



March 26, 2025

Dear Senate Education Policy Committee Members,

The Executive Committee of the Minnesota Science Teachers Association (MnSTA) calls on you to oppose lines 3.13 - 3.18 *Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.024, subdivision 2*, as proposed in **HF1306/SF1740**, and to carefully consider how proposed changes will affect Minnesota's commitment to maintaining high-quality science education. To teach science effectively, a teacher should have:

- Science content knowledge above the course level being taught. These are generally specified in the Science Licensure Standards.
- Science teaching pedagogy that supports student learning of science concepts and skills at the grade level being taught.
- An understanding of students' developmental processes at the grade level they are teaching.

Rationale

HF1306/SF1740 Lines 3.13 - 3.18 *Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.024, subdivision 2*, as proposed would ensure that some Minnesota students would have unqualified and underprepared educators instructing crucial and required science courses that are essential to career and college readiness and success. A population that is knowledgeable in basic science theory and practice is vital to a thriving citizenry and growth in industry and the environment.

HF1306/SF1740 Lines 3.13 - 3.15 *Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.024, subdivision 2*, would be amended to read:

(h) A health education teacher is not required to meet the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 3505.1150, subpart 2, item B, to meet the credit equivalency requirements of paragraph (b).

Health education licensed teachers are generally prepared to teach health courses which are primarily in grades 5-9. Often, community experts (tiers 1 or 2) teach specialized courses, like Health for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) or pre-nursing courses, which are offered in some high schools. These courses are elective, being specific to the nursing profession.

A health education teacher does not have the content preparation to teach life science, earth science, physics and chemistry courses at the middle or high school level (please see the attachments showing degree requirements for health education, and science education licenses). The addition of part (h) to *Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.024, subdivision 2* would allow for a teacher with a health education license to teach middle and high school science courses, and for science credit in high school, without meeting science licensure standards or evidence of subject matter proficiency, such as the passing of an MTLE content test. This would result in untold numbers of Minnesota students being taught required college and career preparation science courses by an unqualified instructor. These credits and standards are required for all students to graduate from high school, and are required to be accepted to colleges and universities. This puts many Minnesota students at a distinct and preventable disadvantage.



HF1306/SF1740 Lines 3.15 - 3.18 *Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.024, subdivision 2*, would be amended to read:

(i) A health science career and technical education credit may fulfill a health or science credit if the course meets the applicable state and local standards in health or related science Standards.

This change could provide a science credit for students, but it would be an elective credit that would not help the student fulfill the science graduation requirements. Hence there is no benefit for designating it as a science credit. It could remain a CTE credit.

The graduation requirements in science are:

“three credits of science, including one credit to satisfy all the earth and space science standards for grades 9 through 12, one credit to satisfy all the life science standards for grades 9 through 12, and one credit to satisfy all the chemistry or physics standards for grades 9 through 12.” *Minn. Stat. 120B.024 Subd. 1.*

These credits are based on science standards developed using science education research about the concepts and skills all students need to be college and career-ready. The standards committee that wrote the standards included representation from colleges, K-12 educators, and industry.

A health science class would be treated similarly to other science electives, which provide an additional science credit above the required three credits. Some science electives offered at schools include natural resource conservation, anatomy/physiology, and crime scene investigation among others.

The Minnesota Science Teachers Association is dedicated to advancing quality science instruction. We see firsthand that effective science teaching requires a strong foundation in content knowledge and pedagogy to prepare students for the changing world and workforce demands.

While we recognize the urgent need to address licensure area vacancies across the state, solutions must reflect the integrity of teacher preparation. Compromising pedagogy training or content knowledge preparation will not serve students, educators, or Minnesota’s long-term educational goals. Instead, we encourage supporting current teachers in adding licenses through PELSB’s current licensure pathway options and bolstering their expertise through targeted professional development opportunities.

PELSB offers multiple short-term solutions, such as Out-of-Field Placements (OFPs) and Innovative Program Permissions (IIPs), allowing districts flexibility until science rulemaking can occur. Several teachers have added the 5-8 General Science or a 9-12 content-area license by meeting the licensure standards through workshops, online study, or courses. This provides another pathway to increase the range of courses they may teach.

Recommendations

The Board of the Minnesota Science Teachers Association (MnSTA) calls on you to **oppose** lines 3.13 - 3.18 *Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 120B.024, subdivision 2*, in **HF1306/SF1740**, and to carefully consider how proposed changes will affect Minnesota’s commitment to maintaining high-quality science education. MnSTA asks you to



prioritize solutions that uphold the quality of science teacher preparation in both content and pedagogy for the grade ranges the teachers may teach while addressing workforce needs.

In conclusion, all Minnesota's students deserve highly qualified, well-prepared teachers who can provide them with the robust science education they need to succeed in an increasingly complex world. We encourage you to support initiatives and policies that foster both innovation and excellence in teacher licensure, and **reject the language proposed in lines 3.13 - 3.18 in HF1306/SF1740** . The MnSTA is committed to being a resource and partner in achieving these shared goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'H. Kalina', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Haley Kalina, President of Minnesota Science Teachers Association