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Greetings,

This communication is regarding HB5020, Amendment 2 of the bill last week which will come before the Senate. While improved, the Elgin Community College Faculty Association (ECCFA), IFT Local 3791, remains concerned with the following:

1. The amendment allows school districts to identify an alternative dual credit provider in the event their community college denies a faculty based on their credentials or due to other reasons, such as course documentation. We agree there should be an appeals process available to the ICCB when there is a denial, as proposed. However, the amendment states that even if the ICCB upholds the decision of the community college to deny, the district may choose an alternative provider in the state. If so, why include an appeals process to the ICCB at all? If the intent of the amendment is to ensure greater consistency across the state in qualifying faculty in dual credit, we support it. However, by achieving consistency statewide, we should not then also allow for districts to shop around for dual credit providers beyond their community college. If the ICCB upholds the college's decision to deny, then the denial should remain intact.
2. While we understand the need for greater statewide consistency in identifying appropriate qualifications for dual credit faculty, we disagree with this approach. Moving the approval of faculty qualifications essentially to a statewide level appears to contradict the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), as they assert that institutions need to exercise authority over faculty qualifications for all of their programs, including dual credit. If we were to have faculty qualifications on campus for our faculty and then have a lesser standard for dual credit faculty dictated by the state's framework, it seems to conflict with the HLC language:

Core Component 4a: "The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and **faculty qualifications for all its programs,**

including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.”

Source: <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/criteria-and-core-components.html>

3. If the decision is to move forward with some statewide recommendations despite these concerns, we feel that the process as currently outlined in the amendment is inappropriate.
 - a. ECCFA is concerned about the size and make-up of the committee. The committee should be limited to representatives exclusively from two-year and four-year colleges. Representation from the high schools is in opposition of the HLC expectations that local college institutions determine the qualifications.
 - b. Instead, we suggest that the IBHE and the ICCB agree to convene a taskforce to work on the same goal with a realistic timeframe permitted. Such a framework should be developed by higher education institutions (not inclusive of K-12 in this case) and will require participants closer to the work. For example, a group of math faculty should propose the math qualifications. It will take time to complete but would be a more effective approach. Once in existence, should legislation move forward, it could focus on adopting this framework
4. Overall, the proposal continues the erosion of autonomy faced by community colleges in dual credit partnerships, exemplified by successive amendments to the Dual Credit Quality Act. With each revision, more power is transferred from the community college to local high schools or the State, limiting the institutions’ ability to make critical decisions regarding its own teacher qualifications, course offerings, and instructional standards. This loss of authority extends to fundamental aspects of education, including who teaches college courses, class composition [mixed enrollment], class sizes, withdrawal policies, and allocation of tuition and fees.

Thank you for your review of our concerns. We are happy to discuss them with you at your convenience.

Kind Regards,
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