

Education Minnesota

Education Minnesota announces continued support for bill to attract and retain more teachers of color

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ST. PAUL, Minnesota. Feb. 19, 2020 – Education Minnesota announced its continued support for the Increase Teachers of Color Act on Wednesday, the day of the bill’s first hearing in the Minnesota House.

“Every Minnesota student deserves the opportunity to connect with a special teacher who brings out the best in their pupils,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “Unfortunately, many students of color miss those relationships, in part, because they never study with a teacher who looks like them. Our union believes this bill will help bring more teachers of color into the classroom and give those teachers the support they need to stay in our profession for long careers. We all know that all students benefit from a racially diverse teaching force.”

“Representation matters,” said Jessica Davis, the 2019 Minnesota Teacher of the Year and a member of Education Minnesota. “When we take deliberate steps toward developing and hiring educators that reflect the diversity of our students, and work in ways that support and retain these educators, our districts will be more equipped to promote achievement. We must choose to take on this work deliberately and intentionally. That is when we change our communities. That is when we change the world.”

The act, known as [HF3201](#), would create mentoring, induction and retention incentives to attract young people of color into the teaching profession and keep them in the classroom. The act includes targeted professional development, grants and forgiveness of education debt.

The act also requires districts to create plans that include strategies to make schools’ curriculum and learning and work environments more inclusive and respectful of students’ racial and ethnic diversity.

Students of color and Native American students make up about 34 percent of Minnesota’s K-12 student population, yet only 4 percent of the state’s teachers are people of color or Native American.

Education Minnesota has been a proud sponsor of the Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota, which helped develop HF3201.

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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