

Education Minnesota

Protecting teacher quality is worth more negotiations

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ST. PAUL, Minn. May 30, 2017 _ Gov. Mark Dayton signed into law on Tuesday an E-12 budget bill that funds public schools and used his line-item veto to pressure the Legislature to renegotiate parts of a teacher licensure overhaul that would significantly lower standards.

“Gov. Mark Dayton knows what bargaining in bad faith looks like and today he called the legislative negotiators on it,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “We agree with the governor that the people of Minnesota deserve better than sneak attacks, last-minute tricks and poison pills. Any teacher would grade their work ‘unsatisfactory.’”

Licensure:

Education Minnesota supports large portions of the overhaul of the teacher licensure system, particularly the effort to clarify laws that split responsibilities between the state Board of Teaching and the Minnesota Department of Education. The union also supports the creation of an independent board led by teachers to oversee the process. However, the union objected to separate provisions that lowered standards.

“The most disappointing provision of the education law is the attack on teacher quality. If this isn’t changed, Minnesota will join a sad list of states that grant teaching licenses to people with no formal training in education,” Specht said. “Even worse, there will be no warning given to parents of children placed with these under-trained teachers. This law is an insult to more than 55,000 K-12 teachers who earned their licenses by acquiring all the different skills they need to meet the needs of their students. And it’s a betrayal of the trust every parent puts in the state of Minnesota when they drop their kids off at school in the morning.”

About Education Minnesota

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota’s members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota’s public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota’s community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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