**Resolution in Support of K–12 Educator Retention in Wisconsin**

**Whereas:** The Student Government Association (SGA) of the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UWSP) recognizes that public education is a public good and the retention of educators is essential to the continual growth and quality of the education that the state provides its citizens;

**Whereas:** Wisconsin lost 2.4% of teachers between 2010 and 2014 and produced 7% fewer graduates from teacher preparation programs, according to a report from the Public Policy Forum;

**Whereas:** enrollment in teacher preparation programs is down 28% across the state. This has led to a decline in teachers available to fill vacancies;

**Whereas:** new teachers are the largest investment for school districts as they require 6 semester credits of professional development, mentoring, and retention incentives;

**Whereas:** the achievement gap increases in urban and rural school districts when schools spend more money on recruiting new teachers than on professional development for the teachers they already have;

**Whereas:** a report by the American Federation of Teachers in 2015 shows that 79% of teachers feel disrespected by their elected representatives and 18% of teachers have experienced physical threats in the workplace, these statistics push educators out of the profession;

**Whereas:** on average, teachers make 17% less than other professionals with the same amount of education;

**Whereas:** one of the largest financial burdens for them is the purchasing of resources like art supplies, books, and storage units for classroom use;

**Whereas:** the expectation of teaching to a statewide standardized test at the expense of the experiential learning and classroom creativity is one of the largest stressors in the teaching profession;

**Whereas:** some districts have instituted a "grow-your-own" financial aid program for paraprofessionals working within the district to get their teaching license;

**Whereas:** The effects of Act 10 have lowered teacher pay by 2.6% (average taken from CNN Business) and 8.8% of teachers in Wisconsin leave the profession each since 2011;

**Whereas:** The effects of Act 10 on rural districts have been disproportionately higher as teachers move out of rural districts in seek of wealthier districts at higher rates;

**Therefore, be it resolved:** UWSP SGA supports tax benefits for teachers, offsetting lower salaries with tax breaks and housing subsidies, student loan forgiveness programs, and additional financial support for education from the State;

**Therefore, be it further resolved:** UWSP SGA backs equitable school funding from the State to decrease the opportunity gap in both urban and rural districts;

**Therefore, be it further resolved:** UWSP SGA supports an increase in research for classroom accountability beyond standardized testing;

**Therefore, be it further resolved:** UWSP SGA encourages a partnership between high schools and teacher-preparation programs that creates a pipeline program to recruit and provide experience to future teachers in high school;

**Therefore, be it further resolved:** UWSP SGA supports school districts providing more adequate mentoring for teachers in their first five years to monitor progress and build connections within districts to better retain;

**Therefore, be it further resolved:** UWSP SGA supports a state-wide institution of a "grow-your-own" program for paraprofessionals to earn a license which would increase recruitment of educators of color by providing financial, academic, and social support for a more diverse population;

**Therefore, be it further resolved:** UWSP SGA supports the repeal of Act 10 to restore collective bargaining rights and assist in the retention of educators state-wide;

**Therefore, let it be finally resolved:** Upon passage, this document be sent to: SGA President Kerber, SGA Vice President Griepentrog, SGA Chief of Staff Jeidy, SGA Speaker of the Senate DeLain, SGA Adviser Jentz, SGA Administrative Assistant Haws, Associate Dean Fernholz, School of Education Professor Buchanan, College of Professional Studies Dean Loy, Superintendent of Public Instruction Taylor, Governor Evers, Representative Snyder, Representative Murphy, Representative Thiesfeldt, Representative Kitchens, Representative Vos, Representative Neylon, Representative Shankland, Senator Olsen, [Senator Darling](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/legislator/2017/1503), [Senator Nass](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/legislator/2017/1519), Senator Jacque, Senator Baldwin, Senator R. Johnson, Senator Testin, Representative Kind, Regent Millner, Regent Jones, UW – Madison Dean for the School of Education Hess, National School Superintendents Association President – Elect Kerr

**Authored by:** President Kerber

**Sponsored by:** Speaker of the Senate DeLain, Speaker Pro Tempore Knipple, College of Letters and Science Senator McNamara, College of Letters and Science Senator M. Johnson, Environmental and Sustainability Affairs Director Ott,

**Sponsoring Committee:** Legislative Affairs Committee