



December 5, 2022

Dear Honorable Representatives of the Ohio Senate:

The Ohio Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (OACTE), a state affiliate of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, represents teacher educators across all of Ohio's public and private institutions. The State University Education Deans (SUED) and the Ohio Association of Private Colleges of Teacher Education (OAPCTE) represent the leadership of all teacher education programs in Ohio. Together, we wish to inquire about specific details related to SB 361.

The intent of SB 361 is to expand eligibility for veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces to be employed as teachers without licenses. We understand the gravity of the teacher shortage crises and the need to address it. We also recognize veterans as dedicated individuals who have served our great nation. However, being a veteran does not qualify a person to provide academic leadership for school children.

Research supports the need for fully prepared teachers:

- Reviews of research over the past 30 years have concluded that fully prepared and certified teachers are generally better rated and more successful with students than teachers without this preparation (Ashton & Crocker, 1986; Darling-Hammond, et. al, 2005; Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002).
- Teacher effectiveness is strongest when content knowledge interacts with pedagogical skill for specific groups of students (Byrne, 1983).
- Grossman (1990) found that the teachers without teacher preparation experienced problems in anticipating student difficulties in learning the subject and in transforming the subject matter content to make it accessible to their students.

Many Ohio institutions already participate in the "Troops to Teachers" program that provides support for military personnel interested in becoming teachers, and Ohio also has an alternative route to licensure program that provides a pathway for individuals with some limited requirements to serve as teachers while they complete the remaining credits required for licensure. We recommend that, instead of changing ORC 3319.283, the state provides scholarships so that military personnel complete a licensure path at no cost.

Another important issue to consider is retention. Teachers with less preparation leave the profession at higher than average rates (Darling-Hammond, 1999). Retaining teachers is equally as important to addressing the shortage as recruiting new teachers. We urge you to consider the teacher shortage issue from both the recruitment and retention points of view. Supporting new (and experienced) teachers by improving support mechanisms such as mentorship, greater compensation, and resources to address their professional development and family care needs would help to combat this problem in a more comprehensive manner.

Veterans are valued and appreciated members of our communities. However, we must provide Ohio's children with highly qualified teachers, well prepared in both content and pedagogy.

Sincerely,

Mary Heather Munger, President

Ohio Association of Colleges of Teacher Education

James C. Hannon, Chairperson State University Education Deans

Diana Garlough, President

Ohio Association of Private Colleges of Teacher Education

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