

# Certification Central

ND's 1<sup>st</sup> Alternative Educator Preparation Program

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## Written Testimony in Support of SB 2229 (with amendments)

Good Afternoon, Chairman Schaible and Senate Education Committee,

For the record, my name is Dr. Katherine Terras and I represent Certification Central, which is ND's 1<sup>st</sup> Alternative Educator Preparation Program approved by the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board. We are in support of SB 2229 with amendments that remove the exclusionary language prohibiting individuals enrolled in state-approved alternative, educator preparation programs from qualifying for this student teacher scholarship program. Individuals enrolled in alternative programs should have equal access to state-sponsored scholarship programs, as these individuals are also enrolled in state-approved educator training programs that lead to the exact same educator professional license from the ND Education Standards and Practices Board. To collectively meet the rural needs and to allow equal access/opportunity to all individuals enrolled in any state-approved educator preparation program, the following amendments are proposed:

- In Section 1 (#1.b, page 1, lines 11-15) redact the exclusionary language and replace with the following: **“Student teacher” means an individual enrolled in a state-approved educator preparation program in this state who is completing qualifications to become a licensed teacher and who signed a contract to teach at a rural school district under the supervision of a license teacher.**
- In Section 1, (#2, page 1, line 18), remove **“eligibility criteria.”** The bill draft determines the eligibility criteria and not the state board of high education, as they are only administering it.
- In Section 1 (#3.a, page 1, lines 22-24), redact this exclusionary language and replace with the following: **Must be enrolled in a state-approved educator preparation program;**
- In Section 1 (#3.b, page 2, lines 1-2), redact this exclusionary language and replace with the following language that better aligns with Chapter 15.1-18 and Chapter 15.1-13: **Must complete qualifications to become a licensed teacher in compliance with chapter 15.1-18 or chapter 15.1-13**
- In Section 1 (#3.c, page 2, lines 3-6), redact this exclusionary language and replace with the following: **Must be enrolled in a teacher preparation program, accredited by the education standards and practices board;**
- In Section 1 (#5.b.1, page 2, lines 23-25), redact the exclusionary language and replace with the following: **The cost of tuition;**

In closing, the ND Education Standards and Practices Board can testify that the program approval process is the same for in-state alternative programs and traditional college/university programs; meaning, alternatives must have the same rigor to earn their program approval. They can also confirm that both pathways lead to the same educator professional license. To meet the educational needs of students in our state, especially in rural areas, we need educator preparation programs to work together to get this job done, which means proposing and supporting legislation that not only cares about K-12 students, but also cares about postsecondary individuals no matter the educator preparation program they choose to attend. Thank you, and I will stand for any questions.