

# Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

---

January 26, 2023

Dear Senate Higher Education Committee Members,

The Minnesota Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (MACTE) supports the Increase Teachers of Color Act and SF267. This legislation strengthens existing programs needed to attract, prepare, license, and retain an increased number of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota. SF267 will greatly reduce financial barriers for our future teachers. We strongly support the provisions and funding in the bill that will *directly support our future teachers*, specifically the Underrepresented Student Teacher Grant program, the Aspiring MN Educators of Color Scholarship program, and the Teacher Shortage Loan Repayment program.

Two barriers to earning a teaching license and degree through a higher education teacher preparation pathway includes the program cost and the loss of income during the required student teaching period. There is a significantly greater need than there is funding for existing grant programs to address these barriers. The increase in funding would have a tremendous impact on the lives of individuals and on the goal of increasing the diversity of our teachers in Minnesota. Research shows that over half of educators have significant student loan debt and that educators of color have significantly more student loan debt than white educators. The proposed programs would support 2,150 prospective BIPOC teachers per year in their licensure program completion and the loan repayment program would support for more than 2,000 BIPOC teachers per year.

The Increase Teachers of Color Act addresses both the severe shortage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers and helps us solve the problem of the overall teacher shortage in Minnesota. This legislation will have a positive impact across the whole state of Minnesota and is an important investment in our future.

Sincerely,  
Laura Mogelson  
MACTE Legislative Liaison