



JOEL KITCHENS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 1ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Representative Kitchens Testimony on AB 423

Good morning Chairman Thiesfeldt and members of the Education Committee,

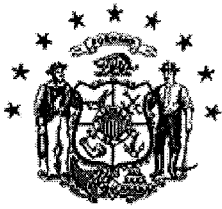
Thank you for holding a hearing and allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of AB 423 today. This legislation has been introduced to expand the opportunity for teachers seeking to teach in a Montessori school to get their initial teaching license.

Under current law, in order to receive their initial teaching license to teach at a Montessori school, an individual must have completed a teacher accreditation program accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education. This bill will add teacher accreditation programs accredited by the Association Montessori Internationale, or AMI, to the list of qualifying teaching programs. The AMI is a widely respected and known organization in the Montessori community. Founded by Dr. Maria Montessori herself, it is the foremost authority in Montessori education internationally. Accepting teaching accreditations from AMI will help public Montessori schools fill teaching slots and take this common-sense approach to expanding their applicant pool.

This simple statute change will allow for more qualified teachers to obtain their initial teaching license without compromising the standards for teachers that we have for those educating our state's children. This bill plays a small but vital role in tackling our teacher shortage and will send a message that Wisconsin is actively working to address the needs of our schools and our children.

I would like to thank my co-author Representative Bowen, and our Senate authors Senator Olsen and Senator Taylor, and their staff, for the work and time they have put into this legislation.

Thank you for holding this hearing and I ask for your support on this bipartisan bill.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DAVID BOWEN

WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY

10TH DISTRICT

State Representative David Bowen Testimony for AB 423

Good morning members of the Assembly Committee on Education,

Montessori schools work by guiding our children's education through the Montessori Method, which is to have children utilize all 5 human senses – rather than only through watching, listening, and reading – to learn at their own individual pace, and values an approach that values a child's physical, social, and emotional, as well as cognitive development that a traditional education prioritizes.

Schools based in the Montessori tradition are evidence-based, are well-received by the parents, and are effective in practice. Currently, Milwaukee Public Schools offer the largest collection of Montessori schools in the United States. This is the result of the fact that in 2014, the Milwaukee Public School Board approved an expansion of Montessori schools due to their rising popularity.

The very simple change that AB 423 makes to the statutes makes sense because it makes it easier for teachers to teach at our successful, popular Montessori schools without sacrificing the quality of teaching in the classroom.

I would like to thank my co-author Representative Kitchens for his support of this bill, and I ask your support as well. Thank you for your consideration.



Luther S. Olsen

State Senator

14th District

TO: Assembly Committee on Education
FROM: Senator Luther Olsen
DATE: Thursday, August 24, 2017
SUBJECT: Testimony for Assembly Bill 423

Thank you Chairman Thiesfeldt and members of the Assembly Committee on Education for holding a hearing and allowing me to testify in support of Assembly Bill 423.

Currently, we allow an initial teaching license to be granted to a person who has successfully completed a teacher education program that is accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE). In order to be eligible for this initial license you must:

1. Possess a bachelor's degree.
2. Successfully complete a teacher education program accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education.
3. Successfully complete an introductory course in special education for which the individual earned at least 3 postsecondary credits.
4. Have earned a passing score on any standardized examinations required by the state superintendent.

The goal for this law was to allow people who have a 4-year degree and have attended a rigorous Montessori teacher education program to be licensed to teach at a school that uses the Montessori method as its primary method of instruction. Most programs that teach Montessori Teacher Education are accredited by MACTE. However, a few programs are approved by the Association Montessori International (AMI) rather than the MACTE.

Assembly Bill 423 modifies the second requirement in current law to allow for teachers who receive training approved by AMI to also be eligible for the Montessori license. Modifying this law would help correct the shortage of Montessori-trained educators that has impacted many schools, such as the Isthmus Montessori Academy here in Madison.

Thank you, members. I ask for your support on AB 423 and would be more than happy to answer any questions.

Testimony of State Senator Lena C. Taylor
Assembly Committee on Education
Assembly Bill 423 – An Initial Teaching License Based on Completion of a
Montessori Teacher Education Program
August 24, 2017

Chairman Thiesfeldt, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit written testimony for Assembly Bill 423, relating to an initial teaching license based on completion of a Montessori teacher education program. This is an important bill that diversify and expand educational opportunities for our students. In addition, it will help create new pipelines for those who aspire to teach.

Since 1929, Montessori has focused on helping children develop executive and independent thinking skills. Key features of Montessori programs include use of hands-on or kinesthetic learning, classroom collaborative activities, and multi-age classrooms. These approaches understand and accommodate the curiosity that young students have. The focus on multi-age classrooms helps students interact with individuals outside of their age group and provides them will the skills to be flexible and confident outside of students' comfort zones.

In my district, Milwaukee Public Schools has seven Montessori schools. Together, these schools enroll over 3,000 students. A recent article from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel highlights the increasing parental demand for Montessori-based education. In one school – the Howard Avenue Montessori, there is a waitlist of 70 three-year olds. To address this demand, the Milwaukee School Board voted to expand the Howard Avenue Montessori school beginning in fall of 2017.

As members of the Assembly Committee on Education, I am sure you are aware of what the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) has described as historic teacher shortages facing public schools across this country and in Wisconsin. In the 2015-2016 school year, 54 percent of Wisconsin school districts faced teacher shortages for mathematics instruction. For crucial fields such as technology and engineering, 89 percent of school districts faced a shortage. Two of the crucial recommendations that DPI has made were to create new opportunities and pathways for educators and to promote the pathways to licensure that currently exist more effectively. Expanding the licensure paths to include teacher education programs approved by the Association Montessori will help grow these pathways, meet parental demands, and reduce teacher shortages.

Chairman Thiesfeldt, members of the committee, I ask for your support for Assembly Bill 423. Montessori is a well-tested and trusted program that can help address the important education issues that our State faces today.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Wisconsin Assembly Education Committee

Assembly chair and committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of Assembly Bill 423. This bill will add to the current Montessori teacher-licensing pathway that was passed in 2013 to allow graduates of an Association Montessori International (AMI) Montessori teacher-training program to apply for the alternative state teaching license. We are here today to inform you that AMI training has a standard of excellence across the world. Students who participate and graduate from an AMI center come to the profession with the highest Montessori credentials and are sought after for open Montessori teaching positions.

The original legislation only considered Montessori training centers that are reviewed and approved by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE). MACTE is recognized by the US Department of Education. Although the majority of AMI training centers in the U S are MACTE certified, the international training centers are not. That is because MACTE is limited to overseeing programs only in the US.

AMI reviews and maintains the highest standards for for all AMI training centers. AMI is the original Montessori foundation, founded by Maria Montessori. All AMI centers have to have certified trained teacher trainers who go through a rigorous three to four year training program to become an AMI instructor. AMI centers in the US who are not MACTE affiliated do so due to cost and the size of the programs. While AMI/USA urges all US AMI centers to join MACTE the costs are prohibitive for smaller AMI United States training programs.

Montessori education continues to grow in Wisconsin in the private and public sector. This past year, Racine Unified District started a Montessori program and Tomah Public approved expansion of it's program to sixth grade. And as you may be aware, the Madison School Board is considering granting a Montessori charter to Isthmus Montessori Academy. As a result, there continues to be a shortage of Montessori trained teachers to fill these teaching positions. By passing this legislation you will help alleviate this problem. We urge you to vote in favor of this bill to provide more opportunities for children and families to have Montessori education as a choice. Wisconsin is a leader in providing Montessori education and as a result we attract many trained Montessori teachers to the state to fill these jobs.

Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions about this bill.

Phil Dosmann
Executive Director
Wisconsin Montessori Association

2009-10 WKCE Proficiency Summary by Subgroup
 School Data is for Fernwood, Craig, MacDowell, and Maryland Av

Reading		Percent Proficient		
Student Group	Enrolled	School	District	State
African-Am	374	69.0%	50.7%	57.6%
Asian	24	70.8%	64.0%	75.6%
Hispanic/Latino	64	81.3%	60.0%	66.3%
Native-Am	5	100.0%	63.6%	71.4%
White	271	86.3%	76.5%	87.0%
Female	395	77.7%	60.7%	84.2%
Male	343	75.5%	54.3%	79.1%
SpEd	127	48.8%	25.0%	46.4%
Non-SpEd	611	82.5%	65.7%	87.3%
ELL	3	33.3%	44.3%	55.1%
Non-ELL	735	76.9%	59.0%	83.3%
FRL	344	64.5%	53.5%	68.9%
Non-FRL	394	87.3%	73.7%	89.5%
Total	738	76.7%	57.4%	81.6%

ELA		Percent Proficient		
Student Group	Enrolled	School	District	State
African-Am	118	59.3%	34.3%	40.0%
Asian	7	71.4%	53.3%	63.8%
Hispanic/Latino	19	73.7%	45.6%	52.1%
Native-Am	3	66.7%	38.1%	51.5%
White	85	82.4%	66.2%	76.4%
Female	129	74.4%	47.0%	75.1%
Male	103	63.1%	37.8%	65.1%
SpEd	43	44.2%	19.1%	35.9%
Non-SpEd	189	75.1%	48.4%	75.5%
ELL	0		30.4%	40.6%
Non-ELL	232	69.4%	43.7%	71.6%
FRL	113	52.2%	38.1%	53.5%
Non-FRL	119	85.7%	58.0%	79.4%
Total	232	69.4%	42.3%	70.0%

Math		Percent Proficient		
Student Group	Enrolled	School	District	State
African-Am	374	60.2%	39.4%	46.4%
Asian	24	66.7%	65.0%	78.1%
Hispanic/Latino	64	71.9%	54.1%	61.9%
Native-Am	5	40.0%	54.1%	63.6%
White	271	84.1%	70.6%	83.4%
Female	395	68.6%	48.5%	77.3%
Male	343	71.7%	49.0%	77.3%
SpEd	127	58.3%	26.0%	44.9%
Non-SpEd	611	72.5%	54.7%	82.6%
ELL	3	33.3%	45.5%	57.3%
Non-ELL	735	70.2%	49.2%	78.6%
FRL	344	59.3%	45.0%	62.8%
Non-FRL	394	79.4%	64.9%	86.4%
Total	738	70.1%	48.8%	77.3%

Science		Percent Proficient		
Student Group	Enrolled	School	District	State
African-Am	118	66.1%	32.4%	40.5%
Asian	7	85.7%	53.3%	69.6%
Hispanic/Latino	19	73.7%	48.4%	57.7%
Native-Am	3	100.0%	44.9%	61.9%
White	85	85.9%	68.5%	83.2%
Female	129	78.3%	41.4%	75.4%
Male	103	70.9%	43.1%	76.6%
SpEd	43	55.8%	23.5%	47.8%
Non-SpEd	189	79.4%	47.2%	80.6%
ELL	0		34.8%	47.1%
Non-ELL	232	75.0%	43.2%	77.7%
FRL	113	61.1%	38.2%	59.9%
Non-FRL	119	88.2%	57.9%	85.3%
Total	232	75.0%	42.3%	76.0%

Soc Stu		Percent Proficient		
Student Group	Enrolled	School	District	State
African-Am	118	82.2%	47.3%	55.1%
Asian	7	85.7%	66.5%	78.8%
Hispanic/Latino	19	89.5%	62.2%	71.0%
Native-Am	3	100.0%	59.9%	72.2%
White	85	95.3%	77.8%	87.5%
Female	129	89.9%	57.1%	83.7%
Male	103	85.4%	54.9%	81.2%
SpEd	43	76.7%	33.0%	55.2%
Non-SpEd	189	90.5%	62.1%	86.8%
ELL	0		50.9%	63.5%
Non-ELL	232	87.9%	56.6%	83.5%
FRL	113	81.4%	53.0%	70.7%
Non-FRL	119	94.1%	67.3%	89.2%
Total	232	87.9%	56.0%	82.4%

Wisconsin Assembly Education Committee – AB 423

Thursday, August 24, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support of Assembly Bill 423. Thank you for your commitment to high quality education for our youth and families. I commend your constant efforts to create ideal learning environments and learning opportunities for all children.

I represent the Wisconsin Montessori Association, Montessori guides and educators, school administrators, and most certainly the children with whom we have the honor to work each day.

As Treasurer of the Wisconsin Montessori Association and as a school administrator, I have the opportunity to work with many schools throughout our state, and I am well aware of the teacher shortage across different methods of education. Passing this bill will provide greater opportunity for highly qualified educators to join this profession.

The AMI Montessori training course was established by Dr. Montessori and is the highest level of standardization within this scientific method of education. This is an internationally recognized educational training and diploma program. MACTE accreditation is limited to the training institutes within the United States, limiting the opportunity for teachers who were trained internationally to receive employment in public institutions within the nation.

Training centers often meet capacity quickly and teachers looking to learn this method of teaching seek international training with the potential consequence of not being able to teach at public institutions within the United States. Adding the recognition of AMI training centers to this bill would eliminate this obstacle and therefore diminish part of the teacher shortage.

Wisconsin is currently a leader in Montessori education with an AMI training center located in Milwaukee. The Wisconsin Montessori Association, Montessori educators, and most importantly the children and families who are served by AMI Montessori education each day, view our state as a model for other states to continue the positive outcomes of this brain-based, scientifically proven method of education. Including AMI to this bill sets the highest standard as well as a precedent for the highest quality Montessori educators to serve our children.

Thank you for your time, and please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

Carrie Marlette
WMA Treasurer
Wisconsin Montessori Association

Members of the Education Committee,

I am here today in support of A.B. 423 which would modify Wis. Stat. 118.194.

Wisconsin has long been a leader in educational innovation, a proud tradition that was advanced further when our legislative body acted two years ago to create a pathway to state licensure for teachers educated in the Montessori tradition.

The current statute provides an initial license to teach for eligible graduates of programs accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education. S.B. 299 extends the same consideration to graduates of programs approved by the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI). This amounts to a basic housekeeping change in the statutory language, which should have included this provision from its inception. The standards, rigor, and reputation of AMI are unparalleled, and the programs thereby approved are in every way equal or superior to those accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education.

The AMI Montessori method of education is an evidence-based, cost-effective, non-sectarian method of inclusive education that provides children with both the freedom and the responsibility to be the guardians of their own education. By widening the pool of programs from which we can recruit qualified teachers, we match an increased access by students with an increased opportunity for employment within our school districts.

We lose nothing in this amendment, and we gain a greater access to a recognized benefit by an increased number of Wisconsin's public school pupils, teachers, and families.

I encourage you to support this bill.

F.L. Miller