



Come Teach in Minnesota

Report to the Legislature

As required by Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.59, subdivision 4

For more information:

Tamara Valmé
School and Educator Support Division
Minnesota Department of Education
400 NE Stinson Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55413 (651) 582-8413
Tamara.valme@state.mn.us
education.mn.gov

As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197: This report cost approximately \$13,980.91 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, braille or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.

Table of Contents

For more information	2
Legislative Charge	3
Introduction.....	3
Analysis	6
Conclusion.....	9

Legislative Charge

[Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.59, subdivision 4](#)

The department must submit a report by Dec. 1, 2022, to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education detailing the effectiveness of the Come Teach in Minnesota program and recommendations for improvement for future years.

Introduction

Attracting and retaining a racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse teacher workforce is vital to ensuring that Minnesota’s student population is reflected in the teacher workforce. The goal of Come Teach in Minnesota is to support districts and charter schools with funding to recruit and retain teachers who are American Indian or teachers of color to move to and teach in Minnesota. The Come Teach in Minnesota Program provides funding for districts or charter schools to offer hiring bonuses for licensed teachers who are American Indian or teachers of color. Bonuses can be offered to teachers licensed in another state who:

- qualify for a Tier 3 or Tier 4 Minnesota license;
- have moved to the region in Minnesota where they are hired; and
- belong to a racial or ethnic group that is underrepresented among teachers.

Participating districts and schools may offer a bonus up to \$5,000 for eligible teachers (up to \$2,500 as a hiring bonus and up to \$2,500 as a retention bonus after four years of demonstrating teaching effectiveness under the local teacher development and evaluation system). If eligible teachers are serving in a licensure shortage area, that combined bonus can be up to \$8,000.

The total Come Teach in Minnesota appropriation for fiscal years 2022 and 2023 was \$400,000, with MDE reserving \$70,000 of the appropriation for administrative costs. The program budget of \$330,000 was available for eligible applicants (Minnesota school districts, charter schools, intermediate districts and education

cooperatives that employ classroom teachers) during the grant application period in December 2022. During this application period, 21 eligible applicants applied. MDE selected 11 applications through a randomized drawing, alternating between applications from Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The 11 participating districts were notified in December 2021 that they had \$8,000 of funding reserved per teacher, and they had until Oct. 1, 2022, to hire eligible teachers and utilize the Come Teach in Minnesota bonuses as an incentive. In total, program funds were sufficient to hire 41 teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

Application and Funding Award Process

Prior to launching the Come Teach in Minnesota program, Minnesota Department of Education staff developed an application and award process guided by the following principles of fairness and equity:

1. The application process would be streamlined for any school or district to apply, even those with limited capacity to write grant applications.
2. Awarded schools/districts would be selected randomly from the applicant pool making the process non-competitive.
3. Funding awards would be evenly distributed between schools/districts in Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities metropolitan area.
4. Requests for teacher recruitment slots would be linked to the total population of the school or district (referred to as the [“teacher cap”](#) in the application). The largest districts could request up to five teachers’ worth of program funding (\$8,000/teacher), the next largest up to four teachers, and so forth. The smallest districts could request up to two teachers’ worth of program funding out of recognition that there are unique challenges experienced by teachers of color and American Indian teachers in our system in general, and those challenges can be exacerbated when one is the only teachers of color and American Indian teachers in a setting. Districts and schools are not required to request the maximum; in fact, we encourage districts to request only what they believe they can achieve.

This next section describes the application and awards process.

Program Announcement

In October 2021, the Minnesota Department of Education announced the launch of the Come Teach in Minnesota program through various Minnesota Department of Education listservs and newsletters including the weekly email to Superintendents and Charter School Directors. In addition, the Minnesota Association of School Personnel Administrators (MNASPA) as well as a number of partners and advocacy groups amplified the announcement in their newsletters and/or on their websites. The application went live on Nov. 1, 2021 and was available to download via the Come Teach in Minnesota website.

Informational Website and Webinar

The [Come Teach in Minnesota website](#) summarized the purpose of the program, explained the eligibility requirements and the hiring and retention bonus, and provided a number of linked resources and documents including the application and a FAQ document. MDE staff were available by email or phone to provide additional assistance and answer questions.

For school/district staff interested in the Come Teach in Minnesota program, an informational webinar was offered on Nov. 18, 2021. This 60-minute webinar explained the purpose of the program, the funding allocation, eligibility requirements and the application and selection process. Time was allotted for a question and answer period.

Program Application

The program application required contact information and the total amount of funding requested guided by the teacher cap (e.g., the number of teaching positions a school/district could request based on their total student population). Applications were due to the Minnesota Department of Education by Dec. 10, 2021.

Awards Distributed

MDE announced funding awards Dec. 17, 2021 and distributed to the following schools and districts:

Table 1. Come Teach in Minnesota Awarded Schools and Districts and Funds Allocated for 2021–2022

2021–2022 Awarded Schools and Districts	Funding Allocated	Teacher Slots Requested
Elk River-Otsego-Rogers-Zimmerman	\$40,000	5
Minnetonka Public Schools	\$16,000	2
Rochester Public Schools	\$40,000	5
Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan	\$40,000	5
Roseville Public Schools	\$32,000	4
St. Francis Area Schools	\$24,000	3
Stillwater Area Public Schools	\$32,000	4
Twin Cities German Immersion School (St. Paul)	\$16,000	2
Wayzata Public Schools	\$40,000	5
Windom Area School District	\$24,000	3
Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools	\$24,000	3
TOTAL FUNDS ALLOCATED	\$328,000	41

Teacher Recruitment Period

Schools and districts had approximately 10 months to recruit teachers and were required to hire teachers by Oct. 1, 2022.

Analysis

Evaluation Study Approach

During the first year of implementation of the Come Teach in Minnesota program, evaluation efforts focused on gathering formative data for purposes of making program improvements and to speak to the effectiveness of the first round of the applications and awards.

Two strategies were used to gather formative data: the first was an online survey, and the second consisted of discussion groups. These two strategies and the resulting findings are presented below.

Stakeholder Survey

In September 2022, an online survey was completed by 43 individuals who registered for and/or attended the Come Teach in Minnesota informational webinar. The webinar was designed to assist interested schools/districts in understanding the application process and rules for the Come Teach in Minnesota program.

The online survey was designed to accomplish multiple goals:

- Explore how respondents heard about the Come Teach in Minnesota program
- Determine if the webinar helped respondents understand eligibility and the rules attached to the funds
- Identify reasons schools/districts did or did not apply for funding
- Gauge the clarity and perceived fairness of the fund selection process
- Examine whether the “teacher cap” was in line with respondent needs and if the application timeline worked for schools/districts
- Assess MDE staff support during the application process
- Establish the value of the Come Teach in Minnesota website
- Capture opinions about the future of the program

Findings:

1. The Superintendent and Charter School Update email from MDE was the most common way that respondents found out about the Come Teach in Minnesota program.
2. The webinar was effective at helping respondents understand the rules and eligibility requirements.
3. The primary reason respondents applied for funding was because they lacked diverse teaching staff but desired to recruit American Indian teachers and teachers of color.
4. The two main reasons respondents did not apply for funding included the perception that they were:
 - a. short on time or human resources and would not be able to implement appropriate recruiting strategies, or
 - b. they believed they were not eligible for funding.
5. The webinar helped most respondents understand that the application process was non-competitive.

6. After attending the webinar, most respondents believed that the process of dividing applications into two groups (Greater Minnesota and the metropolitan area) was fair.
7. The “teacher cap” aligned with respondents’ needs.
8. The application timeline was reasonable.
9. MDE support during the application process was helpful.
10. Respondents reported that the Come Teach in Minnesota website and linked documents were helpful.
11. Most respondents want the Come Teach in Minnesota program to continue with additional funding.

Discussion Groups and Interview

In October 2022, two discussion groups and an individual interview were held with nine of the 11 program participants who were awarded Come Teach in Minnesota funds.

The discussion group protocol consisted of the following topics:

- Steps participants took to recruit teachers
- Barriers experienced in recruiting teachers
- Effective strategies used to recruit teachers
- Recommended supports outside of their schools/districts to help with teacher recruitment

Findings:

1. Participants employed a wide range of strategies to recruit teachers – some of which they used previously and other strategies that were new to them and selected specifically to connect with prospective American Indian teachers and teachers of color. For example, participants:
 - a. attended in-person and virtual career fairs intended for American Indian teachers and teachers of color,
 - b. followed-up individually with candidates requesting information about the Come Teach in Minnesota program,
 - c. advertised on national listservs and job boards, and
 - d. built relationships with people in education departments in colleges and universities outside of Minnesota who might help with recruitment.
2. Participants experienced a number of barriers to successfully recruiting teachers including:
 - a. working in schools/districts with few staff and financial resources to support recruitment efforts that are new or different from what they have typically employed,
 - b. little or no experience with out-of-state recruitment strategies, and
 - c. staff turnover in human resources departments resulting in less attention devoted to the recruitment efforts needed for this program.
3. Participants also experienced barriers that could be traced directly to how the Come Teach in Minnesota statute is written. For example:
 - a. Participants wanted to hire new graduates from nearby states who were not yet licensed in the state where they graduated. Because they needed to be licensed teachers in another

state and then obtain Tier 3 licensure in Minnesota to be eligible for the hiring bonus, candidates were not interested in the available teaching positions.

- b. Participants wanted to recruit students from other states attending Minnesota post-secondary teacher education programs who were not eligible; however, the requirement that teachers be licensed first in another state was a barrier.
- 4. Some of the participants stated that having earlier access to the funding would have been helpful for their recruitment processes.
- 5. Participants discussed how a centralized marketing website for the Come Teach in Minnesota program (perhaps housed at MDE) would have been useful and more effective compared to their individualized approaches.

Outcomes

Two of the 11 program participants receiving Come Teach in Minnesota funds hired a total of six teachers (see Table 2 below). Minnetonka Public Schools hired four teachers for their language immersion programs and the Rochester Public Schools realized two new hires qualified for Come Teach in Minnesota, so they provided them with the hiring bonus.

With that said, each of the six hired teachers qualified initially for a Tier 2 license, and they are completing Minnesota requirements for a Tier 3 license. Per the program guidelines MDE developed, the newly hired teachers have two years to obtain a Tier 3 license and, at that point, they may receive their hiring bonus.

2021-2022 Awarded Schools and Districts	Teacher Slots Requested	Teachers Hired
ISD 728 School District (Elk River-Otsego-Rogers-Zimmerman)	5	0
Minnetonka Public Schools	2*	4
Rochester Public Schools	5	2
ISD 196 School District (Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan)	5	0
Roseville Public Schools	4	0
St. Francis Area Schools	3	0

2021-2022 Awarded Schools and Districts	Teacher Slots Requested	Teachers Hired
ISD 834 (Stillwater Area Public Schools)	4	0
Twin Cities German Immersion School (St. Paul)	2	0
Wayzata Public Schools	5	0
ISD 177 (Windom Area School District)	3	0
Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools	3	0
Total	41	6

*Minnetonka Public Schools was initially eligible to request five teachers and instead requested two teachers during the application process. During the recruitment phase this district exceeded its recruitment expectations and hired four teachers of color. MDE approved additional funding since there were sufficient funds.

As a result of low numbers of teachers of color and American Indian teachers moving to Minnesota to teach as part of this program, about \$282,000 in funding was not spent during this pilot year. Unspent funds will rollover to eligible applicants who were added on a waiting list during the December 2022 grant application period. The new program participants have until Oct. 1, 2023, to recruit and hire teachers of color and American Indian teachers for School Year 2023–2024.

Conclusion

The Come Teach in Minnesota pilot program ran from November 2021 through September 2022 and resulted in six teachers of color hired in Minnesota schools. While this result falls short of the program’s goals, there were several lessons learned from the pilot experience that will lead to stronger results in the future. The following items include conclusions drawn from the pilot experience.

1. The strategies employed to publicize the program worked well and should be continued in the future.
2. The Come Teach in Minnesota webinar should continue to be offered. It was effective at communicating essential information about the application process, eligibility requirements and rules for the program.
3. The simplicity of the application process made the funds accessible to any school or district. Future modifications to the application should be made taking this into consideration.
4. Awarding Come Teach in Minnesota funds earlier may benefit program participants who begin their recruitment efforts early in the calendar year.
5. The Come Teach in Minnesota website was helpful for participants and may need to be modified to reflect any program changes in future years.
6. MDE staff should continue to provide support during the application process.
7. MDE staff should provide additional support for awarded program participants during program implementation (e.g., facilitate networking and/or communities of practice).
8. MDE should consider how to best facilitate a centralized recruiting website for the Come Teach in Minnesota program on behalf of awarded program participants.
9. Changes to the Come Teach in Minnesota statute may increase the program's success. Potential changes
 - Eliminating the requirement to first be licensed in another state
 - Allowing hiring bonuses to be awarded to teachers who qualify for a Tier 2 license
 - Allowing selected programs to use a portion of dedicated funding to support out-of-state recruiting activities