



September 8, 2015

Dr. Barbara Gellman-Danley
President
Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, Illinois 60604-1411

Dear Dr. Gellman-Danley:

We write to you today regarding the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) recently adopted clarification to its Assumed Practices for faculty roles and qualifications. The adoption of these new guidelines has numerous education stakeholders in Minnesota concerned, particularly dual credit providers. The credentialing standards which are at the heart of this concern are outlined below:

~~Faculty teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses—that transfer, typically, hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.~~

For the past thirty years, the State of Minnesota has developed and invested in education programming that delivers on dual credits for students. Education stakeholders in Minnesota believe that this new policy may have a crippling effect on a number of these successful dual credit programming.

At this time, we invite you to present your organization's decision to a Joint Session of the Minnesota Senate's Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee and the Minnesota House's Higher Education Committee. This will allow members of the committee and education stakeholders to gain a better understanding of this policy change and the chance to ask some clarifying questions. Conversely, this may be a great opportunity for your organization to inform education stakeholders in Minnesota of the need for the change and articulate the exemptions outside of credentialing which are allowable in the context of this decision.

Our staff will be in touch with you to ensure you have received this invitation, and if you accept our invitation to present to our committee, schedule a time to do so. We greatly appreciate your time and willingness to educate vested stakeholders, and the public, on this important policy change. This discussion will allow us to explore its impact on Minnesota and begin to develop a plan forward.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Terri E. Bonoff.

Senator Terri E. Bonoff
Chair, Higher Education & Workforce Dev

Handwritten signature of Bud Norrnes.

Representative Bud Norrnes
Chair, Higher Education

cc: Dr. David R. Anderson, Chair, Higher Learning Commission Board of Trustees
Senator Greg D. Clausen