

My name is Kim Reger and I teach 5th grade at Bennett Elementary in Fargo and have been a teacher for 30 years.

The value of institutional knowledge cannot be overstated when it comes to any career enterprise. Employees in every sector become more knowledgeable, efficient and pay a higher rate of return on investment with every year they spend in their chosen career path.

Teachers have historically stayed in their profession for longer tenures than workers in other industries. This is important, not only for them as individuals, but for their students and the communities in which they work. Children crave consistency, and it's much easier for a parent to know they can trust their most valued and prized asset in the hands of an educator who they may have had teach them when they were their child's same age.

So, it is important to maintain high qualification standards for teachers, through the licensure process, and to also incentivize our educators to stay in the profession long-term. No doubt, that was the goal of setting the current mark for lifetime licensure at 30 years of service. However, we are seeing fewer and fewer workers spend 30+ years in the same job. This is true of teachers, too.

Please also know that as dedicated educators, we will still be required to take consistent and ongoing professional development to stay on top of the latest trends so we can continue to provide high-quality education to our students.

HB 1329 is a simple step the state can take to recognize our communities' long-term educators at a time we sure could use it.

Kim Reger
5th grade teacher
FEA President