachers will help meet these needs.

**The Need**

**Recruit effective teachers**
Many Minnesota school districts say current licensing requirements—including those for out-of-state educators—prevent them from hiring and retaining the effective teachers their schools need. **Districts reporting that licensing and other requirements are a small or large barrier to:**

- 65% Hiring effective teachers
- 87% Retaining effective teachers

**Fill hard-to-staff positions**
In the face of educator shortages, Minnesota should work urgently to grow the teacher talent pipeline. **District hiring officers who expect vacancies will be impossible or difficult to fill in:**

- 43% Math
- 48% Chemistry
- 38% Physical Science
- 70% Special Education

**Increase teacher diversity**
Teacher diversity continues to be a huge challenge for Minnesota, and yet, our licensure system makes it exceedingly difficult for schools to recruit teachers from historically black colleges and universities, tribal colleges, Hispanic-serving institutes and alternative certification programs in other states. **Students of color vs. teachers of color in MN:**

- 43% Math
- 48% Chemistry
- 38% Physical Science
- 70% Special Education
- 30% Students
- 3.8% Teachers

**What District Hiring Officials are Saying**

“It has been extremely difficult to get our transferred teachers from out of state to acquire a MN teaching license.”

“It is also very difficult to get out of state teachers to get the required Minnesota licensure.”

“If they have been successful teachers out of state and re-locate to MN, we should honor that and have the ability to employ them without making it more difficult.”

Ms. Harris*

OBJECTIVE
Experienced educator seeks permanent license to teach in Minnesota.

EDUCATION
• Master’s level coursework in Education
  — Master’s project in evaluating critical thinking skills at the upper elementary level
• J.D.
  — Concentration on International Human Rights Law
• B.A. in Political Science/Spanish
  — Magna cum laude
  — Phi Beta Kappa

CREDENTIALS
• California Multiple Subject professional teaching credential
• Passed all required MTLE tests

WORK EXPERIENCE
• 11 years of teaching experience in California, China and Hungary

MY PATH TO LICENSURE

Denied and referred to teaching college
Despite years of success in the classroom in other states, I was denied a license in Minnesota because the Board of Teaching believed I had not met “Minnesota standards.” To fulfill those “standards,” I was told to enroll at Hamline University, which I did.

Appealing my denial
But, at the same time, I also decided to seek legal assistance and appeal my denial. After filing several motions in the Administrative Law Courts, MDE reversed course and said that if I dropped out of the Hamline program, I could be licensed immediately under “new procedures,” which were never fully explained.

A discouraging process
Transferring my teaching licensure to Minnesota was an extraordinarily frustrating and time-consuming experience. Between unclear standards and secret procedures, I believe that Minnesota is disrespecting, even deterring, highly qualified educators like myself. To meet the needs of all schools and students, Minnesota must streamline licensure for out-of-state teachers.

*This teacher’s name has been changed to protect her privacy.