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February 13, 2019

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645 State Office Building  
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Dear Sir or Madam,

Enclosed please find two hard copies of a report required by 2000 Minnesota Laws Chap. 489 Art. 11 Sec 2 Subd 4(c) concerning the Urban Teacher Education Program at Metropolitan State University. Copies of this report, *"The Urban Teacher Program in the School of Urban Education at Metropolitan State University: Report to the Legislature,"* were delivered to Representative Connie Bernardy, Chair of the House Higher Education and Career Readiness Policy and Finance Committee, and Senator Paul Anderson, Chair of the Senate Higher Education Finance and Policy Committee, on February 15, 2019.

Please contact me, [Jon.Dalager@MinnState.edu](mailto:Jon.Dalager@MinnState.edu) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jon K. Dalager  
System Director for Academic Initiatives and Program Support

c: Ron Anderson, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs  
Satasha Green Stephen, Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs  
Melissa Fahning, Managing Director of Government Relations

Enclosure





February 15, 2019

Academic & Student Affairs

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**The Urban Teaching Program in  
the School of Urban Education at  
Metropolitan State University**  
Report to the Legislature

Minnesota State

**The Urban Teacher Program**  
in the  
**School of Urban Education**



**A Progress Report to the  
Chairs of the Higher Education Finance Divisions  
of the Minnesota State Legislature**

**February 2019**

## OVERVIEW

The School of Urban Education (UED) at Metropolitan State University is charged with the mandate of preparing racially and ethnically diverse teachers who understand, value and contribute to enhance learning outcomes for all students in the urban settings. The Urban Teacher Program (UTP), was founded in 2001 following legislation in 2000 that authorized the Metropolitan State University to offer a new teacher education program to “meet the needs of Minneapolis, St. Paul and inner-ring suburbs”. This legislation mandated the University to enroll at least 50 percent teacher candidates of color with hopes of addressing the lack of diversity among classroom teachers.<sup>1</sup> After a successful site visit in April 2018, the UED was reaccredited by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) with continuing approval to offer teacher education licensure programs through June 30, 2023. The UED offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs leading to teacher education licensure in the following majors:

- Urban Early Childhood Education (undergraduate only)
- Urban Elementary Education (undergraduate only)
  - Pre-Primary Endorsement (undergraduate and graduate)
- Urban Secondary Education (undergraduate and graduate)
  - English/Communication Arts & Literature
  - Life/General Sciences
  - Mathematics
  - Social Studies
- English as a Second Language (additional undergraduate and graduate licensure, initial approval fall 2017, launched fall 2018)
- Special Education (additional ABS graduate licensure, initial approval fall 2017, launched fall 2018)

Admission of new students into the secondary math and science education program majors was suspended in summer 2018. The decision not to accept new students was occasioned because enrollment in these programs was small and had declined over recent years. A primary hurdle faced by UED is a limited pool of students interested in the secondary math and science education programs. More broadly, the decision was made as the unit grappled with finding ways to prepare for an uncertain future while holding onto its core identity. The

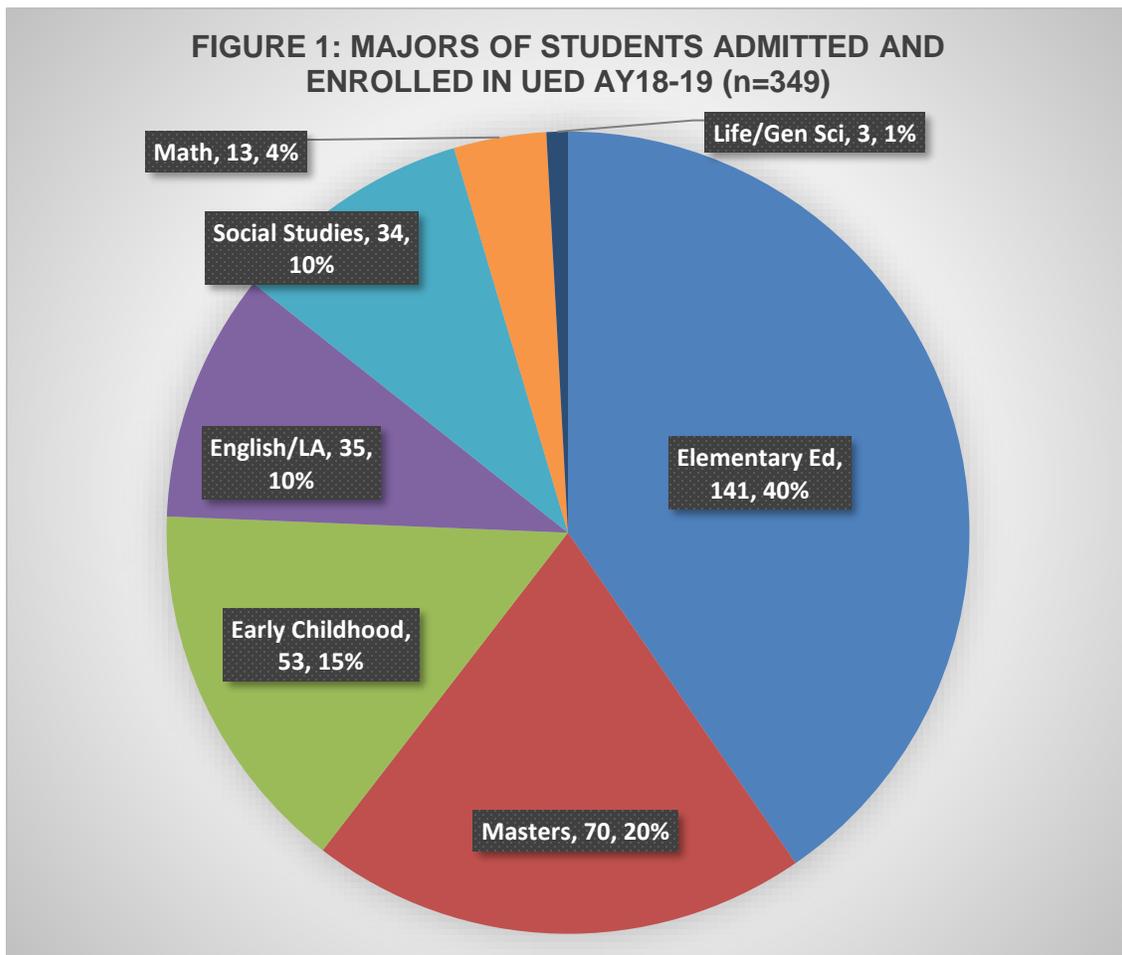
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<sup>1</sup> According to the 2017 Minnesota Teacher Supply and Demand Report published by the Minnesota Department of Education, less than 4.2 percent of teachers are of color, while students of color represent 41 percent of the student population. Of the 32,246 teachers in the Twin Cities Metro Area, only 2,197 (6.8%) are of color or American Indian while 41.1 percent of 475,092 students in metro area schools are of color or American Indian.

admission suspensions allows faculty in the College of Sciences and the School of Urban Education the opportunity to meet and engage in dialogues in order to review the current course offerings and find additional ways to better serve the students. The revamped secondary math and science education programs will improve our curricular offerings giving students greater flexibility while preserving the quality of their education.

The UED works in collaboration with community colleges throughout the metro area as well as several school districts to provide increased pathways for racially and ethnically diverse prospective teachers becoming prepared to be effective urban teachers. The UED collaborates with school partners to recruit, prepare, and mentor student teachers so they can learn and grow to become quality teachers who add value to improve student learning outcomes. Partnership agreements between university and school partners communicate expectations for shared expertise and resources to support student learning.

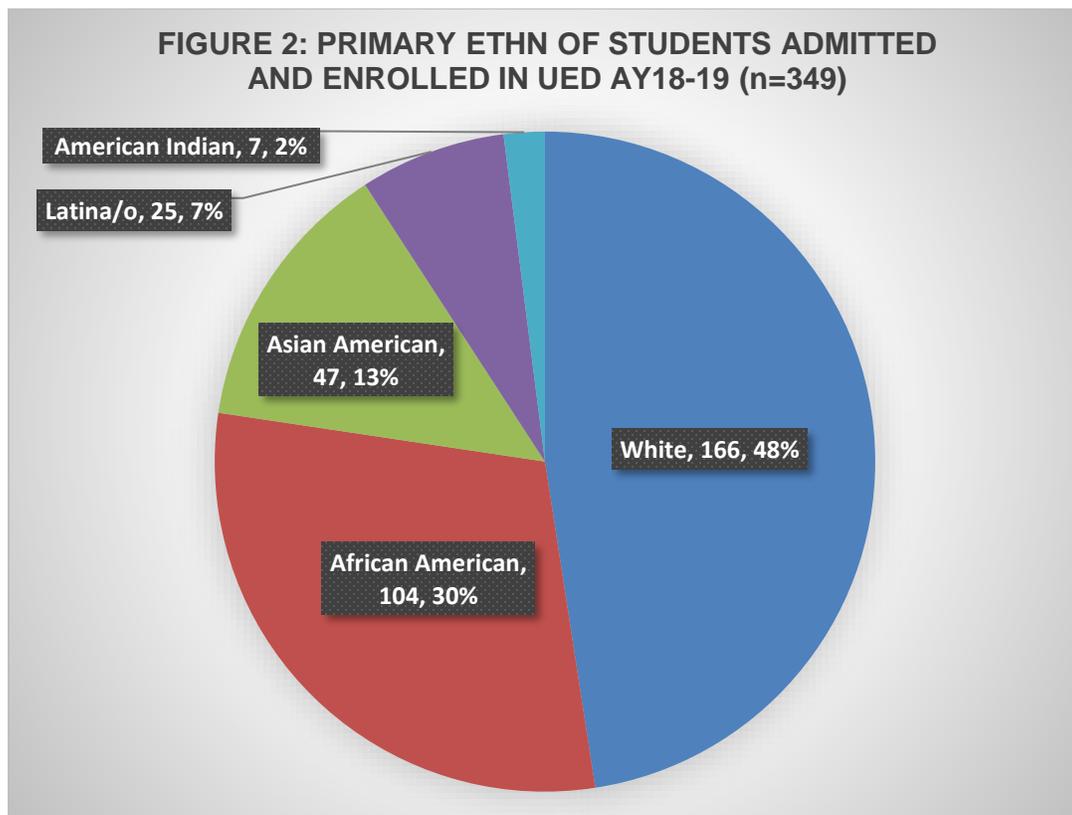
Over the years, UED has been committed to prepare and retain highly qualified racially and ethnically diverse teachers for academically and linguistically diverse PreK-12 classrooms in the metro area. Figure 1 shows the license majors, number, and percentage of students admitted and enrolled in UED in 2018.



## CONTINUED OUTCOMES RELATED TO THE 2000 LEGISLATURE’S TARGET OF THE PROGRAM ENROLLING AT LEAST 50% STUDENTS OF COLOR

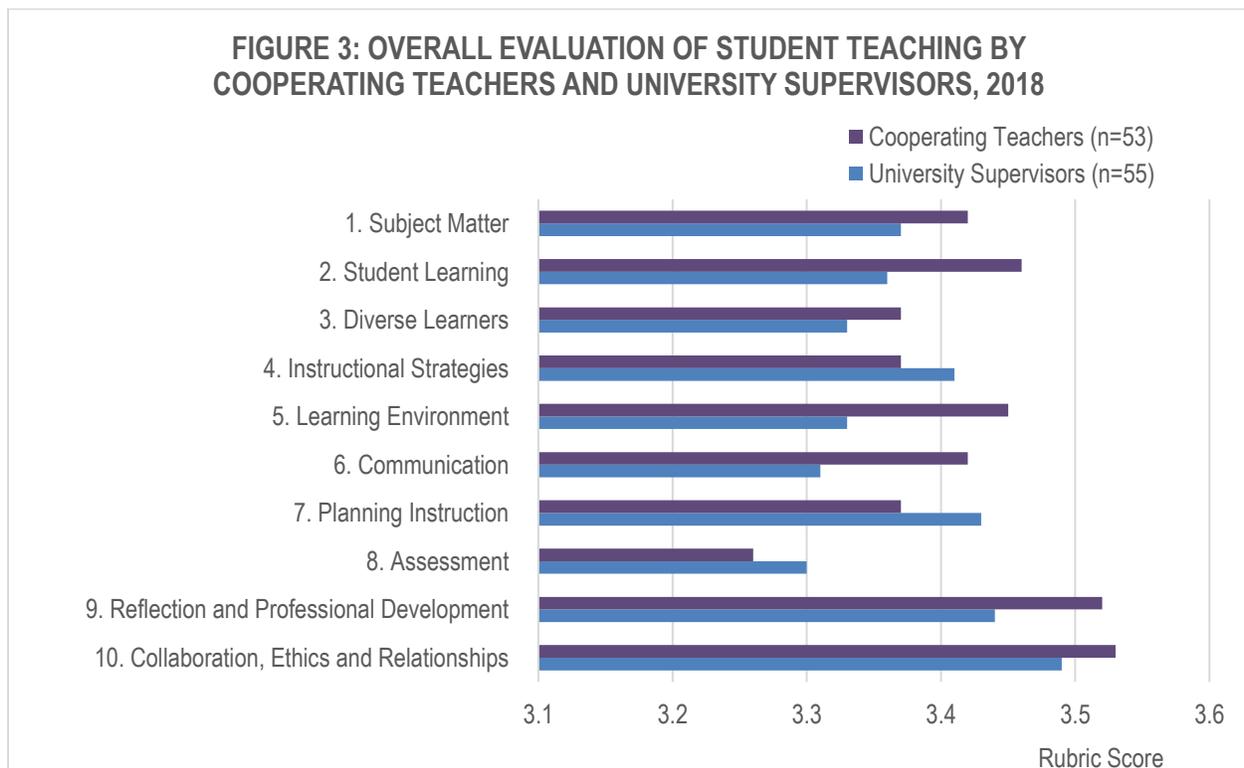
Metropolitan State University and the UED have made a concerted effort to increase their underrepresented student population, with acknowledgement that there is still work to be done to close the ethnic gap that exists in classrooms. Over the years, the number and percentage of students of color enrolled in the UTP have been on the increase when compared to enrollments in teacher preparation programs at private and public colleges and universities in the metro area. Increasingly, enrollments in these other teacher preparation programs remain predominantly white with the exception of a few specialized programs that receive extra funding to cater to students of color and American Indian students.

Metropolitan State University is proud to report that 52 percent of all Urban Education majors taking courses in the UED during the 2018-19 academic year are students of color or American Indian (Figure 2). With a commitment to providing degree award and licensure attainment, UED has implemented efforts to improve completion rates. Over the last two years, the number of program completers has increased by 13.6 percent across the various teacher licensure programs. Increasingly, we continue to reduce the difference in program completion rates between white students and students of color and American Indian students.



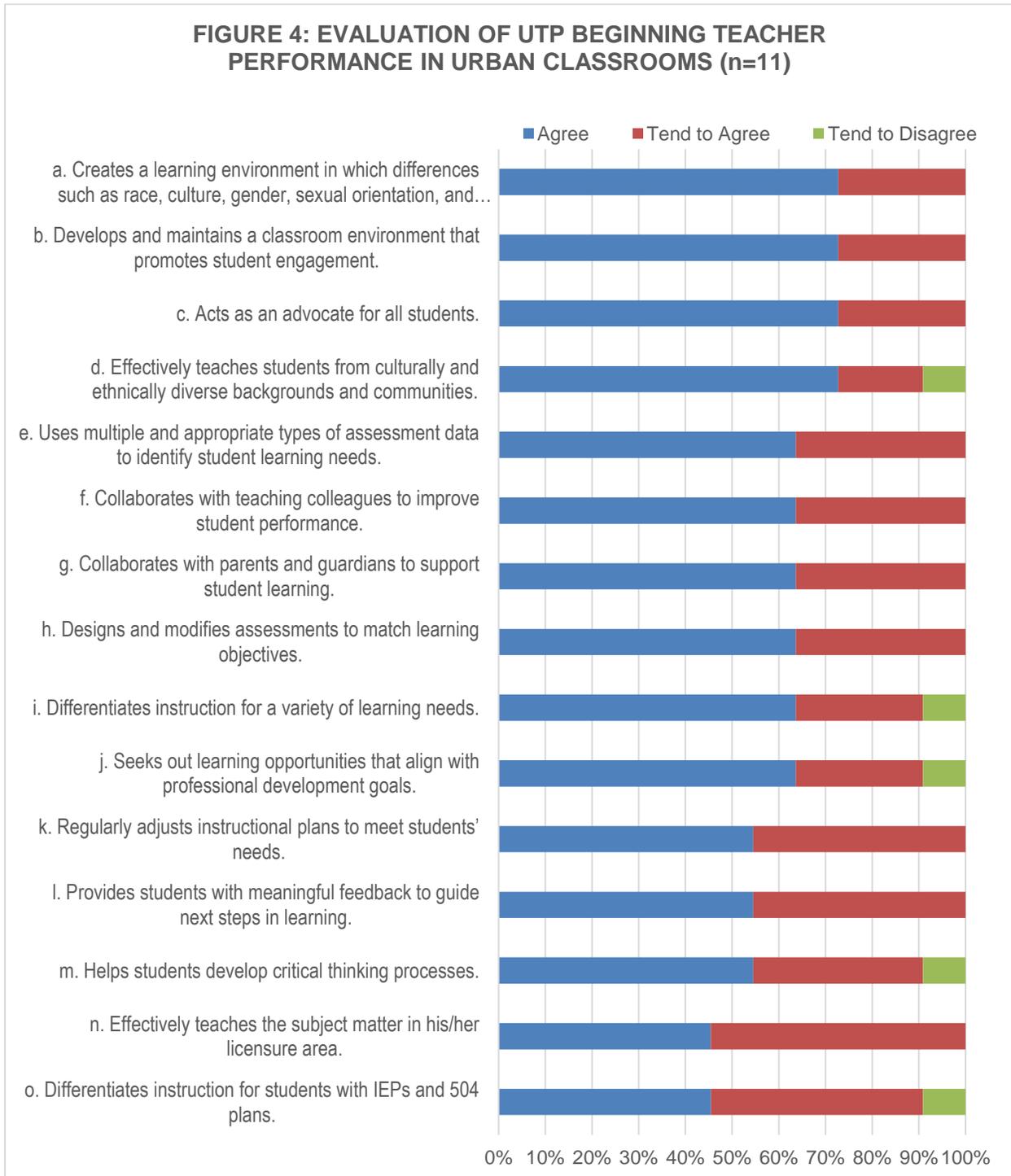
## EVALUATION OF STUDENT TEACHERS BY COOPERATING TEACHERS AND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS

UED teacher candidates are taught by outstanding racially and ethnically diverse faculty and they learn to practice teaching under the mentorship of highly qualified cooperating teachers in our partner schools across the metro area. Cooperating teachers mentor and guide teacher candidates by assisting them to develop standards-based lessons and observing and providing constructive feedback, and modeling effective teaching strategies and professional behaviors. At the conclusion of the student teacher's experience, the cooperating teacher and university supervisor complete a form evaluating the student teacher's performance in the classroom. The four-point rating scale ranges from 1 to 4; where (1) lacking, (2) emerging, (3) proficient and (4) exemplary. During the 2017-18 academic year, both cooperating teachers and university supervisors rated the student teachers' teaching skills as proficient on average across the ten standards of effective practice (SEPs) for beginning teachers (Figure 3). The student teachers' teaching skills average scores by cooperating teachers was higher compared to university supervisor average scores in all the SEPs except three namely, Instructional Strategies, Planning Instruction and Assessment. Standards 9 and 10, Reflection and Professional Development and Collaboration, Ethics and Relationships skills were highly rated by both cooperating teachers and university supervisors. On the other hand, standard 8, Assessment, was a lower rated skill by both cooperating teachers and university supervisors and is an area for further continuous improvement.



**Feedback from Schools on How UTP Teacher Candidates Perform in Urban Classrooms**

Increasingly, performance feedback from employers and/or supervisors of UTP beginning teachers is very positive. According to employers and supervisors, UTP first-year teachers have a strong instructional practice, an ability to work with diverse learners, skill to manage the learning environment, and exhibit great professionalism in their conduct. Figure 4 shows the performance rating of beginning teachers by their employers or supervisors.



Below are examples of the strengths of beginning teachers in their performance as licensed teachers as pointed out by their employers or supervisors in 2017-18.

- *[xxxxx] was chosen as KS95's Teacher of the Week during her first year of teaching. She is an exceptional novice educator.*
- *[xxxxx] has solid strengths in building a positive classroom environment honoring each individual student. As with many new teachers, he is working on understanding and effectively teaching the standards and curriculum for highest levels of learning by students.*
- *We enjoy having [xxxxxx] at our school. She has had a decent and safe first year teaching 4th grade with us. Since she is new to teaching and to our school, have yet to see her perform under strong pressure however she is receptive and willing. Moving forward into next year, she has volunteered to take a leadership role as PLC chair for intermediate grades. I anticipate to see her growth and I am excited to see her plans and leadership works.*
- *[xxxxxx] has performed wonderfully as a first year teacher!*
- *[xxxxx] has been a wonderful addition to Sojourner Truth Academy. She is patient and willing to go above and beyond for her scholars.*
- *[xxxx] has an early childhood education license but has a reading license now as well and is acting as a Literacy Specialist. Her ratings are based on that work.*

## TEACHER CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE

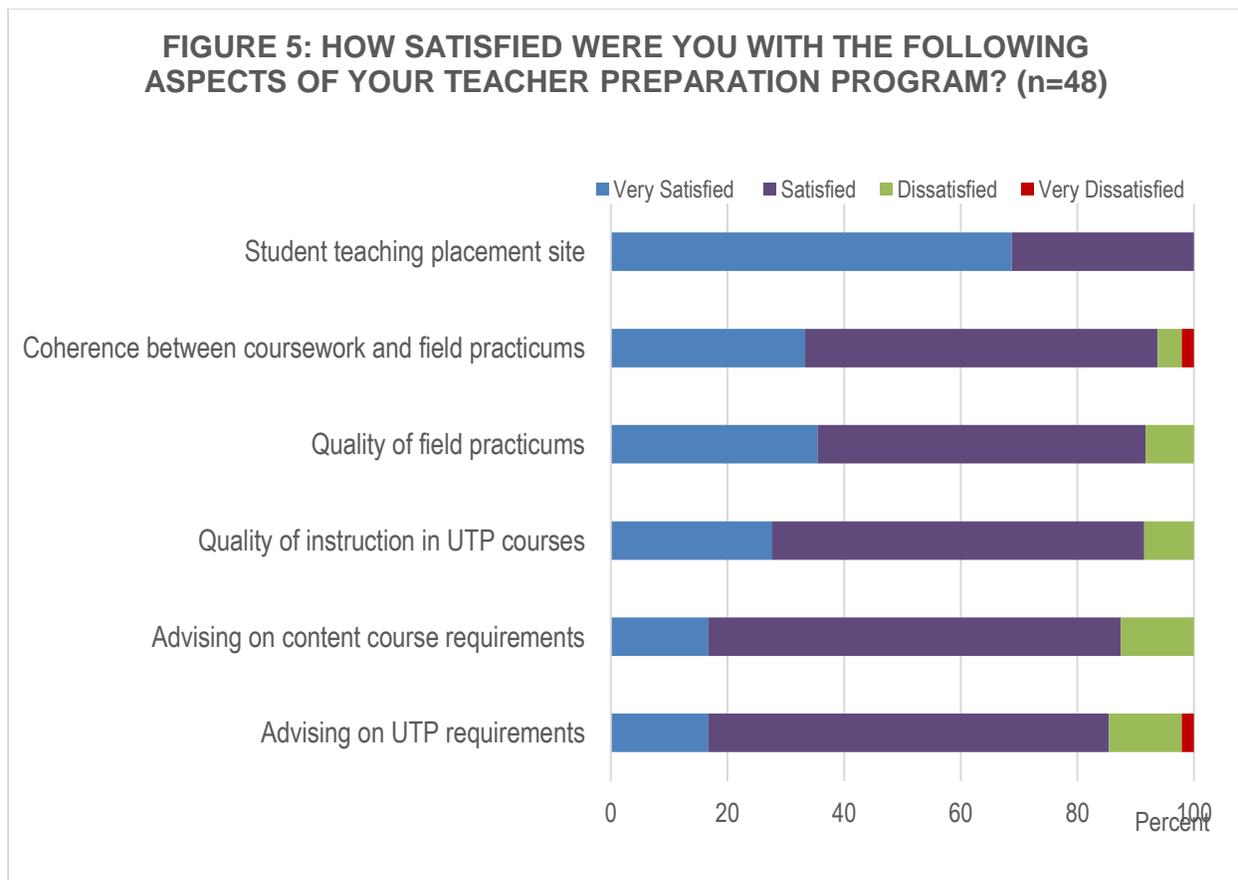
UTP teacher candidates must successfully complete the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations (MTLE) required by the Board of Teaching (Basic Skills—Reading, Writing, Math; Content Area Exam; and Pedagogy Exam) in their fields prior to being recommended for licensure. Table 1 shows the cumulative results for the MN NES EAS Basic Skills test for the 2017-18 academic program year. Though the UTP teacher candidates pass rate is lower than that of the state, it is trending positively. In addition, the UTP Mean Total Scaled Score is approaching or exceeds the minimum required score of 520.

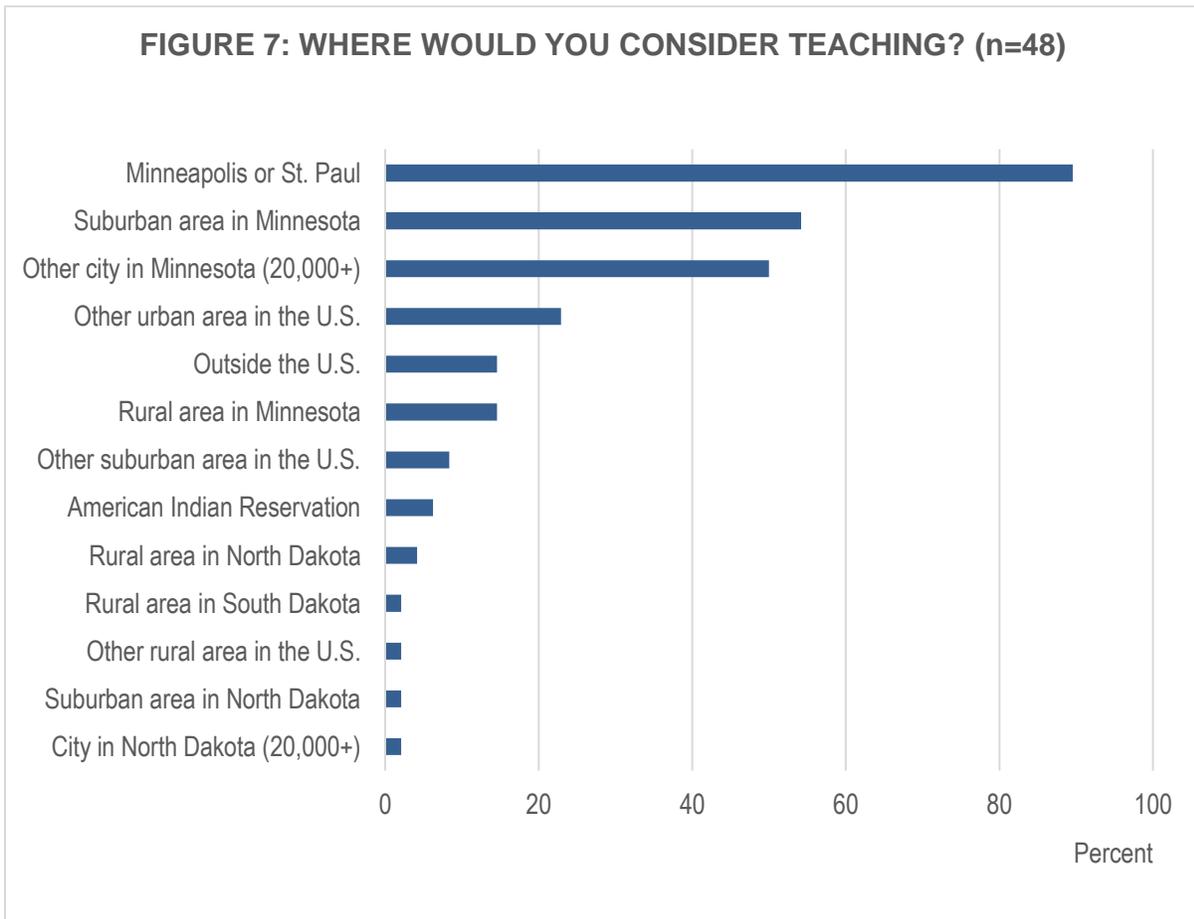
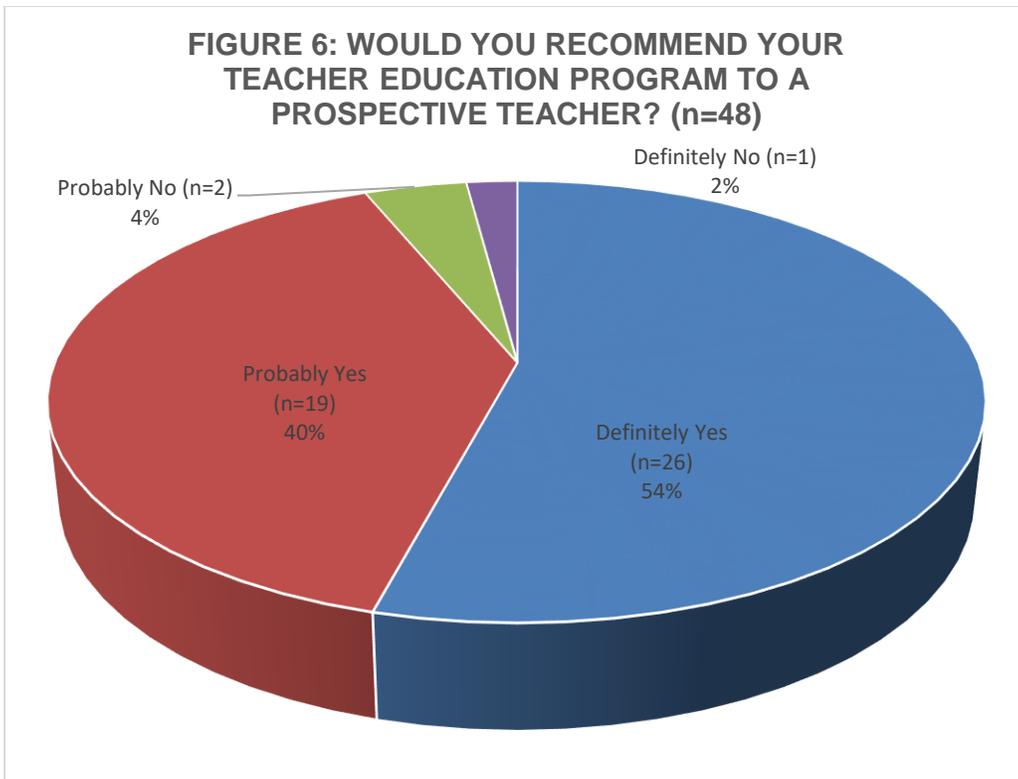
**TABLE 1: MTLE RESULTS FOR 2017-18 PROGRAM YEAR**

Subtest	Number of Takers		Pass Rate		Mean Total Scaled Score	
	Metro	State	Metro	State	Metro	State
EAS Mathematics	63	2844	52%	80%	519.0	542.0
EAS Reading	49	2677	71%	90%	537.0	551.7
EAS Writing	54	2995	26%	76%	513.1	532.0

## STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN THE PROGRAM

UED students are satisfied with the quality of the program. A total of 48 students who graduated from UED in Spring of 2018 completed the exit survey. Figure 5 shows the respondent ratings on the six domains. Overall, a combined majority (about 85% or more) of program completers were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the program across the six domains. Furthermore, an overwhelming percentage of program completers (94%) indicated that they would recommend UED to a friend or colleague interested in becoming a teacher (Figure 6). A near similar number also indicated that they are heading to the teaching workforce and would more likely prefer to work in the Twin Cities metro area schools (Figure 7). This clearly shows that UED places the outcomes of students at the heart of what they do to ensure that its student teacher graduates enter the classroom well prepared to improve student learning and contribute toward narrowing achievement gaps for historically underserved students.





A sample of students' reasons to recommend UTP to prospective teacher candidates.

- *“Because Metropolitan State University focuses mainly on Urban Education with equity on teaching of all students. Metro State also focuses on teachers of color and student of color who are disproportionate in many of our learning institutions hence reducing student teacher of color ratio with equity.”*
- *“Because it is incredibly flexible and relevant in a way no other program is.”*
- *“I had a very positive experience with the Urban Teaching Program because I learned a lot about teaching students of all cultures and backgrounds. I felt confident and excited throughout the program.”*
- *“I had great placements and a very positive experience through student teaching gaining experience*
- *Multicultural education as a part of every class is necessary for today's teachers.”*
- *“It was an overall decent experience but I feel that some of the classes could have better prepared you. Ex: lesson planning, using curriculum, real life differentiation lessons, providing us lesson plans or enacting them.”*
- *“I think UTP is the only teacher prep program that addresses head on the education system's role and complicity in upholding white supremacy, homophobia, patriarchy and the worst parts of capitalism. However, there are huge gaps in quality instruction that would make me hesitate recommending the program whole-heartedly.”*
- *“Most of the teachers were great and knew what they were talking about. Wonderful experience compares to other schools.”*
- *“The emphasis on urban education sufficiently prepares you for the jobs that will be available.”*
- *“It is the least expensive option, but instructional quality was uneven. I feel like my work experience in the education field was far more valuable than most of the things I learned in classes. However, the focus on urban teaching and learning was invaluable.”*
- *“I would because I have seen how my knowledge of urban learners and the context that they bring to urban learners is better understood so I feel prepared in making a learning community inclusive to all students and to those who come from experiences that don't parallel my own.”*

- *“It’s a reasonably priced program, and there are some good educator in the program. Advising needs improvement.”*
- *“I feel like I received very good preparation before and during student teaching that helped make it a successful placement. I feel prepared to go out into the teaching field.”*
- *“Affordable, Adaptable to my schedule, Great Urban Ed Focus, Diverse Program, Mostly knowledgeable Professors and Admin.”*
- *“The overall program is fine, but the communication during student teaching has been awful. There have been so much information that is incorrect, or not told in a timely manner. Someone really needs to look at what happens in the program when student become teacher candidates. We need more information and more support. One person can’t be in charge of all the student teachers and someone needs to speak to early childhood student teachers because the requirements are different and they were not addressed during our sessions.”*

## **OTHER PROGRAM UPDATES AND DEVELOPMENTS**

**LONG RANGE PLANNING:** The UED has made great strides since its founding, and its future is even brighter. For UED to reach its potential in preparing quality teachers, the UED engaged in a strategic planning process. The goal of strategic planning is to develop strategic priorities (goals) and identifying actions to achieve those goals. The draft strategic plan was written based on the pre-retreat homework findings and the themes that were generated during an UED Special All-School meeting held in December 2017. The strategic plan aligns purposefully with the university’s goals and builds upon essential knowledge and skills, research findings, and sound professional practice. These goals will result in a clear direction for UED to continue to meet the ever changing need of diverse teachers in the community.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** Metropolitan State University partnered with Augsburg University to offer an intensive mathematics tutoring sessions to help students prepare and pass the NES math subtest, which is needed to receive a Tier 4 teaching license. The free 8-week intensive NES mathematics test prep sessions were offered at one location on Friday evenings during the spring and on Saturday mornings during the summer. The foci and aim of the sessions were enhancing participants’ knowledge of the mathematics concepts that are covered in the NES mathematics subtest, exam taking skills and strategies, and of equal importance, to acclimate the participants to the NES mathematics subtest itself. The ultimate goal of this “intervention” was to ensure that students felt confident that they were well-prepared for and could do their best on the test. A total duplicated headcount of 240+ people drawn from a number of surrounding universities including Metropolitan State, St. Thomas, Concordia, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis College, and Minneapolis Public schools, among others benefited

from the tutoring sessions. A performance analysis of the students who took the NES test between January 2017 and June 2018 found that the average scaled score for those participants who attended the NES Math Prep sessions was higher than those who did not attend the tutoring sessions.

**NEW HIGH-NEED PROGRAMS:** UED is excited to build on the excellence of our program and our efforts to recruit and prepare exceptional SPED and ESL teachers. Starting Fall 2018, there was a successful roll-out of two new Master of Science in Urban Education programs. The English as a Second Language (ESL) and Special Education graduate programs were approved for licensure by PELSB in 2017. We look forward to conducting regular assessment and revisions of the newly launched programs to ensure the programs continue to meet the school's mission and the needs of students, and then adjust accordingly.

**HIGH LEVEL PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS:** UED prides itself in forging partnerships with local school districts to provide field placements and student teaching placements. In 2018, UED worked on memorandum of understanding with New Horizon Academy to have student teachers become para-professionals and be paid for their student teaching. Community of Peace Academy partnered with UED to gain more field placements and student teaching placements. In addition to existing partnerships, Inver Grove Heights Schools, South St. Paul Public Schools, Richfield Public Schools, Minneapolis Public School (MPS) and St. Paul Public School (SPPS) Districts entered into 'a higher level partnership' with UED to ensure more placements and placement priority. Plans are in the works for a Special Education cohort for master's level with MPS and if UED program completers apply for a teaching job in SPPS, they will not only receive an in person interview, but will gain priority interview status. While UED and the school districts have worked together in the past, this is a reaffirmation and expansion of the existing collaboration.