



February 15, 2021

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

**Metropolitan**  
State University



**School of Urban Education**

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

**February 2021**

## OVERVIEW

The School of Urban Education (UED) at Metropolitan State University is charged with the mandate of preparing racially and ethnically diverse teachers equipped with critical skills to teach in diverse classrooms in urban settings. The UED was founded in 2001 following a state legislation in 2000 that authorized Metropolitan State University to offer a new teacher education program to “meet the needs of Minneapolis, St. Paul and inner-ring suburbs”. The legislation mandated Metropolitan State to enroll at least 50 percent teacher candidates of color with hopes of building a diverse and stable teacher workforce.<sup>1</sup> Today, as we are proud to have been preparing urban teacher candidates for 20 years, the UED remains accredited by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) and 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 (undergraduate and graduate licensure)
- Special Education (graduate, additional ABS licensure)

Educational research is clear that the most important school-based factor on student achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher, followed closely by the effectiveness of the school principal. Moreover, research also tells us that though all students benefit from a racially diverse teaching workforce, students of color and American Indian students benefit even more. Policymakers, educators, and the public call on teacher preparation institutions to continuously examine how they recruit and prepare teacher candidates before they enter the profession. Since its inception, the UED has been committed to preparing and retaining highly qualified racially and ethnically diverse teachers for academically and linguistically

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<sup>1</sup> According to the 2021 Minnesota Teacher Supply and Demand Report published by the Minnesota Department of Education, 5,497 (7.3%) teachers in the state are of color, while 333,669 are students of color representing 38 percent of the student population. Of the 40,420 teachers in the Twin Cities Metro Area, 4,886 (12.1%) are of color or American Indian while 236,325 (48.0%) students in metro area schools are of color or American Indian.

diverse PreK-12 classrooms in the metro area. Today, in its 20<sup>th</sup> year of existence, the UED is now the 10<sup>th</sup> largest overall teacher preparation institution in the state despite having a fraction of the resources and infrastructure that other institutions have amassed over much longer periods of time preparing teachers (see Table 1). Moreover, the UED prepares a significantly higher number and percentage of teacher candidates of color compared to the top 15 largest teacher preparation programs in the state. Clearly, 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.

**Table 1: Top 15 Largest MN Teacher Prep Institutions and Their Enrollment of TOCAIT Candidates<sup>2</sup> (2019 Title II Reporting Year, AY17-18)**

Program	Total Enrollment	White	Hispanic	American Indian	Asian	Black	Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	Total TOCAIT Enrollment	% TOCAIT Enrollment
Minnesota State-Mankato	1,026	866	50	3	29	35	0	27	144	14%
Winona State University	611	556	12	9	7	7	0	12	47	8%
Bemidji State University	537	513	12	18	6	8	1	17	62	12%
U of M - Duluth	490	464	9	2	4	6	1	6	28	6%
St. Cloud State University	488	405	9	3	38	19	0	2	71	15%
Martin Luther College	463	425	9	1	12	12	0	4	38	8%
Minnesota State-Moorhead	430	393	3	2	4	3	0	11	23	5%
U of M - Twin Cities	422	328	29	1	31	10	0	13	84	20%
Bethel University	387	356	11	2	16	4	1	5	39	10%
<b>Metropolitan State U</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>62%</b>
Augsburg College	372	215	12	6	15	41	0	17	91	24%
Hamline University	328	224	10	0	34	12	0	17	73	22%
University of St. Thomas	284	217	12	1	12	19	0	10	54	19%
Minnesota State-Southwest	243	230	6	0	4	3	0	0	13	5%
Concordia University-St. Paul	222	160	6	1	23	17	0	9	56	25%
<b>Sub-Total Top 15</b>	<b>6,301</b>	<b>5,139</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>1,021</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Total State</b>	<b>7,904</b>	<b>6,548</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>1,164</b>	<b>15%</b>

<sup>2</sup> Data compiled above from publicly reported data in the 2019 Federal Title II Report, in AY2017-18. For this reporting year, there were 1,164 teachers of color and American Indian teacher candidates enrolled across 29 Minnesota teacher preparation programs -- they represented just 15 percent of 7,904 total candidates in the state yet K-12 students of color and American Indian students represented 34 percent of all students. During FY21, the top 15 teacher preparation programs listed above enrolled 1,021 TOCAIT candidates, about 90 percent of all TOCAIT candidates in the state.

Regardless of this progress, financial constraints ensure that many teachers of color or American Indian teacher candidates take longer to or simply do not successfully complete their program.<sup>3</sup> Admittedly, increasing the number of teachers of color requires intentional preparation and hiring, providing ongoing support, and addressing college affordability. To this end, UED prioritizes seeking funding to alleviate the financial constraints that TOCAIT candidates often experience during and prior to student teaching. During the FY21, Metropolitan State University was awarded a total of \$288,000 from the Collaborative Urban and Greater MN Educators of Color (CUGMEC) Grant program to support efforts to recruit, retain, and induct teacher candidates who are of color or who are American Indian. Money from the grant has been used to: (i) award tuition scholarships to TOCAIT candidates to cover course and student teaching credits, and (ii) provide intensive teacher preparation support programs including tutoring support, exam fee vouchers, and other supports to ensure teachers of color successfully complete preparation programs.

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

The mission of UED since 2002 has been to increase the number and percentage of TOCAIT in the Twin Cities metro area. Over the years, the UED mission has shaped every facet of the program ranging from admissions to an integrated curriculum. Beyond this, the mission has helped create a cohesive set of policies, policy decisions, and programmatic practices that provide students with great learning experiences.

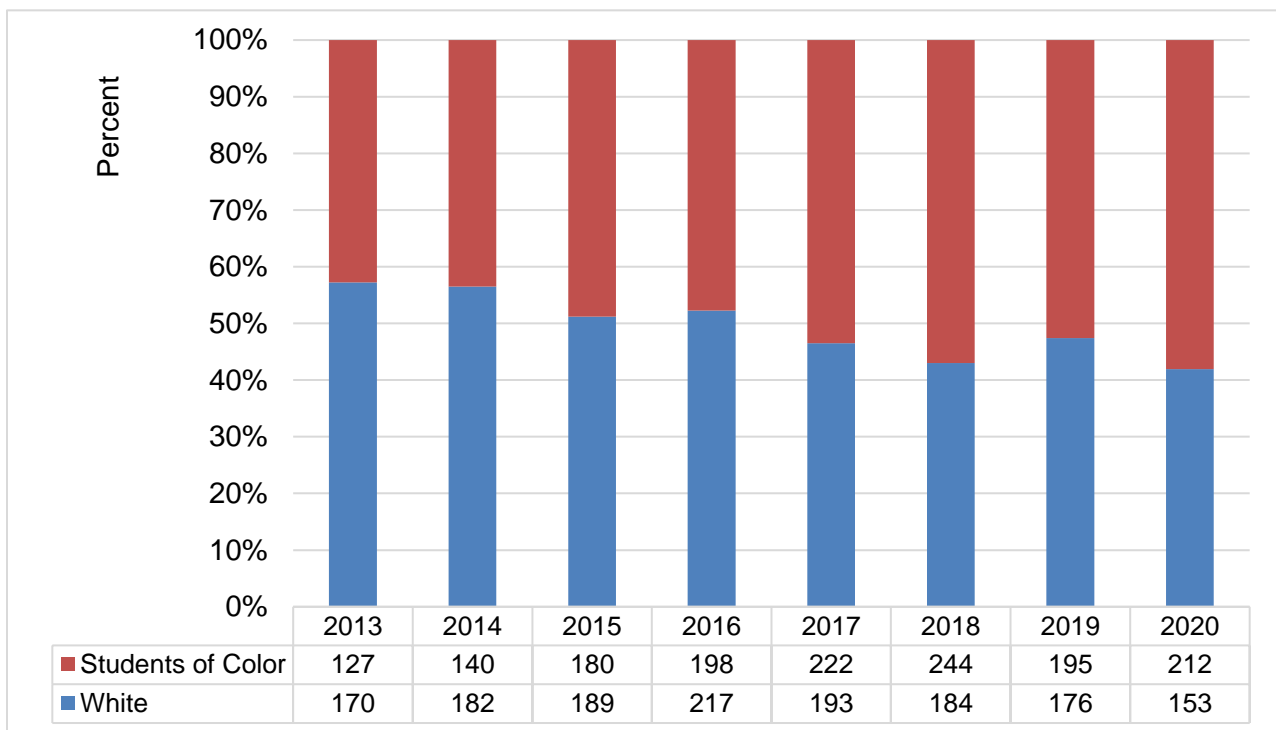
**Enrollment:** Over the years, the number and percentage of students of color enrolled in the program has been on the increase. As shown in Figure 1, much of this growth has largely been experienced among teacher candidates of color or American Indian. The number of students of color increased from 127 in 2013 to 212 in 2020. During academic year 2020-21, we had 212 students of color or American Indian candidates taking the required coursework ranging from content and methods classes to student teaching (a 67% increase since 2012-13) and they represent 58 percent of all teacher candidates enrolled in the program. Using CUGMEC grant monies, UED has been able to provide direct support in form of tuition scholarships covering at least 6 credits each to all fully admitted and enrolled UED teacher candidates of color or American Indian teacher candidates prior

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<sup>3</sup> Internal UED data reveal that students of color and American Indian students take longer to complete their programs, assume more debt, and are less likely to engage in unpaid labor by resigning from their paid employment in order to complete the mandatory 12–15-week unpaid full-time student teaching period. Student teaching tuition and fees costs range from \$2,164 (undergraduate) to \$3,522 (graduate), not including required exam and edTPA expenses.

to student teaching. In addition to the tuition scholarship, a total of 18 TOCAIT candidates who did not receive the FY21 Office of Higher Education (OHE) student teaching grant were awarded tuition scholarships using CUGMEC funds to cover the cost of all student teaching credits. In part because of the CUGMEC grant, the number of TOCAIT candidates slightly increased from 195 in 2019 to 212 in 2020, accounting for about 9 percent increase. Despite the overall increased enrollments over the years, the UED is currently facing declining enrolment in a number of licensure fields, in particular mathematics and science education programs.

**Figure 1: UED Student Enrollment Trends Comparing SoC and Whites, FY14-21**

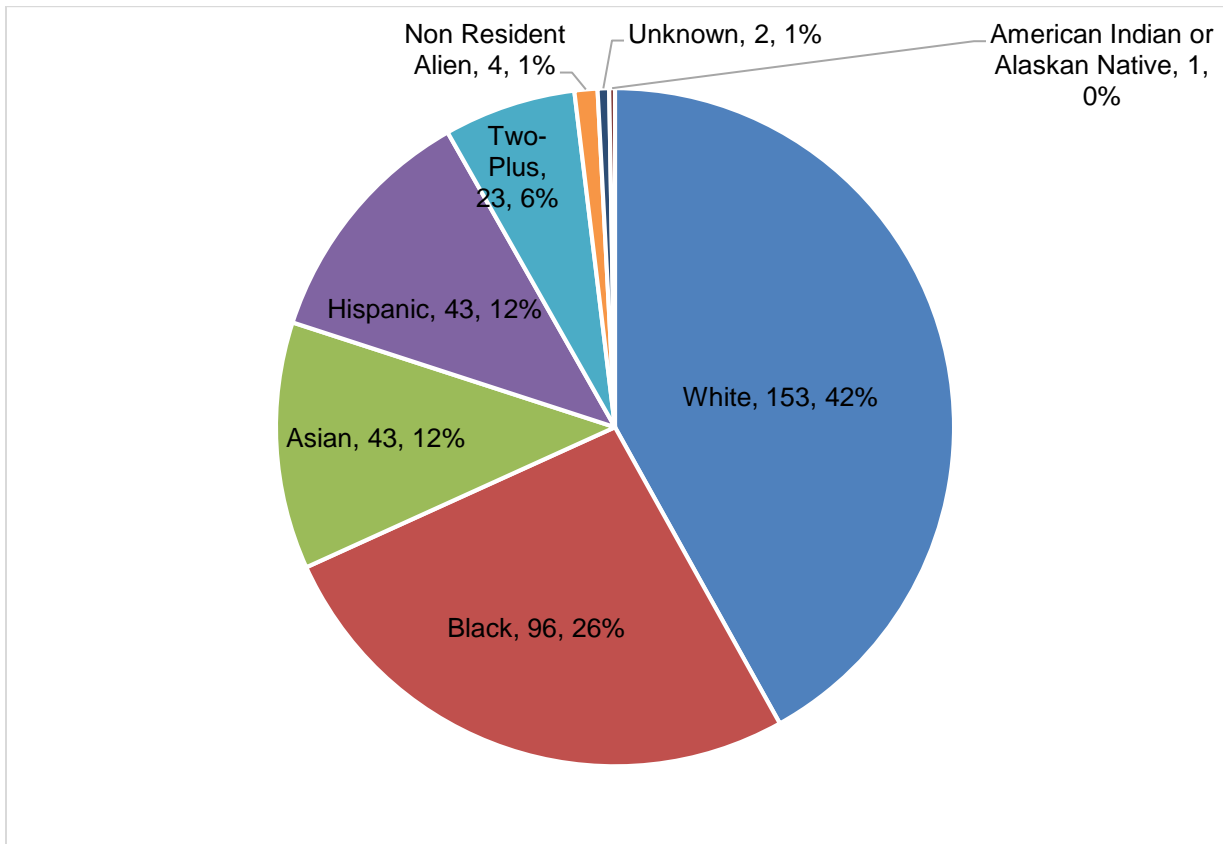


Clearly, UED has maintained a healthy enrollment of students of color or American Indian students over the last decade. Figure 2 shows the number and percentage of students of color admitted and enrolled in UED in FY21. With minimal scholarship support, UED has attracted historically underrepresented groups including Latinos, Black/African Americans, American Indians, and Asians. Today, a majority (58%) of the students enrolled in the UED are people of color or American Indian; surpassing the expected enrollment goal of 50 percent teacher candidates of color set by the Legislature in 2000. This milestone has been achieved without continued earmarked program funding from the Legislature, without a program recruiter, and without implementing admission quotas. However, a near-term issue is with uncertainty in enrollment outcomes following

the Covid-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, the UED has implemented a number of support practices to retain diverse candidates including:

- *Early intrusive advising:* professional academic advisors, preview days & admission orientation.
- *Continuous intrusive advising:* faculty advisors, academic standing automated reports and early alert system, and required Progress Checks 1 & 2.
- *Culturally responsive curriculum:* start with pre-professional coursework before admission, including the policy that students complete an Ethnic Studies course for admission.
- *Academic support:* Write to Teach initiative, test preparation for MN NES Essential Academic Skills exams, new SET initiative (“Success Engagement Team”).<sup>4</sup>
- *Financial support:* CUGMEC, university and foundation scholarships, OHE grant.
- *Data Analysis:* Always looking at data from admission to completion with a racial/ethnic lens to ensure we are reaching our goals and closing opportunity gaps.

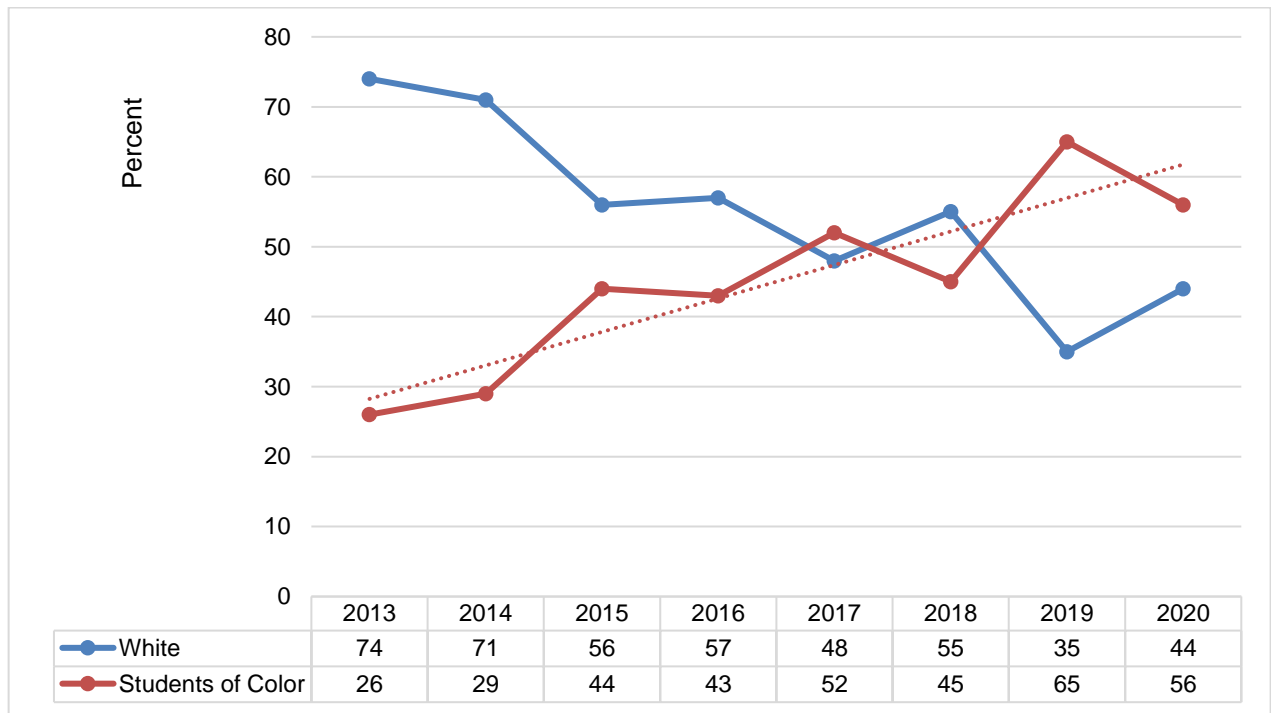
**Figure 2: Primary Ethnicity of Students Enrolled in UED AY 2021 (n=365)**



<sup>4</sup> This is a faculty initiative designed to create opportunities and programming that more intentionally supports teacher candidates from beginning to end.

**Student Teaching:** Prospective teacher candidates in Minnesota must complete a degree at an approved teacher preparation school, gain field experiences and complete student teaching under a teacher licensed in the field the candidate is seeking licensure. All UED licensure programs incorporate a wide range of ongoing field experiences for teacher candidates to hone skills and knowledge required in the SEPs. Increasingly, the number of TOCAIT candidates who completed their student teaching has been on the increasing trend (Figure 3). However, the sudden decline in the number of candidates who completed their student teaching was occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>5</sup> Students were affected by limited access to technology and Wi-Fi networks as college pivoted to remote learning because of COVID-19. Of the 66 teacher candidates who successfully completed student teaching requirement for licensure during the academic year, 37 (56%) were students of color or American Indian. Thus, we have closed the achievement gap of program completion that troubled UED for years as disparate percentages of TOCAIT candidates could not afford to student teach at the end of their academic studies. Importantly, of the 37 TOCAIT candidates who successfully completed their program in 2019-2020, a total of 18 who did not receive the OHE student teaching grant were awarded tuition scholarships through the CUGMEC grant for all their student teaching credits.

**Figure 3: UED Program Completers by Race as a Percent (%) (FY14–21)**

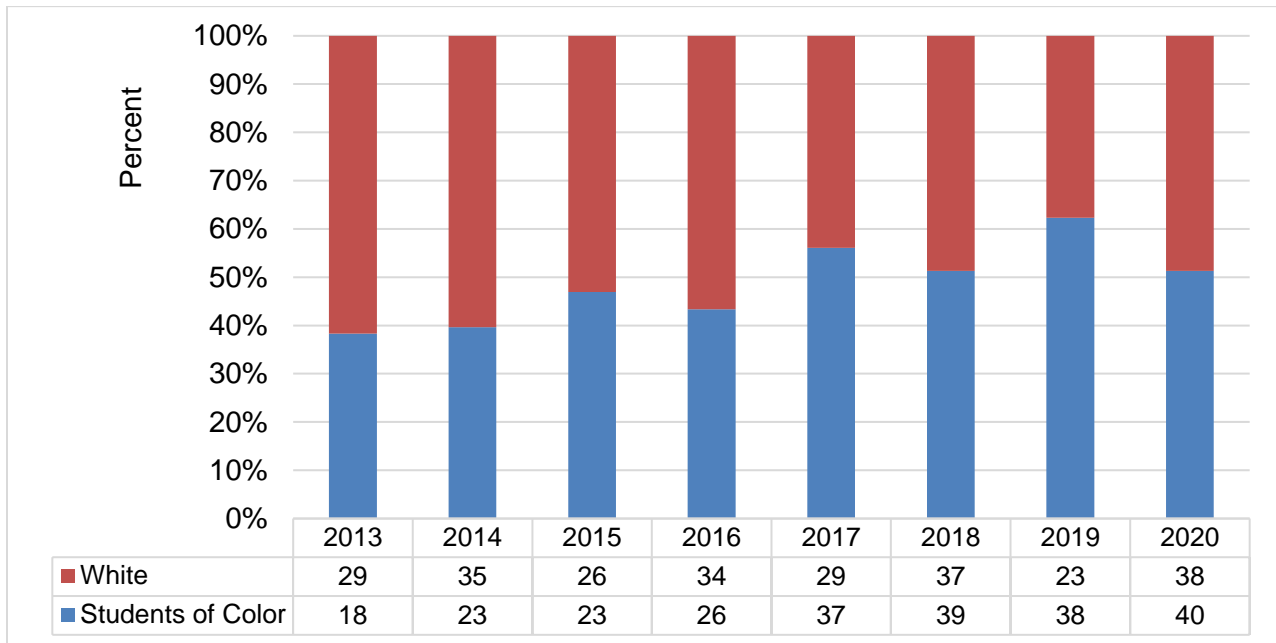


<sup>5</sup> The closure of the K-12 learning institutions to contain the spread of COVID-19 greatly interrupted student teaching; teacher candidates were not able to fulfil their in-person practicum requirements as student-teachers in schools or complete their edTPA portfolios.



**Graduated:** In order to graduate, UED teacher candidates must complete required coursework and earn and maintain a minimum GPA in content and professional education coursework. However, UED students can graduate without enrolling for student teaching once they earn 120 credits and meet other university degree requirements.<sup>6</sup> The number of teacher candidates of color or American Indian who have graduated from UED has been growing steadily over the years (Figure 4). Notably, the number of teacher candidates of color who graduated from the program has marginally increased for the past three years. Of the 78 teacher candidates who graduated with a degree in urban teaching in FY21, 40 were TOCAIT candidates, and all of them graduated after successfully registering for their student teaching.

**Figure 4: Numbers of UED Graduates by Race, FY14-21)**



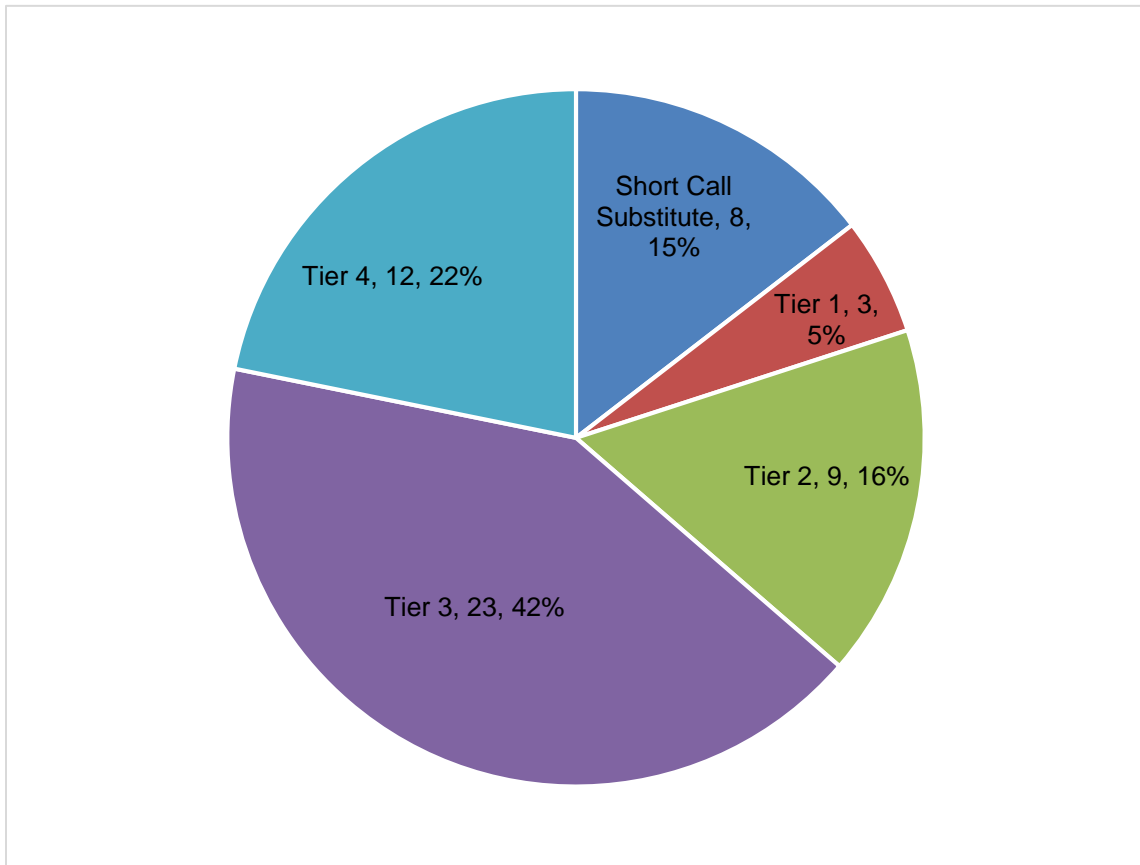
**Licensed:** Teacher candidates obtain their teacher licensure after successfully completing student teaching, submitting an edTPA portfolio for scoring and passing the Minnesota Teacher Licensing Examinations (MTLE). The UED offers support to students to ensure they pass their licensure exams.<sup>7</sup> During academic year 2019-2020, the UED was not able

<sup>6</sup> Student teaching is not considered a requirement for graduation but is required for licensure recommendation.

<sup>7</sup> Starting Spring 2018, Metropolitan State University partnered with Augsburg University to offer an intensive mathematics tutoring session to help students prepare and pass the National Evaluation Series (NES) math subtest, which is needed to receive a Tier 4 teaching license in Minnesota. The foci of the free 8-week intensive NES mathematics test prep sessions was: (i) to enhance participants' knowledge of the mathematics concepts that are covered in the NES mathematics subtest, (ii) exam taking skills and strategies, and (iii) to acclimate the participants to the NES mathematics subtest itself. Moreover, during Fall 2020, UED built a website and offered six tutoring sessions to support the elementary education majors to take and pass the MTLE content tests.

to implement the National Evaluation Series (NES) Math Tutoring Program and the Elementary Education content test tutoring. Moreover, teacher candidates were not able to take their basic skills MTLE/NES Content and Pedagogy exams as test centers were closed following the spread of Covid-19. Because of logistical challenges posed by Covid-19, PELSB issued a discretionary variance on licensure application requirements for teacher candidates completing student teaching in the 2020-21 school year.<sup>8</sup> These variance changes in licensure application requirements resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of teacher candidates who applied and obtained their Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 teacher licensure in FY21 (Figure 5). Overall, the number of teacher candidates of color who obtained their licensure more than doubled, increasing from fourteen (14) in FY16 to more than fifty-one (51) in FY21, accounting for more than 200 percent increase.

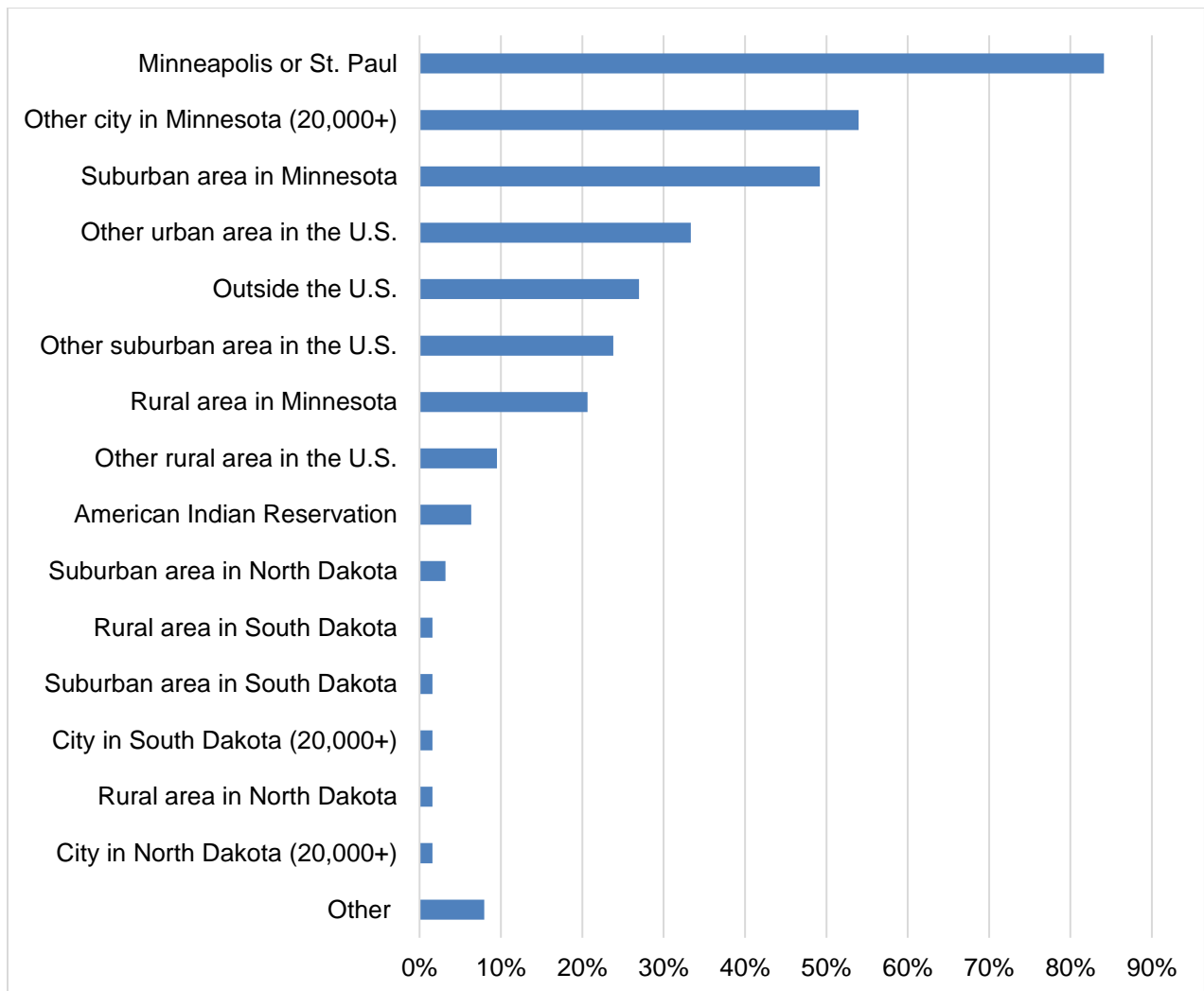
**Figure 5: Number and Percent of Newly Licensed Teachers, FY21 by License Scope.**



<sup>8</sup> Teacher candidates were not required to complete the edTPA, those who have not yet taken the required examinations could be licensed as a Tier 2 teachers if have a job offer with a Minnesota public or charter school, and those currently applying for a Tier 3 license must take and pass the appropriate MTLEs in content and pedagogy. In lieu of the edTPA, PELSB authorized teacher preparation providers to complete a teacher performance assessment for each student-teacher that includes components of planning, instruction, and assessment.

**Newly Employed:** Most of the UED teacher candidates who obtain their licensure before the start of the school year get employed within the Twin Cities metro area schools. According to the available data, 36 teacher candidates who were awarded either an initial license or added another license were employed as teacher on record during the 2020-21 school year. More than two thirds (72%) of those employed during the 2020-21 school year were teacher candidates of color or American Indian. This notwithstanding, we know that most of our newly licensed teachers end up becoming employed in learning institutions within the Twin Cities metro area. According to exit survey results of the 2019-2020 teacher graduates, a great majority of the UED teacher candidates plan to seek employment within the Twin Cities metro area schools (Figure 6).

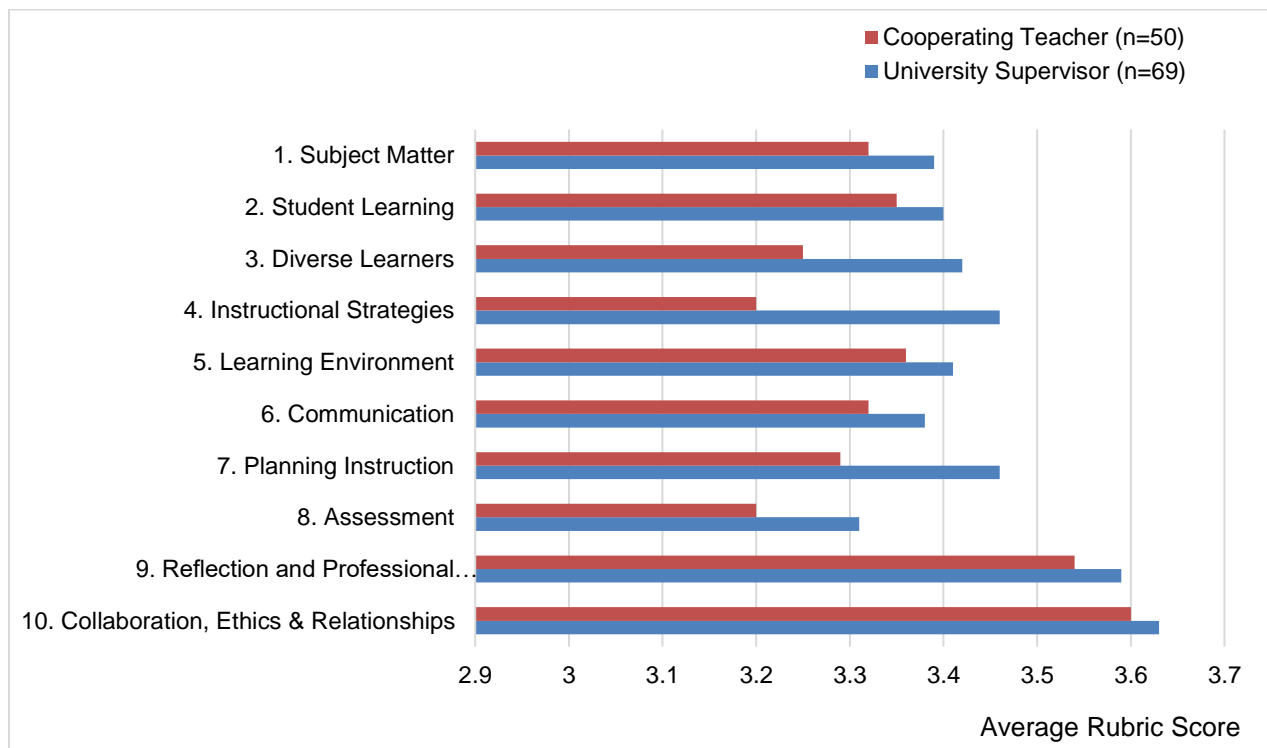
**Figure 6: Where would you consider Teaching? (n=62)**



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

Minnesota teacher candidates are required to demonstrate mastery of teaching practice standards relating to knowledge, skills, and dispositions. These standards are embedded in teacher education coursework, practicum placement, and student teaching. At the conclusion of the student teaching experience, cooperating teacher and university supervisor evaluate the student teacher's performance in the classroom using a four-point rating scale; where (1) lacking, (2) emerging, (3) proficient and (4) exemplary. During the 2019-2020 academic year, both cooperating teachers and university supervisors rated the beginning teachers' teaching skills as proficient on average across the ten standards of effective practice (SEPs) (Figure 7). Though average scores by university supervisors were higher compared to those of cooperating teachers in all the SEPs, Ethics and Relationships skills (standard 10), Reflection and Professional Development and Collaboration (standard 9), Subject Matter (standard 1), and Learning Environment (standard 5) were highly rated by both cooperating teachers and university supervisors. On the other hand, there was huge variation in average scores between cooperating teachers and university supervisors on Instructional Strategies (standard 4), Planning and Instruction (standard 7), Diverse Learners (standard 3) and Assessment (standard 8), and these are the areas for further continuous improvement.

**Figure 7: Overall Evaluation of Student Teaching Candidates, 2019-2020.**



## **FEEDBACK FROM PROGRAM GRADUATES**

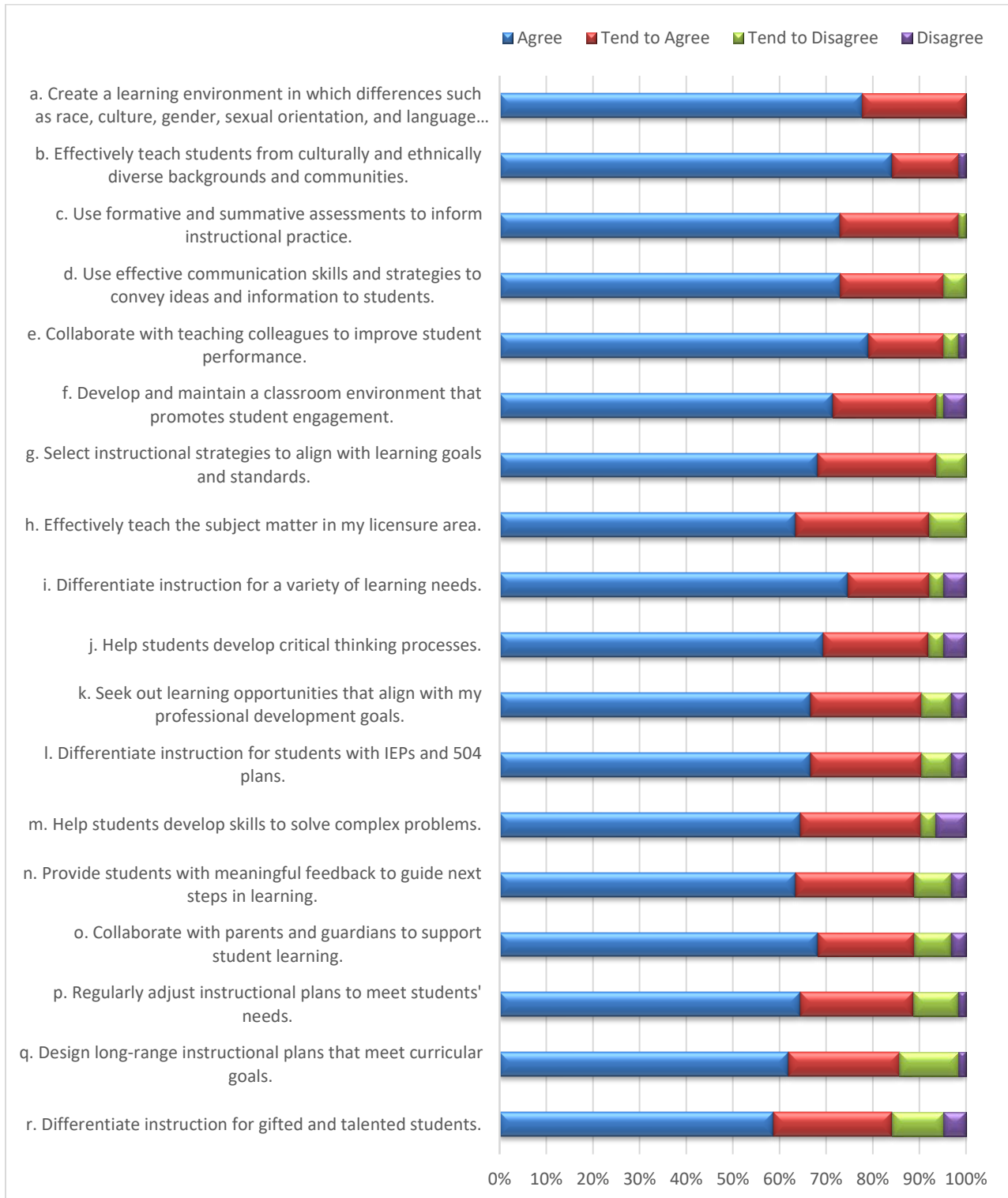
Given the Covid-19 challenges experienced by school personnel, UED did implement the Exit Survey but not the Transition to Teaching Survey (TTS) and Employer Surveys during academic year 2019-2020. Results from the exit survey of graduating candidates across all teaching majors indicate the quality of the program is rated highly. Figure 8 shows the rating of the basic performance skills that students gained from the program. Nearly more than 90 percent of the graduates agree or tend to agree that program equipped them with adequate skills to: (a) create a learning environment in which differences such as race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and language are respected, (b) effectively teach students from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds and communities, (c) use formative and summative assessments to inform instructional practice (d) use effective communication skills and strategies to convey ideas and information to students, (e) collaborate with teaching colleagues to improve student performance, (f) develop and maintain a classroom environment that promotes student engagement, (g) select instructional strategies to align with learning goals and standards, (h) effectively teach the subject matter in my licensure area, and (i) differentiate instruction for a variety of learning needs. The high rating indicates that UED teacher candidates are taught by outstanding faculty and learn to practice teaching under the mentorship of highly qualified cooperating teachers in our partner schools across the metro area.

## **STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN THE PROGRAM**

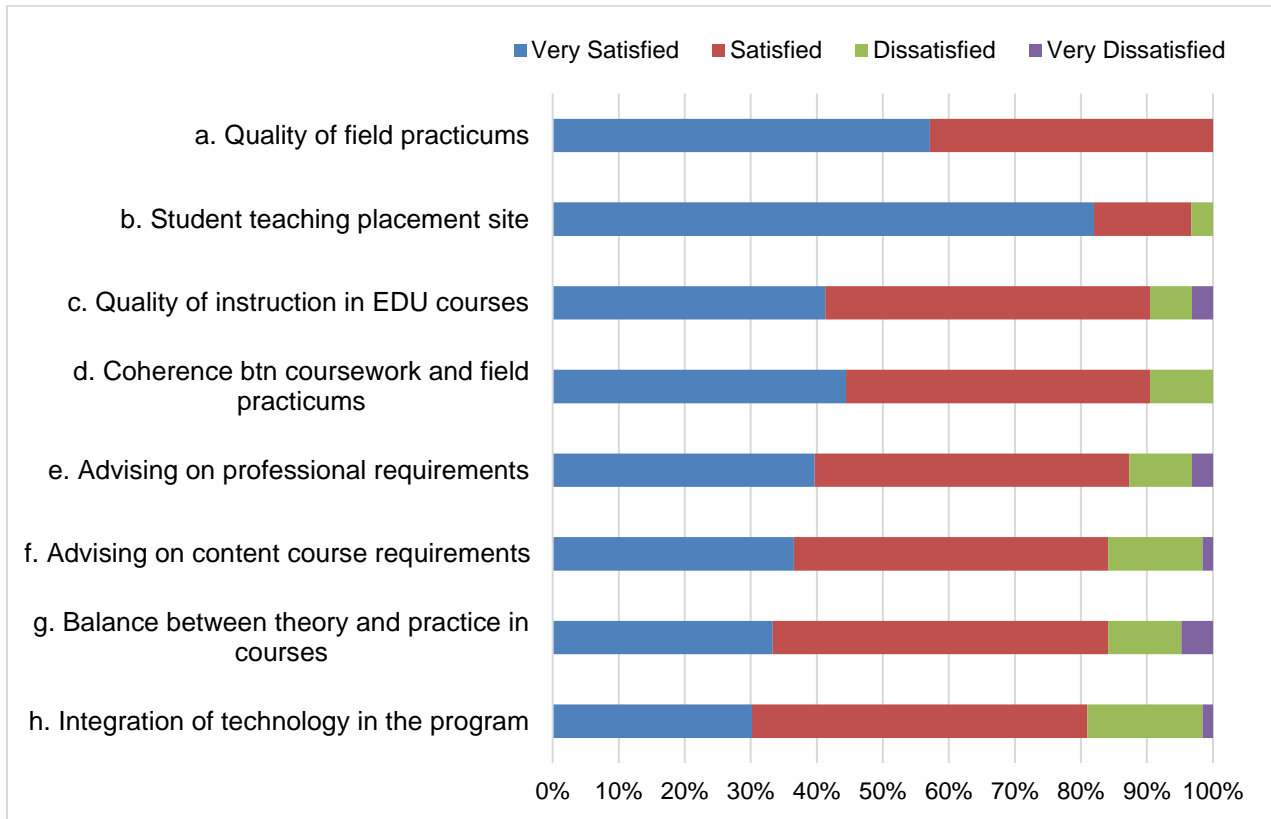
The UED places a greater priority on the experience of students not only to ensure they graduate but to also have an engaged and active student base that become energized advocates of the program and alumni. Students who are graduating from the program are required to take an exit survey whose results are used to provide a better experience in order to attract and retain students. A total of 63 students who graduated from UED in 2019-2020 completed the exit survey. Figure 9 shows respondent ratings on eight domains. Overall, a combined majority (76% or more) of the students reported that they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the quality of the program across the eight domains. More than 90 percent of the respondents expressed a high satisfaction on the quality of field practicums, the student teaching placement sites, quality of instruction EDU prefix courses, and coherence between coursework and field practicums in that order. Students expressed a low satisfaction on how technology has been integrated in the program. Broadly speaking, a high percentage of graduating students rating UED as effective in preparing students in each of these areas speaks to well-designed curriculum, teaching practices, and quality of

student services offered. The areas in which the graduating students most likely to expect the UED to increase its emphasis are integration of technology into the program, balancing theory and practice in courses, as well as academic and professional advising.

**Figure 8: Evaluation of UED Program by Graduating Students (n=63)**



**Figure 9: How Satisfied were you with the following aspects of your Teacher Preparation Program? (n=63)**



On the other hand, the graduating students were asked if they would recommend their teacher preparation program to another prospective teacher. An overwhelming majority (89%) of the respondents indicated that they would recommend the School of Urban Education to a friend or colleague interested in becoming a teacher. The high expression of confidence in the program is a key pointer that UED effectively produces high-quality educators who enter the classroom well prepared to improve student learning and contribute toward narrowing achievement gaps for historically underserved students. Below are a sample of verbatim students' reasons for recommending UED to prospective teacher candidates:

- ***Affordable and nice faculty!***
- ***Knowledgeable and experienced professors make great programs!***
- ***The cost of attending is cheap, the professors are for the most part very knowledgeable about their content. This helped a lot in student teaching.***
- ***I loved the hands-on aspect of the teaching program, I have learned a significant amount by being in schools observing.***

- The **diversity of the student body** provides an education in and of itself. The **focus on urban education, and the consistency** throughout the program. The **cost is more affordable**, and the **program is accommodating to working individuals**, parents, etc.
- yes. I have learned and grew so much during this program. It is **hands on** and our professors are in or have been in the education field.
- The program **provided many techniques** on how to work with a child living in an urban setting. Great advise and great stories from professors.
- The Urban Teaching Program at MetroState University is geared towards reaching so many people xxxxxxx. The **teaching staff is very encouraging and informative** to where each and every one has helped guided me in the right direction outside of the classroom. I can only give a positive review about my experience.
- I learned everything I needed to learn about teaching in an urban environment. I can't stress enough how important it was that the classes I took had such **a large diverse student body who were all willing to help each other out**.
- The program is **affordable and flexible**; however the program is lacking in keeping up to date and teaching use of modern classroom technology
- This **program tries to cover everything you would see in the classrooms** and they make it a requirement to get in the classroom.
- The Urban Education program shapes a future teacher in becoming ready for the realities of the education field. The **professors are knowledgeable, hard working, and dedicated in prospective teachers succeeding**. The program is built upon a strong foundation and we have always worked together as a family, which has always made **the environment welcoming and friendly for everyone to feel inclusive**.
- This teaching program is unique because it **focuses on the URBAN classroom**. The learning is remarkable and important for teachers everywhere.
- I felt that it is a great program for those going back to school and that the **professors are from diverse backgrounds** which really prepare you for teaching!
- My teacher prep program was **affordable & flexible in schedule**, but most of my classes were taught by professors who were prior English and Social Studies teachers. These professors were often good professors, but they were not equipped to tailor instruction to future Math educators. I would have felt more prepared if I had had more practical instruction.
- Metropolitan State University is **so diverse**. The amount of hours that we need to prepare us to work in multicultural school districts is so important. I feel more than prepared based on the **amount of hours I have dedicated towards schools** with majority students of color.



- *The Urban Teaching Program is the only program in the state designed to prepare teachers for urban settings and urban learners. This was the only program for me, whether or not I wanted to teach in urban settings. It **prepares teachers to work with ALL learners**, not just those white, middle class children for whom our schools were built.*
- *I would recommend this program to others because of **the diversity and hands-on learning approach***
- *Because it prepared me for what I needed to know when working with **diverse groups of young people**.*
- **Cheap price, flexible schedule**
- *xxxx was **very knowledgeable** on her content that she taught to her scholars. She gives amazing guidance and models what a quality learning environment consists of. She is **great advocating for herself, her scholars, and the needs of others**. She ensures that she is always **prepared with lessons** that are suitable for the learning needs of the scholars in her classroom.*
- *It's a great program that **focus entirely on teaching in the Urban setting school**.*

## CONCLUSION

### Summary of Program Strengths

- The **number and percentage of students of color** or American Indian enrolled in the UED have been on the increase when compared to enrollments in teacher preparation programs at private and public colleges and universities within the state.
- Through concerted efforts, UED has been slowly **closing the graduation and licensure gap** between students of color or American Indian students and white students.
- The **diversity of the student body** readily provides an environment that prepares teachers to work with ALL learners, not just those white, middle class children for whom our schools were built.
- The focus on urban education, and the consistency throughout the program.
- The **cost is more affordable**, and the **program scheduling is accommodating** to working individuals, parents, etc.
- **The teaching staff** is not only from **diverse backgrounds**, but also very **knowledgeable, encouraging and informative** and provide a **hands-on aspect of the teaching program**.

- Effectiveness of the '**Student Teaching**' is another strength of the program. Student teaching experiences provide teacher candidates with opportunities to learn about teaching and help reduce anxiety among those entering the profession. Cooperating teachers help teacher candidates to master their theoretical knowledge into practice and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses before they start the teaching profession.

## Way Forward

Metropolitan State University and the UED have made a concerted effort to attract, prepare and retain an increasing number and percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teacher candidates. Today, UED is under immense pressure to both increase the diverse enrollment, manage costs, and maintain growth—all while competing for a declining number of enrolled students. To ensure long-term sustainability, it is critical that UED to rethink strategies and priorities that will help increase the number and percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teacher candidates. Planning for this increase will ensure all students within the Twin Cities metro area have more equitable access to effective and racially and ethnically diverse teachers who reflect the diversity of students.

- The UED must adopt a comprehensive, **long-term strategic plan** to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the best teaching workforce. The program should design and articulate a set of **well-established program values** that are focused on deeper learning and equity. But looking ahead, the plan should ensure that these values are instantiated through a closely aligned program culture, structures, and practices.
- To meet the legislative mandate, the UED should continue **recruiting** and **enrolling** a diverse pool of teacher candidates into the program. The UED should clearly communicate with potential candidates about its values, including student-centered teaching and education for equity and social justice. Whereas prior academic accomplishments and test scores are important during admissions and selection processes, the UED should supplement them with evidence of the potential teachers' foundational attitudes and experiences. The UED should look for prior experience with children, require essays about educational goals and views, and bring in recruits for interviews, including group and interactive sessions intended to assess dispositions toward teaching and learning, attitudes toward students, and cultural competence. Given that technology is indispensable to today's students, there is need to explore the possibility to **provide online programs and course offerings**. Additionally, **targeted recruitment efforts** may also be merited to

increase the pool of minority applicants. One possibility is the creation of a Grow Your Own program that will provide additional pathways for non-licensed employees and others interested to becoming teachers joining the teacher preparation program.

- UED faculty are continually looking for new ways to blend field work into their university courses. The program faculty should use feedback from cooperating teachers to intensify the **integration of coursework with fieldwork** to support the deeper learning of candidates. The coursework should be designed around research-based teaching and learning theories that are explored and applied in fieldwork experiences. This intentional and systematic integration will enable candidates to understand the practical relevance of theory and how to theorize practice. Candidates can also learn to teach effectively by experiencing that kind of learning themselves, as their instructors, supervisors, and cooperating teachers **model practices** they expect candidates to use. Beyond this, the program should also select and train supervisors and cooperating/mentor teachers who provide strong and effective modeling and exemplify high-quality practices that are well connected to candidates' course content.
- The UED should intensify effort to build **partnerships with k–12 systems, schools, and other learning institutions** to open up opportunities for extended clinical and/or student teaching and placement priority so that teacher **candidates become apprentices** to accomplished teachers. By working in classrooms that instantiate the practices described in their connected coursework, teacher candidates will experience excellent modeling of instruction and learn how to emulate it. As part of these efforts, the UED should carefully and deliberately **select, train, and support cooperating teachers**. The UED faculty should also engage as members of these school-based **collaborative learning communities** and provide intensive support including observing one another, sharing practices, developing plans together, and solving problems collectively as the foundation of effective learning. In addition, these partnerships should be characterized by instructional conversations that provide candidates with ongoing **feedback and support for structured reflection** on teaching. A range of **authentic assessments** allows for the application of skills and knowledge and offers opportunities for feedback and reflection. These include regular formal and informal supervisory evaluations of clinical practice and formal benchmark assessments that evaluate progress on specific skills. They also include culminating assessments that reflect candidates' ability to put teaching principles into action and performance assessments in which

candidates bring together theory and practice to demonstrate their learning. To this end, **additional support for the Field Director's** activities is needed to facilitate and establish deep partnerships with schools and create communities of practice focused on deeper learning and equity.

- **Leadership should prioritize teacher preparation** at the institutional and program level, across colleges and with outside partners, providing guidance and ongoing support. As a commitment, the state and university leadership should set a side **dedicated resources** to support teacher preparation while looking for opportunities to innovate. Consideration should be given to securing additional funding for tuition discounts and scholarships to enhance the intellectual and ethnic diversity of the student population and close the graduation and licensure rate gap. Ongoing and individualized support should be designed to level the playing field for teachers of color and American Indian teacher candidates. This support should include, but not limited to financial aid, tutoring and textbook support, provision of laptop computers, peer advising support, connections to university resources and programming, and on-track graduation planning. Such targeted “interventions” will ensure that students feel more confident that they are well-prepared for and could complete their program and do their best on the licensure exams.
  
- Data and capacity are needed to bridge the divide between our current data and what is needed for accountability, continuous program improvement, and equity. UED should work with other teacher preparation program providers within the Minnesota State to design systems of data collection that include information collected at the stages of selection, progression, program completion, and post-completion. To facilitate data collection for teacher preparation programs, the PELSB needs to house a new portal on its website to store candidate and employer surveys. Teachers and employers will complete the surveys online and the website programming will tally the results. Users will be able to access the data and make informed decisions based on a greater breadth of information.