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Analysis

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Senate

State of Minnesota

S.F. No. 446 – STRENGTHENING THE INCREASE TEACHERS OF COLOR ACT

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Section 1. Definitions. (e) Defines “ethnic studies curriculum” as the critical and interdisciplinary study of race, ethnicity, and indigeneity with a focus on the experiences and perspectives of people of color.

(f) Defines “rigorous” as meeting the state academic standards.

(g) Defines “anti-racist” as the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, attitudes, and dispositions so that power and resources are redistributed and shared equitably.

(h) Defines “culturally sustaining” as integrating content and practices that infuse the culture and language of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities who have been harmed and erased through schooling.

(i) Defines “institutional racism” as policies and practices within institutions that produce outcomes that chronically favor white people and disadvantage those who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Section 2. Adopting plans and budgets. Amends the requirements for a school district’s world’s best workforce strategic plan to include access to ethnic studies curriculum for all learners, and education effectiveness practices that integrate curriculum that is rigorous, accurate, anti-racist, and culturally sustaining; ensures learning and work environments validate, affirm, embrace, and integrate cultural and community strengths for all students, families, and employees; and provides a collaborative culture that seeks to retain qualified, racially and ethnically diverse staff effective at working with diverse students while developing and supporting teacher quality, performance, and effectiveness.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective for all strategic plans reviewed and updated after final enactment.

Section 3. District advisory committee. Requires the district advisory committee to recommend to the school board strategies that ensure the curriculum is rigorous, accurate, anti-racist, and culturally sustaining, and that learning and work environments validate, affirm, embrace, and integrate the cultural and community strengths of all racial and ethnic groups.

Section 4. Equitable School Enhancement Grants.

Subdivision 1. Grant program established. Directs the Commissioner of Education to establish a grant program to support implementation of certain world’s best workforce strategies to support collaborative efforts that address issues of curricular, environmental, and structural inequities in schools.

Subd. 2. Definitions. Defines the following terms, for the purposes of this section.

(b) “Anti-racist” means the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, attitudes, and dispositions.

(c) “Curricular” means curriculum resources used and content taught.

(d) “Environmental” means relating to a school’s climate and culture.

(e) “Equitable” means fairness.

(f) “Institutional racism” means policies and practices within an institution that produce outcomes that favor white people and disadvantage people who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

(g) “Structural” means relating to the organization and systems of a school.

Subd. 3. Applications and grant awards. Directs the commissioner to determine application procedures, select schools to participate in the grant program, and determine the award amount. Directs the commissioner to award an equal number of grants between districts in greater Minnesota and those in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Subd. 4. Description. Requires the grant recipients to use the funding to support collaborative efforts to ensure school climate and curriculum incorporate equitable, anti-racist educational practices that:

(1) validate, affirm, embrace, and integrate cultural and community strengths; and

(2) address institutional racism with equitable school policies, structures, and practices.

Subd. 5. Report. Requires grant recipients to report annually to the commissioner. The report must assess the impact of the efforts to engage students, families, educators, and community members of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds in making improvements to school climate and curriculum. The commissioner must publish a summary report for the public.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective July 1, 2021.

Section 5. Increasing the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota.

Subdivision 1. Purpose. Declares the purpose of the section to set short-term and long-term state goals for increasing the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota.

Subd. 2. Equitable access to racially and ethnically diverse teachers. Requires the percentage of teacher who are of color or American Indian in Minnesota to increase by two percentage points per year.

Subd. 3. Rights not created. Establishes that the attainment goal in this section does not confer a right or create a claim for any person.

Subd. 4. Reporting. Directs the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) to collaborate with the Department of Education and the Office of Higher Education to publish a summary report of the outcomes related to the preparation or retention of diverse teachers of each grant program they administer. Directs PELSB to include recommendations for state policy and funding needed to achieve the goals of this section. Requires PELSB to consult with the state Indian Affairs Council and ethnic councils in developing the report.

Section 6. Curriculum Policy. Requires a school board to adopt a policy that prohibits discrimination or discipline for a teacher or principal on the basis of incorporating into curriculum contributions by persons in a federally protected class.

Section 7. State Model Policy. Requires the commissioner to develop and maintain resources to assist a district or school in implementing strategies for creating a positive school climate. Requires the commissioner to develop state level standards for social, emotional, and cognitive development.

Section 8. Requirements. Directs PELSB to issue a Tier 3 teaching license to a candidate who provides information to demonstrate the following:

- (1) the candidate has completed a teacher preparation program from a culturally specific Minority Serving Institution in the United States, and is eligible for a teaching license in another state; or
- (2) the candidate has completed a university teacher preparation program in another country and has taught at least two years.

Section 9. Requirements. Directs PELSB to issue a Tier 4 teaching license to a candidate that provides sufficient information to demonstrate that the candidate has teaching experience in another state and achieved tenure, continuing contract status, or has completed three consecutive years of employment for at least 120 days per year with a single employer.

Section 10. Tests. Strikes the requirement that a Tier 4 teacher licensure candidate must pass a skills examination in reading, writing, and mathematics. Requires PELSB to revise rules for Tier 3

and Tier 4 license applicants to allow a candidate to pass a pedagogy and content examinations if the applicant has not completed a board-approved preparation program. An applicant who has completed an out-of-state preparation program and passed licensure examinations in that state are not required to pass similar examinations in Minnesota. Requires testing centers to provide monthly opportunities for untimed content and pedagogy examinations. The board must require the exam vendor to provide other equitable opportunities to pass exams.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective July 1, 2021.

Section 11. Probationary Period. Allows a teacher who has taught for three consecutive years in another state to serve a one-year probationary period in a Minnesota school district.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective for collective bargaining agreements effective July 1, 2021 and thereafter.

Section 12. Probationary Period; Discharge or Demotion. Allows a school district located in a city of the first class to negotiate a contract with a one-year probationary period with a teacher who has obtained tenure, continuing contract status, or completed three consecutive years of employment with a single employer.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective for collective bargaining agreements effective July 1, 2021 and thereafter.

Section 13. Come Teach in Minnesota Hiring Bonuses.

Subdivision 1. Purpose. Establishes the program to support districts and schools recruiting and offering hiring bonuses to meet staffing needs in shortage areas.

Subd. 2. Eligibility. Requires a district or school to verify that the hiring bonus is given to certain teachers licensed in another state.

Subd. 3. Bonus amount. Allows a district or schools to offer a signing and retention bonus of at least \$2,500 and no more than \$5,000 to a teacher who meets the eligibility requirements. A teacher who meets the eligibility requirements and meets a licensure shortage area in the economic development region of the state where the school is located may be offered a signing bonus of at least \$4,000 and no more than \$8,000. Half of the bonus is paid to the teacher when starting employment and the second half after completing four years of serving in the hiring district or school. Requires the teacher to repay the bonus if they do not complete their first school year.

Subd. 4. Administration. Directs the commissioner to establish a process for districts or schools to seek reimbursement for hiring bonuses and to provide guidance to districts to seek repayment of a hiring bonus from a teacher who does not complete their first year of employment. Allows the department to conduct a pilot program for the 2022-2023 biennium to establish feasibility, and report to the legislation by December 1, 2022.

Subd. 5. Account established. Creates a Come Teach in Minnesota Hiring Bonus program account in the special revenue fund.

Effective Date: Makes the section applicable to teacher contracts entered into on or after July 1, 2021.

Section 14. Grant Program Administration. Requires the Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color (CUGMEC) grants awarded after fiscal year 2021 to be awarded for a two-year grant period.

Section 15. Report. Modifies the reporting date for CUGMEC grant recipients from January 15 to June 30 of each year. Establishes the summary report date by PELSB as September 1 of each year.

Section 16. Grants for Grow Your Own Programs.

Subdivision 1. Establishment. Requires the commissioner to award grants for three types of Grow Your Own (GYO) programs.

Subd. 2. Definitions. (b) Defines “eligible district” as a school district, charter school, or cooperative unit.

(c) Defines “Grow Your Own program” as a program established by an eligible district in partnership with a PELSB-approved teacher preparation program provider, or a Head Start program, to provide a pathway for teacher licensure candidates.

(d) Defines “residency program” as a PELSB-approved teacher preparation program established by an eligible district and a teacher preparation program provider that uses a cohort-based model and includes a clinical experience.

(e) Defines “resident” as a teacher candidate participating in a residency program.

Subd. 3. Grants for residency programs. Allows an eligible district to apply for a grant to develop, maintain, or expand effective residency programs. Requires at least 80 percent of grant funds to be used for tuition scholarships or stipends to enable employees or community members seeking a teaching license, who are of color or American Indian, to participate in a residency program. An eligible district that provides financial support to teacher candidates under this subdivision may require a commitment from a candidate to teach in the district for a reasonable time not to exceed five years.

Subd. 4. Grants for programs serving adults. Allows an eligible district or Head Start program to apply for grants to provide financial assistance, mentoring, and other experiences to support persons of color or American Indian persons to become licensed teachers or preschool teachers. Grant funds awarded under this subdivision must be used for:

- (1) tuition scholarships or stipends to eligible Tier 2 licensed teachers, education assistants, cultural liaisons, or other nonlicensed employees who are of color or American Indian and enrolled in undergraduate or graduate-level coursework that is part of a board-approved teacher preparation program leading to a Tier 3 license;
- (2) developing and implementing pathway programs with local community-based organizations led by and for communities of color or American Indian communities that provide stipends or tuition scholarships to parents and community members to

change careers and obtain a Tier 3 license or credential needed to teach in a Head Start program; or

- (3) collaborating with a board-approved teacher preparation program provided by a postsecondary institution to develop and implement innovative teacher preparation programs that lead to Tier 2 or Tier 3 licensure, involve intensive and extensive clinical experiences with more professional coaching or mentorship than are typically required in traditional programs, provide candidates with support, and have more than half of their candidates identify as persons of color or American Indian.

The eligible district or Head Start program that provides financial assistance to individuals may require a commitment from candidates to teach in the eligible school or Head Start program for a reasonable amount of time not to exceed five years.

Subd. 5. Grants for programs serving secondary school students. An eligible district may receive grants for developing and offering dual-credit postsecondary course options in schools for “Introduction to Teaching” or “Introduction to Education” courses or to offer other innovative programs that encourage secondary school students to pursue teaching. The eligible district must ensure that the aggregated percentage of secondary school students of color and American Indian students participating in the program is equal to or greater than the aggregate percentage of students of color and American Indian students in the district or charter school. Grant funds awarded under this subdivision must be used for:

- (1) supporting future teacher clubs or service-learning opportunities that provide middle and high-school students who are of color or American Indian with experiential learning to increase students’ interest in pursuing a teaching career;
- (2) providing direct support to students to enroll and be successful in postsecondary enrollments options courses; or
- (3) offering scholarships to graduating high school students to enroll in board-approved undergraduate teacher preparation programs at a college or university in Minnesota.

Subd. 6. Grant procedure. Requires an eligible district or Head Start program to apply for a grant. The commissioner must give priority to eligible districts or Head Start programs with the highest total number or percentage of students who are of color or American Indian.

Subd. 7. Account established. Creates a GYO account in the special revenue fund.

Subd. 8. Report. Requires grant recipients to annually report to the commissioner on their activities under this section. Directs the commissioner to publish a summary report for the public.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective July 1, 2021.

Section 17. Teacher Mentorship and Retention of Effective Teachers.

Subd. 2. Applications. Allows a higher education institution or nonprofit organization to partner with a teacher mentorship grant applicant but is not eligible as a sole applicant for grant funding.

Subd. 3. Criteria for selection. Amends the criteria for grant selection to give priority for efforts to induct, mentor, and retain Tier 2 or Tier 3 teachers who are of color or American Indian and Tier 2 or Tier 3 teachers in licensure shortage areas.

Subd. 5. Program implementation. Allows grants to be awarded for implementing activities over a period not to exceed 24 months.

Subd. 6. Report. Amends the date grant recipients report to PELSB from June 30 to September 30 of each year.

Effective Date: Makes this section effective July 1, 2021.

Section 18. Duties; Evaluation. Amends the principal's annual evaluation to support and improve a principal's culturally responsive leadership practices that create inclusive and respectful teacher and learning environments for all students, families, and employees.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective July 1, 2022.

Section 19. Graduation Ceremonies; Tribal Regalia and Objects of Cultural Significance. Requires a school district or charter school to allow an American Indian student to wear American Indian regalia, tribal regalia, or objects of cultural significance at graduation ceremonies.

Section 20. Plan Implementation; Components. (c) Amends the requirements for a district's Achievement and Integration plan. Requires the plan to include strategies to validate, affirm, embrace, and integrate cultural and community strengths of all students, families, and employees in the district's curriculum, learning and work environments, and to address institutional racism in schools. Provides examples of institutional racism experiences by students who are of color or American Indian.

(d) Requires districts to use local data to develop the plan and allows the plan to include:

- (1) innovative and integrated prekindergarten through grade 12 learning environments;
- (2) family engagement initiatives;
- (3) opportunities for students, families, staff, and community members who are of color or American Indian to share their experiences in the school setting;
- (4) professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators focused on improving the academic achievement of all students, including knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to be anti-racist and culturally sustaining;
- (5) recruitment and retention of teachers, administrators, cultural and family liaisons, paraprofessionals, and other staff from racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds represented in the student population;

- (6) collection, examination, and evaluation of academic and discipline data for institutional racism in structures, policies, and practices in order to propose anti-racist changes;
- (7) increased programmatic opportunities and effective and more diverse instructors focused on rigor and college and career readiness for students who are impacted by racial, gender, linguistic, and economic disparities;
- (8) ethnic studies curriculum to provide all students with opportunities to learn about their own and others' cultures and historical experiences; or
- (9) examination and revision of district curricula in all subjects to be inclusive of diverse racial and ethnic groups while meeting state academic standards and being culturally sustaining.

Effective Date: Makes the section effective for plans reviewed and updated after final enactment.

Section 21. Appropriations. See fiscal tracking sheets.