

Good morning _____. My name is Ashley Smalley and I am here today to show our support for this bill. As a former teacher, a student teacher supervisor, and the director of the new Office of Teacher Recruitment and Retention at UND, I see this from several perspectives. I am currently writing my dissertation on teacher shortage and there is no lack of evidence that something needs to be done .

Student teaching is the most expensive semester within a teacher preparation program. On top of paying for tuition, student teachers often have additional fees to help cover the cost of paying their cooperating teachers (the teachers in whose classrooms they teach) and student teaching supervisors (the teachers who evaluate the student teacher's abilities). In addition, student teachers also pay for the background check and fingerprinting process, state licensure exams

(Praxis), CPR certification, and teacher license applications. As presented here, the average cost for these direct, required student teaching expenses is over \$1,400.

Student Teaching Expenses	Amount
Cooperating & Supervising Teacher Stipends	\$ 910
Background Check/Fingerprinting	\$ 45
State Licensure Exam (Praxis II)	\$ 286
CPR Certification	\$ 60
ND Teaching License Application	\$ 105
Total Student Teaching Expenses*	\$ 1,406

In addition, these students have living expenses, ranging from \$6,000-\$11,000, and still must cover tuition and fees for the semester.

To further complicate the financial burden, student teachers are very limited in being able to maintain a job since they are already engaged in a full-time student teaching experience for often more than 8 hours a day. As you may know, a student teacher's role is to

eventually take on all the responsibilities of the classroom teacher during the semester of student teaching, all while not getting a single paycheck.

This bill would allow for students to feel less stress about the inability to work during the student teaching semester and to potentially get more out of their student teaching experience because of this. The goal for student teaching is for student teachers to try new things, learn from student interactions and responses to lesson plans, and get feedback and guidance on what to do differently in the future. This “give and take” opportunity sets them up for a more successful experience within the teaching profession, leading to an outstanding education for ND PK-12 students. When we have student teachers who are forced to work to make ends meet during the student teaching semester, it is almost always evident in their limited preparation for lesson

planning, lack of enthusiasm for the profession and overall exhaustion. Sometimes the concerns progress to the point where a student teacher chooses to discontinue the student teaching experience (or is removed by the teacher preparation program). These unfortunate situations could be avoided if student teachers could be compensated for their student teaching experience.

SB 2270 would be great progress in supporting student teachers during a financially challenging period. UND's College of Education & Human Development fully supports the stipend. However, we strongly encourage the stipend to be paid during the term of student teaching. We have confirmed with our Financial Aid office that a stipend paid through DPI would *not* negatively impact a student's ability to receive financial aid such as grants, scholarships, and student loans. It would be counted as "pay for work," like regular income,

which is not counted as part of a student's financial aid package in the current year and thus would not limit their other aid options. On the contrary, a grant that is only paid out once a student confirms an employment contract after their enrollment will not go as far to relieve the financial burden during their actual student teaching service. Students would still need funding to pay for their immediate expenses, which would still entail taking out additional loans, increasing their student debt, and/or working, which as indicated, is detrimental to their student teaching success.

Funding is necessary to get more qualified students into the teaching education pipeline. We have potential low-income students who would make outstanding teachers who are not entering the field because of the financial limitations. The financial ability to pay for the education and student teaching experience should not restrict our pool of qualified ND

teachers. Students need to know in advance that they will have timely financial support so that they can make informed decisions about their ability to pursue a teaching degree. Awarding them after their costs have been incurred will not go as far to support them.

In addition, we fully support a bill that is limited to students teaching within ND in order to combat the teacher shortage within our state.