



Department of Special Education

January 24, 2023
House Education Public Hearing
Coteau AB Room - ND State Capitol

RE: Written Testimony in Support of HB 1340 Pertaining to a Special Education Permit

Good morning Chairman [Heinert](#) and members of the committee:

For the record, my name is Dr. Holly Pedersen, and I am the Department Chair of Special Education at Minot State University.

As a representative of one of our state's preparation programs for special education teachers, I am here to offer testimony in support of HB 1340. During the past year, I have been part of a team working to bring this topic forward for consideration.

As you know, this bill will allow candidates who have not yet completed their bachelor's degree in special education, but who have completed all special education coursework and clinical experiences, to obtain a temporary permit allowing them to teach while completing the remaining courses for their degree. I would like to offer 3 key points in support of this bill. First and foremost, it is an avenue to address the critical shortage of special education professionals without compromising quality. Research supports that pedagogical knowledge and skills are the primary factors in special education teacher effectiveness. Under this bill, candidates will have successfully completed all required pedagogy coursework and clinicals, including student teaching before being issued the temporary permit. Second, a similar avenue currently exists. Known as an alternate access license, candidates who do have a bachelor's degree in a major other than education and 30 related credits may be the special education teacher of record while completing their degree for licensure. Finally, 2 ½ years ago, our department launched the first special education paraprofessional to teacher pathway in our state and have seen firsthand the success of innovative yet thoughtful ways of providing diverse and accessible pathways for individuals to become licensed special education teachers.

In summary, this bill would result in increasing the number of special education teachers available to support students with disabilities in our state and we support it.

Thank you for your time on this important matter,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly L. Pedersen".