



NDSA-11-2324

A Resolution in Support of Alternative Pathways to Teacher Licensure

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Student Association (NDSA) represents the voice of North Dakota's 45,000 public college and university students; and,

WHEREAS, the purpose of NDSA is to represent all students enrolled in the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and advocate on issues of higher education in support of access, affordability, quality, and the student experience; and,

WHEREAS, the current teacher employment field in North Dakota is experiencing a shortage and retention issue, leading to a reliance on substitute teachers and underqualified staff; and,

WHEREAS, the Teacher of the Future subgroup of the Envision 2035 project from the State Board of Higher Education highlighted preparing future teachers as one of their main subject areas to focus on and develop; and,

WHEREAS, there is a negative impact on K-12 student success and academic performance when facing these shortage issues with reduced one-on-one attention and a lower quality of education; and,

WHEREAS, SB2032 was passed during the 2023-25 legislative session and gave an appropriation of \$3,000,000 to the Department of Public Instruction to develop Paraprofessional-to-Teacher programs¹; and,

WHEREAS, emergency credentialing within the state has been discussed with the Governor's Retention and Recruitment Task Force to address the current teacher shortage²; and,

WHEREAS, expanding hiring records to teacher candidates within their student teaching semester may be a feasible way to offset the shortage of educators in the state, along with emphasizing and expanding loan forgiveness and scholarships to teacher candidates; and,

WHEREAS, pathways for teachers to earn increased salaries, benefits, and access to professional development opportunities promote statewide retention and combat workforce shortages; and,

WHEREAS, these programs for emergency licensure may not be permanent, but can be a strong approach to alleviating immediate staffing issues; so,

¹ https://ndlegis.gov/assembly/68-2023/regular/bill-overview/bo2032.html?bill_year=2023&bill_number=2032

² Teacher of the Future, Teacher Shortage Sub-Group. Dr. Allen Burgad, et al



THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the NDSA supports the NDUS initiative to expand mentorship programs for 1st-year teachers, further investment in retention strategies, and the continuing support for Paraprofessional-to-Teacher programs.

Approved by the North Dakota Student Association General Assembly

Saturday, March 16th, 2024