April 15, 2026

Members of the PESLB Board:

We write in strong support of the provision brought forward by the PELSB to allow Tier 2 teachers to enroll in approved teacher preparation programs outside of Minnesota as part of their pathway toward full licensure. This is a practical change that addresses real workforce challenges facing Minnesota schools today.

Minnesota school districts continue to face persistent and serious educator workforce shortages, particularly in special education and other hard-to-staff areas. Tier 2 teachers are already serving students in our classrooms and playing an essential role in ensuring that students receive consistent instruction and critical support services. Many of these educators are deeply committed to advancing toward full licensure but the current landscape of available preparation programs does not always meet their needs in terms of location, scheduling, or professional fit.

This proposal does not lower standards. It expands access. By permitting more flexibility for Tier 2 teachers, Minnesota would ensure that high-quality pathways to full licensure are accessible to educators regardless of geographic or logistical barriers.

For school districts this flexibility is meaningful and necessary. It supports the retention of educators who are already embedded in schools and communities. It encourages and accelerates advancement toward full licensure. And it strengthens the long-term stability of our educator workforce by creating more viable pathways for the teachers already doing this critical work.

Most importantly, it benefits students. When schools can retain and support developing educators who are committed to their growth and to their communities, students benefit from continuity, stability, and qualified instruction. This provision is a meaningful step toward ensuring that every student in Minnesota has access to the educators they deserve.

Thank you for including this proposal in your legislative priorities for the 2026 session. We stand ready to work with you to advance this important recommendation.

Sincerely,

Association of Metropolitan School Districts
MN Association of School Administrators
MN Administrators for Special Education
MN Rural Education Association
MN School Boards Associations