



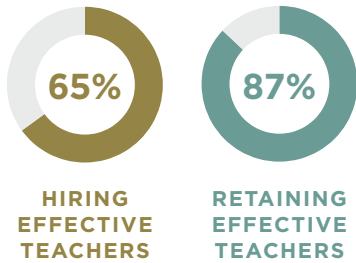
Minnesota children need great teachers. Teacher shortages and educator diversity are challenges facing the state, yet many talented and experienced educators are being turned away due to Minnesota’s onerous out-of-state licensure process. A recent Minnesota Department of Education report looked at teacher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

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:

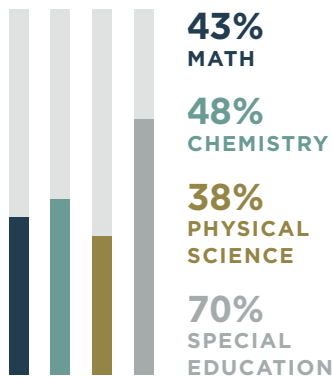


THE NEED

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:

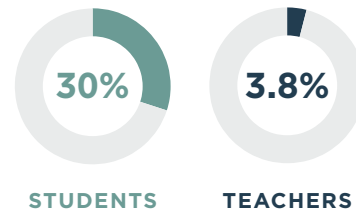


THE NEED

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:



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.”

“...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.”

“Not having reciprocity between states for licensure results in about 5 people not accepting my positions each year (I just had someone from Colorado ask about MN licensure because they are considering moving to town; when she found out the requirements she said she would stay in CO).”

“State testing and licensing requirements are factors in our ability to hire teachers of color—particularly teachers of color from other states.”

“Our district has a desire to hire a diverse teacher population. Part of this requires us to recruit teacher candidates from other states. There are MN state licensure requirements that at times pose as an obstacle for these candidates.”

“Teacher Supply and Demand: Fiscal Year 2015 Report to the Legislature.” Minnesota Department of Education, accessed February 9, 2015, <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Welcoming/Legis/LegisRep/>.

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

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.