

**Minnesota
Dental
Hygiene
Educators'
Association**

February 16th, 2025

To: Senator Bobby Joe Champion
Chair, Senate Jobs and Economic Development Committee

Dear Chair Champion and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Minnesota Dental Hygiene Educators' Association (MDHEA), I express our organization's support for SF1325, Dental Assisting and Hygiene Program Grants. The MDHEA is an organization representing the 10 dental hygiene programs in the state of Minnesota. It is composed of dental hygiene program directors and faculty who meet regularly and communicate frequently to ensure the best education for our dental hygiene students. Our association is aware of the workforce shortages across our state and the programs have been working diligently to address this issue. One solution is to increase enrollment, however many of us face financial barriers to implementation.

SF1325 will help improve Minnesota's dental workforce challenges and improve patient access to quality care provided by a licensed dental hygienist. Recent data obtained within our membership indicate that programs want to increase enrollment and have the student applicants to do so. However, the main barrier that most of us face is the need to expand our current infrastructure as well as purchase additional dental clinic and/or laboratory equipment. Please see the data presented on the following pages that were collected from each program specifying the current enrollment, application pool, most recent and/or plans to increase enrollment, intentions to apply for funding and details on program needs.

In summary, the MDHEA supports SF1325 appropriating funds for expansion of dental hygiene and dental assisting programs in Minnesota. These grants and forgivable loans will allow our educational programs to increase enrollment and ultimately graduate more oral health professionals to help ease the workforce shortages in our state.

Sincerely,

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Minnesota Dental Hygiene Educators' Association Representative

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Minnesota Dental Hygiene Program Data in Support of SF1325

Dental Hygiene Program:	Normandale Community College Bloomington, MN
1. Current capacity of program	48 students, 2 cohorts of 24 students
2. Last increase in enrollment	Fall 2021: increased from 20 to 24 students
3. Plans to increase enrollment	Plan to increase Fall 2026 from 24 students per cohort to 28 -29 students due to oral simulation lab being built
4. # of students applying	185
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	We do not have a waitlist. We do have an alternate list should a student drop prior to the start of the program. Students on the alternate list need to reapply the following year.
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	We are in the process of building an oral simulation lab which will have 35 stations. However, we do not have the clinical space to support 35 students per cohort. We would use a grant to expand our clinical space to include an additional 6 clinical units as well as expand our sterilization area. If we had this additional clinic space, we could increase to 35 students per cohort.
8. How much would you apply for?	It is uncertain exactly how much money would be needed but we would need a large amount to expand our clinic space into our current classroom/lab and purchase dental equipment to support 6 additional clinical units. ~\$1,000,000 - \$1,500,000
Dental Hygiene Program:	Century College White Bear Lake, MN
1. Current capacity of program	24 students: 2 cohorts of 12 students
2. Last increase in enrollment	Never: 1994
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	Fall 2025: Increasing from 12 to 20 students per cohort
4. # of students applying	Must be a licensed dental assistant to apply: 62 applicant's last cycle
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	Capped at 12 applicant alternate list
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	Expand our simulation space to accommodate 24 students in result increasing out cohorts again to a total of 48 students.
8. How much would you apply for?	Estimated \$500,000-800,000

Dental Hygiene Program:	St. Cloud Technical & Community College St. Cloud, MN
1. Current capacity of program	28 students: 2 cohorts of 14 students
2. Last increase in enrollment	Never, Program started in 1993
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	*Fall 2025 we will be increasing to 16 per cohort (32 students total) *Would like to increase to 20 students per cohort, goal is to implement in the next 2-5 years.
4. # of students applying	80-100 applicants per year
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	We have an alternate list of 5 students every year
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	Remodeling our current space or building a new space. We currently have 15 dental operatories, to increase we would need a minimum of 20. We have the space but would need a remodel to use the space appropriately.
8. How much would you apply for?	Estimated: 1,000,000.00 -2,000,000.00
Dental Hygiene Program:	Minnesota State University Mankato, MN
1. Current capacity of program	60; 2 cohorts of 30 students
2. Last increase in enrollment	Fall 2023; increased from 24 to 30 students
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	Possible increase Fall 2027 or 2028 from 30 to 40 students
4. # of students applying	125
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	We do not have a waitlist. We have an alternate list should a student drop prior to the start of the program. Students on the alternate list need to reapply the following year.
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	We would use a grant to expand our clinical space to include an additional 10 clinical units.
8. How much would you apply for?	\$1,500,000 -\$2,000,000
Dental Hygiene Program:	Central Lakes College Brainerd, MN
1. Current capacity of program	30 students (2 cohorts of 15 each)
2. Last increase in enrollment	Brand new program, starting Fall 2025
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	Not at this time
4. # of students applying	32 so far, application is still open until March 1
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	We do not have a waitlist. We have an alternate list should a student drop prior to the start of the program. Students on the alternate list need to reapply the following year.

6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	We would use a grant to create a Sim lab, where many of our Dental Assisting Program functions could be taught, and also where Dental Hygiene students could practice some skills.
8. How much would you apply for?	\$500,000
Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting Program:	Minnesota State Community and Technical College Moorhead, MN
1. Current capacity of program	DH: 40 (2 cohorts of 20 students) DA: 30 students per year
2. Last increase in enrollment	DH 2009: 18 students to 20 students DA 2018: 24 students to 30 students
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	DH: Plan to increase Fall 2026 to 24 students DA: No plan
4. # of students applying	DH: 80-100 per year DA: 40-50 per year
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	No waitlist, but we accept 10 alternates to assure we start with a full cohort. The alternates need to reapply the following year
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	Adding a radiology and dental assisting lab that would be separate from our clinic so we can accommodate more DH and DA students.
8. How much would you apply for?	Estimated: \$750,000
Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting (Hybrid and On ground), Radiology Certificate Programs:	Herzing University St. Louis Park, MN
1. Current capacity of program	DH: 54 per year DA/DA Hybrid: 144 per year Radiology Certificate: Flexible
2. Last increase in enrollment	DH: 2018 DA/DA Hybrid: 2022 Radiology Certificate: None
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	Yes; Current limitations radiology and clinical space.
4. # of students applying	DH: 2023-2024 = 450 Applications DA/ DA Hybrid: 2023-2024 = 402 Applications Radiology Certificate: 2023-2024 = 37 Applicants
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	DH: 45-60 DA/DA Hybrid: No Waitlist Radiology Certificate: No Waitlist
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	Expand our radiology and clinical space

8. How much would you apply for?	\$1,500,000 -\$2,000,000 Goal to expand by 20 chairs.
Dental Hygiene Program:	University of Minnesota Minneapolis, MN
1. Current capacity of program	42 DH (21 in each DH cohort); additional 16 dual degree DH/DT per cohort
2. Last increase in enrollment	None for DH; increasing by 1 DH/DT student beginning Fall 2025
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	3-5 students dependent on funding
4. # of students applying	125
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	No waitlist, but we have an alternate list to ensure a full cohort.
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	Increasing class size would require increasing preclinic space, new equipment, and additional faculty.
8. How much would you apply for?	1,500,000-2,000,000
Dental Hygiene Program:	Rochester Community and Technical College Rochester, MN
1. Current capacity of program	DH 32 students. 16 in each cohort. DA 24 students.
2. Last increase in enrollment	Years ago
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	Yes Plans to increase each cohort to 20-25 students in 2026 and within 2 years to 30 students due to our simulation lab being built and expected to open for both DA and DH programs fall 2025.
4. # of students applying	125 for DH program
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	No. We do not have a waitlist. We do have an alternate list should a student drop prior to the start of the program. Students on the alternate list need to reapply the following year.
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	Our current clinic has 18 chairs. We would need to expand the clinic to 24 chairs and radiology equipment to accommodate the growth for both programs
8. How much would you apply for?	\$1,500,000 -\$2,000,000

Dental Hygiene Program:	Lake Superior College Duluth, MN
1. Current capacity of program	40; 2 cohorts of 20 students
2. Last increase in enrollment	Years ago, when the CODA faculty instructor ratio returned to 1:5
3. Future plans to increase enrollment	Not at this time The program is limited by SimLab space, clinical space and lack of supervising dentists in the clinic
4. # of students applying	80-110 each year
5. Do you have a waitlist? If so, how long is the waitlist?	No, we no longer utilize a waitlist. We do have an alternate list should a student drop prior to the start of the program. Students on the alternate list who were not selected for entry must reapply the following year.
6. Would you apply for a grant?	Yes
7. What would you use a grant for?	We would like to increase the class size, but this would require renovation and addition of clinic space and SimLab space. We would need to purchase equipment (dental chairs, Simulation manikins, and radiology tube heads), and hire additional faculty.
8. How much would you apply for?	Difficult to estimate without a specific increase in enrollment determined (the cost would vary depending on number of new dental units required) but based on the cost for building our Simulation Lab, my guess would be in the range of \$1,000,000 – 2,000,000.