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### **Legislative Management interim Education Funding and Taxation Committee Testimony**

I graduated from a college in North Dakota in 1991. As part of my BA in Elementary Education, I completed my Student Teaching in a second grade classroom.

Several years after completing my degree, I accepted a teaching position in a two room school. During my first year teaching, I taught grades four through eight. I taught all subjects with the exception of Music. At times, I also taught Music when the Music Teacher was unable to make it to our location.

I completed my Masters in Education in Educational Technology from Dakota State University in Madison, SD in August of 2010. Upon completion of the program, I submitted my transcripts to the South Dakota Department of Education for my Educational Technology endorsement. This would allow me to teach K-12 computers in South Dakota. The certifying office said I would need to student teach again for the endorsement. I was told it would need to be grades seven or above. I explained that I had taught grades seven and eight. The SD DOE said that "Verified teaching experience in K-12 educational technology within the five-year period immediately preceding application may be accepted in lieu of the above field experiences." As a result, I am now certified in SD for K-12 Educational Technology. I can teach computer related courses such as Computer Applications, Introduction to Information Technology, Web Publishing and Design, Computer Graphics, Multi-Media Design, Computer Hardware, Desktop Publishing and Word Processing.

It was suggested that I also look for teaching positions in North Dakota. I looked into the endorsements required for teaching computers in North Dakota. There were no endorsements for just computers, so I reviewed the available endorsements and submitted my transcripts and a completed application for the Business Education endorsement, which I felt was the closest fit.

I was told via an email dated 07/12/10, from Beverly Sandness, that I would need to complete a Methods of Teaching Business course along with five weeks of student teaching in order to meet the ME 24 requirements. She stated in the email that I was not qualified to teach Business Education until I completed the required student teaching and methods course.

I spoke with Beverly on the phone on 07/15/10 concerning the Methods course. The Methods course in question was on the endorsement application in the ME 24 section. I questioned that I was being required to take the Methods course as part of the requirement to be able to begin teaching Business Education. With the exception of the Student Teaching, I had met the requirements for ME 16, which would allow me to teach for a maximum of five years before requiring me to take the Methods course. Beverly stated that the Methods course should be in the ME 16 sections and they need to correct the form. She said that most people who have as many credits as I do have already taken the methods course.

I explained to Beverly that I had taught grades seven and eight. Since my classroom time does not appear on a college transcription, it would not be accepted. I was told that when I had received my BA, if I had student taught grades seven or eight, regardless of the subject, I would not be asked to student teach again. However, since this was not the case, I would need to student teach grades seven or above in a Business Department.

During this entire process, I was in dialogue with a Superintendent in a neighboring community. He had an opening for a Business Teacher and was very interested in hiring me. He and I both spoke with Beverly and the ESPB concerning my situation. He was told that he could not hire me if he had another applicant who was completely qualified. If he did not have a qualified applicant, he could apply for a special waiver after August 1<sup>st</sup> and hire me. He ended up hiring the only applicant he had who was qualified and who had just graduated from Valley City State.

In October of 2010, I again began conversing again with Beverly Sandness, as I wanted to make sure I understood what I needed to do and what I could or could not teach. Beverly confirmed that I had met the ME 16 requirements (contradiction to what I had been told previously) and could teach business related courses to grades K-8. It was at this time that she also told me about TAFE. I could apply for this special license and have three years to complete my Methods course and Student Teaching. It made it appear that I could have been hired by the Superintendent, but I had not been told about this alternative.

I was hired by a local college as an Adjunct Business Professor in November of 2010. A professor had to leave suddenly and I was asked to fill the position for the remainder of the year. I taught most of the business classes for the department including Personal Finance, Accounting, Introduction to Business, Marketing, Business Law, Principles of Management and Human Resource Management. I asked the NSPB if this could be used for a Student Teaching experience. I was told that it must be at the 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade level and could not be used.

The position I had missed out on in the neighboring community opened up again for 2011-2012. I called the Superintendent and told him I could apply for TAFE and accept a position. We spoke of the student teaching and he wondered if he could supervise me for the student teaching. He was told I could not be supervised by a hiring superintendent or a business teacher from a neighboring school. This in essence would mean I could teach for two years at a school that had only one business teacher. After the second year, I would not be able to return as I would need to go somewhere and student teach. I was not offered the position due to the student teaching issue. He didn't want to hire someone and then be back in the same situation after two years.

The time for positions to begin to open up is upon us, and I was at a crossroads. Do I spend the time and money and student teach, or do I only apply for positions in South Dakota? A former colleague of mine suggested I write to the Governor, Representative and Senator, and explain my situation. I did so and promptly received a phone call from Barb in the Constituents Service office for the Governor. She stated that nothing could be done for me and that she had been in

communication with Janet Welk of the ESPB. I was given Janet's phone number and asked to give her a call. I called Janet on 01/25/12 concerning my situation. She told me there was nothing that could be done and that I would have to student teach or do a clinical. Student teaching would be for five weeks as I had already student taught once. If I were to do a clinical, the school would have to hire a business teacher for the 10 weeks so that they could be the teacher of record.

I received a phone call from Representative Brandenburg and Senator Erbele a few days later. I told them what I had been told by Janet Welk. They spoke amongst themselves and asked if Chairman Kelsch would allow me to share my story with this committee.

I feel North Dakota needs to have a policy in effect like South Dakota that acknowledges teaching experience and accepts it in lieu of Student Teaching for additional degrees. I would like to thank you for the time granted to me to share today, and for your careful reflection on these circumstances.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebekah Middlestead