



February 15, 2023

Academic and Student Affairs

The Minnesota Urban Teacher Program in the School of Urban Education at Metropolitan State University: Report to the Legislature

MINNESOTA STATE



METRO STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF URBAN EDUCATION

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

February 2023

BACKGROUND OVERVIEW

The shortage of full-time qualified teachers in the state of Minnesota is rapidly expanding.¹ Fueling the rise in the educator staffing crisis is a dramatic drop in teacher candidates enrolled in preparation programs. A continuing element of this crisis is the severe shortage of teachers who are as racially and ethnically diverse as the students they serve. According to PELSB's 2023 biennial *Teacher Supply and Demand Report*, there are 6.24 percent of teachers who identify as of color or as Indigenous, and 40 percent of students of color or Indigenous students in Minnesota. In the seven-county metropolitan area, 9.68 percent of teachers are teachers of color or Indigenous teachers while the student population was reported as 50.15 percent students of color or Indigenous students. Education research suggests that the shortage of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) teachers has been catastrophic, particularly for black, brown and low-income students in urban areas as well as suburban and rural communities with majority BIPOC student population.

To deal with the pronounced shortage of racially and ethnically diverse teachers, in 2000 the state legislature authorized Metropolitan State University to offer a teacher education program to “meet the needs of Minneapolis, St. Paul and inner-ring suburbs”. The legislation mandated Metro State to enroll at least 50 percent teacher candidates of color with hopes of building a diverse and stable teacher workforce. At that time, BIPOC teachers represented less than 4 percent of the state’s teaching force. Today, the School of Urban Education (UED) enrolls a majority of BIPOC teacher candidates and is accredited by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). The UED offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs leading to teacher education licensure in eight fields.² The mission of UED is to increase the number and percentage of BIPOC teachers in the Twin Cities metro area and prepare all teachers to improve the educational achievement of historically and currently underserved urban learners.

The UED remains committed in all we do to prepare and retain highly qualified racially and ethnically diverse teachers for academically and linguistically diverse PreK-12 classrooms in the metro area. Certainly, the number and percentage of BIPOC teacher candidates

¹ According to PELSB's 2023 biennial *Teacher Supply and Demand Report*, nearly nine of 10 school districts report being “somewhat significantly” or “very significantly” affected by the teacher shortage (84%) and the substitute teacher shortage (89%). These figures are up from 70% and 70% in the 2021 report.

² Current UED majors include: (i) Early Childhood Education, (ii) Elementary Education, with Pre-Primary Endorsement, (iii) Secondary Education - Life/General Sciences, Mathematics, English/Communication Arts & Literature, Social Studies, (iv) English as a Second Language, and (v) Special Education.

enrolled in the UED has increased over the two decades since the program was founded. Currently, nearly half (49.4%) of the 352 students enrolled in UED are BIPOC; barely missing the expected enrollment goal of 50 percent teacher candidates of color set by the Legislature in 2000. Some of the key strategies for recruiting students from diverse backgrounds include: hiring a Director of Recruitment, Retention and Induction in July 2022; enhancing marketing; informal recruitment efforts including word of mouth by teacher candidates, alumni and school partners; personal contact with faculty, staff and students at K-12 schools; financial support in the form of scholarships to support retention and completion; early access to university resources; and academic, social, and cultural support programs. The UED works in collaboration with community colleges throughout the metro area and several school districts to recruit, prepare, and mentor teachers of color. Though much younger, the UED in its 22nd year of existence, has grown to become the 13th largest overall teacher preparation program in the state (Table 1). Today, the UED prepares a significantly higher number and percentage of teacher candidates of color compared to all teacher preparation programs in the state.

Financial constraints continue to be a challenge for teacher candidates of color or American Indian teacher candidates who disproportionately take longer to complete their program.³ 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 BIPOC teacher candidates often experience during and prior to student teaching and we have closed the achievement gap between white teacher candidates and BIPOC teacher candidates who graduate and complete student teaching. During FY22, Metropolitan State University was awarded a total of \$290,000 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 BIPOC. With the grant support, UED provided support in the form of tuition scholarships to cover at least six credits for 167 teacher candidates of color prior to student teaching during the academic year. In addition to tuition scholarships, 16 teachers of color candidates who did not receive the state student teacher grant for \$7,500 were awarded tuition scholarships for all student teaching credits during FY22. Equally, some grant money was used to provide exam fee vouchers to help reduce barriers for teacher candidates of color to earn licensure.

³ 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.

Table 1: Number of Teacher Candidates Enrolled in Initial Licensure Programs by Race/Ethnicity.⁴

Teacher Program	Total Enrollment	White	Hispanic/Latino of Any Race	American Indian or AI Native	Asian	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	Total TOCAIT		
									Enrollment in the Unit	% Enrollment in the Unit	% Enrollment in Minnesota
St. Cloud State	1090	915	38	3	35	41	1	47	165	15.1	12
Winona State	896	819	24	8	10	9	0	16	67	7.5	4.9
MSU-Mankato	841	731	42	3	13	20	0	25	103	12.2	7.5
U of M - Twin Cities	668	527	42	1	47	15	0	16	121	18.1	8.8
Bemidji State	654	607	3	9	5	4	2	38	61	9.3	4.4
Martin Luther	538	492	12	0	13	12	1	8	46	8.5	3.4
Bethel	504	439	12	6	17	16	2	8	61	12.1	4.4
U of M - Duluth	476	423	11	3	6	8	5	8	41	8.6	3
MSU-Southwest	475	446	4	4	8	5	0	0	21	4.4	1.5
St. Thomas	461	319	0	0	19	30	0	16	16	3.5	1.2
Augsburg College	362	227	15	2	24	49	0	20	110	30.1	8
MSU-Moorhead	354	321	11	2	2	5	0	10	30	8.5	2.2
Metropolitan State	348	143	42	1	40	93	4	23	203	58.3	14.8
Hamline	346	256	16	0	26	14	0	16	72	20.8	5.2
St. Mary's	311	228	22	1	18	13	0	0	54	17.4	3.9
Concordia -St. Paul	236	186	9	1	18	9	1	7	45	22.9	3.3
St. Scholastica	214	194	9	0	4	2	0	2	17	7.9	1.2
St. Benedict & John's	196	171	9	2	5	3	0	3	22	11.2	1.6
Concordia-Moorhead	183	170	1	0	3	1	0	4	9	4.9	0.7
St. Catherine	167	144	0	0	7	5	0	4	16	9.6	1.2
Northwestern - St.Paul	151	133	4	0	7	1	0	4	16	10.6	1.2
St. Olaf College	129	108	5	2	7	1	0	2	17	13.2	1.2
Gustavus Adolphus	127	114	3	3	3	2	0	0	11	8.7	0.8
U of M - Morris	87	71	3	12	1	0	0	0	16	18.4	1.2
Bethany	58	52	2	0	1	1	0	2	6	10.3	0.4
U of M - Crookston	53	45	5	3	0	0	0	0	8	15.1	0.6
North Central	46	30	4	1	2	0	0	1	8	17.4	0.6
Walden	40	34	1	0	0	4	0	0	5	12.5	0.4
Crown College	37	32	2	0	2	1	0	0	5	13.5	0.4
Total State	10048	8377	351	67	343	364	16	280	1372	13.7	100

Source: Prepared using Data extracted from the 2021 Federal Title II Report, in AY2019-20

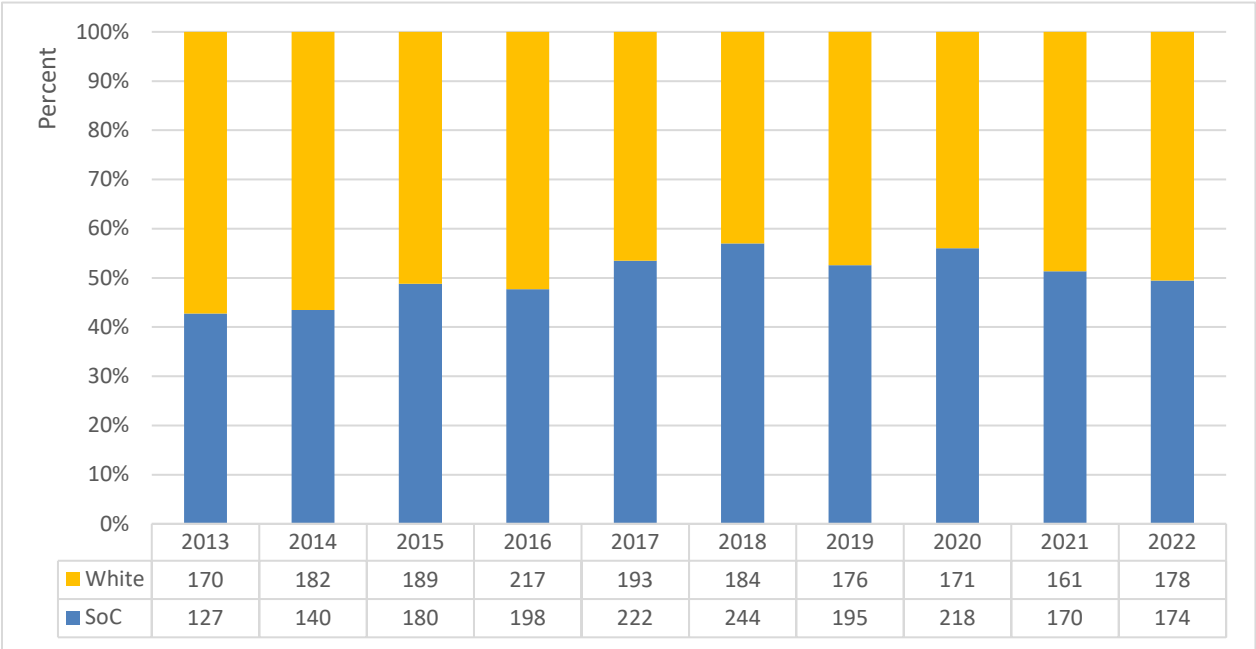
⁴ Data from publicly reported data in the 2021 Federal Title II Report, in AY2019-20. For this reporting year, there were 1,372 teachers of color and American Indian teacher candidates enrolled across 29 Minnesota teacher preparation programs -- they represented just 13.7 percent of 10,048 total teacher candidates enrolled in the state, yet K-12 students of color and American Indian students represented 34 percent of all students. During FY22, the top 15 teacher preparation programs enrolled 1,171 TOCAIT candidates, accounting for about 86 percent of all TOCAIT candidates enrolled in the state.

Several partnering school districts included Metro State Urban Teacher Program in their grant applications for Grow Your Own state grants in Fall 2021. Two of the 11 districts receiving grants had Metro State included as the higher education partner where their non-licensed employees or secondary students would be supported with scholarships to attend and earn licensure. In late 2021, the University and UED received a \$1 million donation from a benefactor to be used over four years to support the recruitment, retention and success of teachers of color in UED and we hired our first Director of Recruitment, Retention and Induction in July 2022.

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

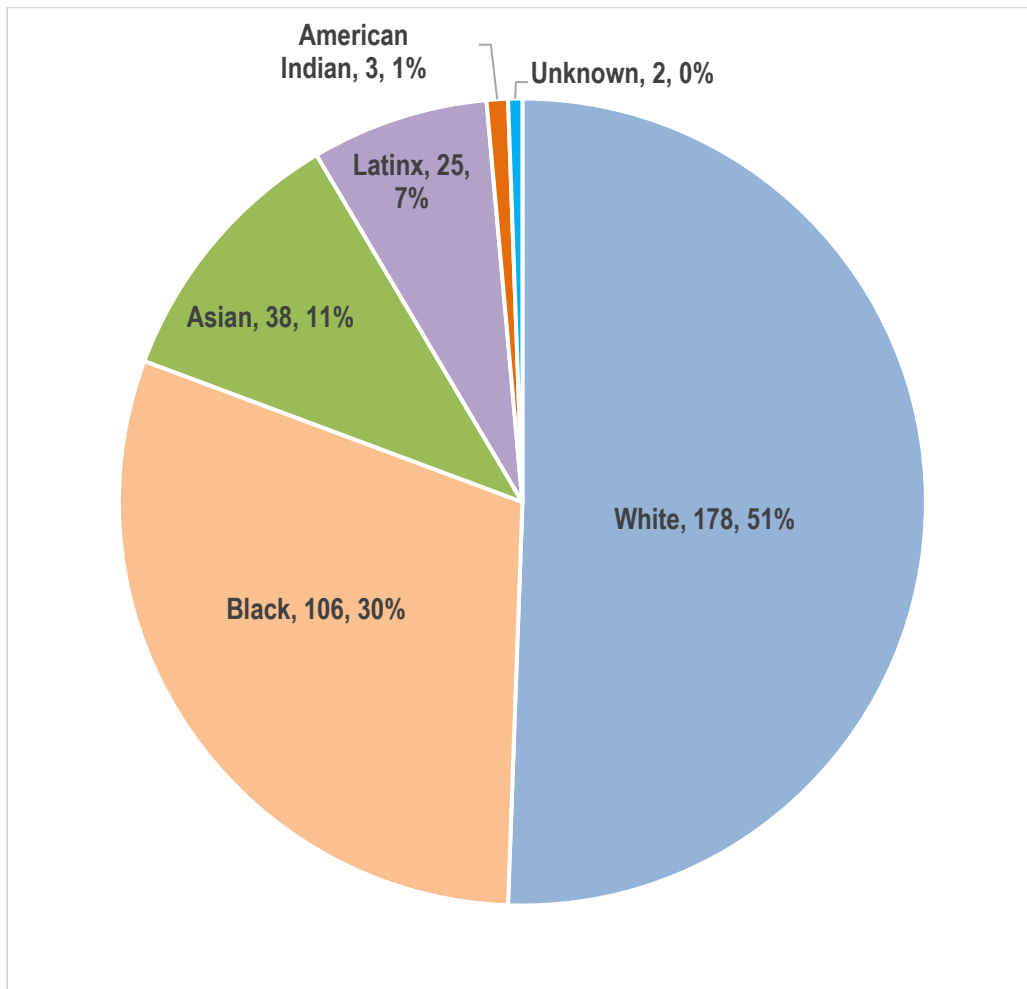
Enrollment: Over the years, the number and percentage of students of color enrolled in the program has been on the increase thanks in no small part to competitive CUGMEC grants the UED has been awarded since 2017. During academic year 2021-22, we had 174 BIPOC candidates taking the required coursework ranging from content and methods classes to student teaching (Figure 1). This number represent about 49.4 percent of all teacher candidates enrolled in the program. Since our last Legislative Report, the number of enrolled BIPOC candidates slightly increased from 170 in 2021 to 174 in 2022. Despite this overall increase in enrollment, the UED is currently facing declining enrollment in both mathematics and science education licensure programs.

Figure 1: UED Student Enrollment Trends Comparing SoC and Whites, FY13-22



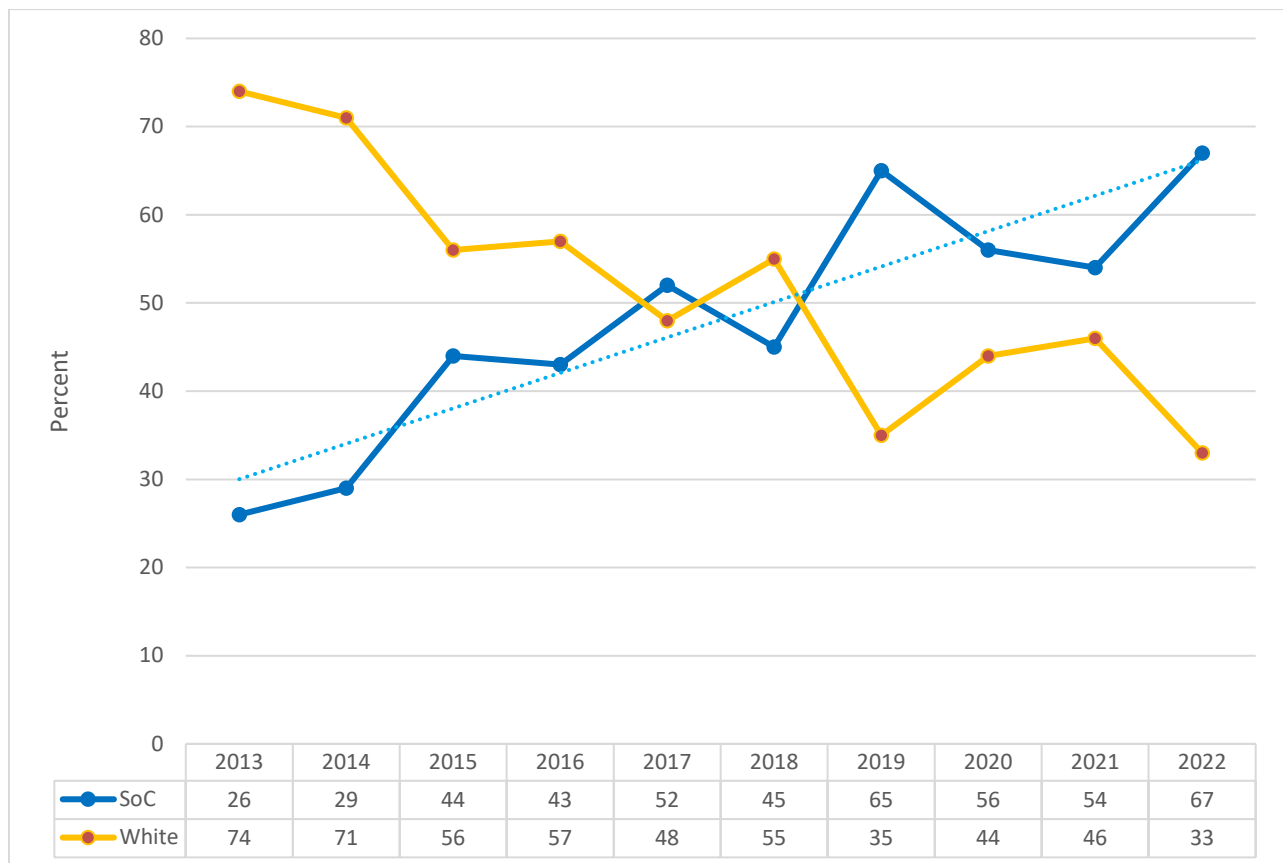
Clearly, the UED has maintained a healthy enrollment of BIPOC students over the last decade. Figure 2 shows relative parity in the number and percentage of students of color admitted and enrolled in UED in FY22 with the number and percentage of the white students enrolled in the program. However, a near-term issue is with uncertainty in enrollment outcomes following the Covid-19 pandemic that seems to have had a disproportionately negative impact on BIPOC candidate enrollment. Nonetheless, the UED implements four categories of support practices to retain diverse candidates, including: (1) *Early intrusive advising* (professional academic advisors, preview days & admission orientation), (2) *Continuous intrusive advising* (faculty advisors, academic standing automated reports and early alert system, and two required Progress Checks), (3) *Culturally responsive curriculum, Academic support, Financial support* (CUGMEC, university scholarships, OHE grants), and (4) *Data Analysis* (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 2021-2022 (n=352)



Student Teaching: The number of BIPOC candidates who completed their student teaching (aka “Program Completers”) has been on the increasing trend (Figure 3), and the percentage of BIPOC student teachers during the grant period was UED’s highest percentage ever. However, the sudden decline in the number of candidates who completed their student teaching in fall 2022 was a direct result of declining enrollment during the Covid-19 pandemic period.⁵ Of the 43 teacher candidates who successfully completed student teaching requirement for licensure during the 2021-22 academic year, 28 (65%) were BIPOC students. Importantly, of the 28 BIPOC teacher candidates who successfully completed their program in 2021-2022, a total of 16 who did not receive the OHE student teaching grant were awarded tuition scholarships through the CUGMEC grant for all their student teaching credits. Thus, we have closed the achievement gap of program completion that troubled UED for years as disparate percentages of BIPOC teacher candidates could not afford to student teach at the end of their academic studies.

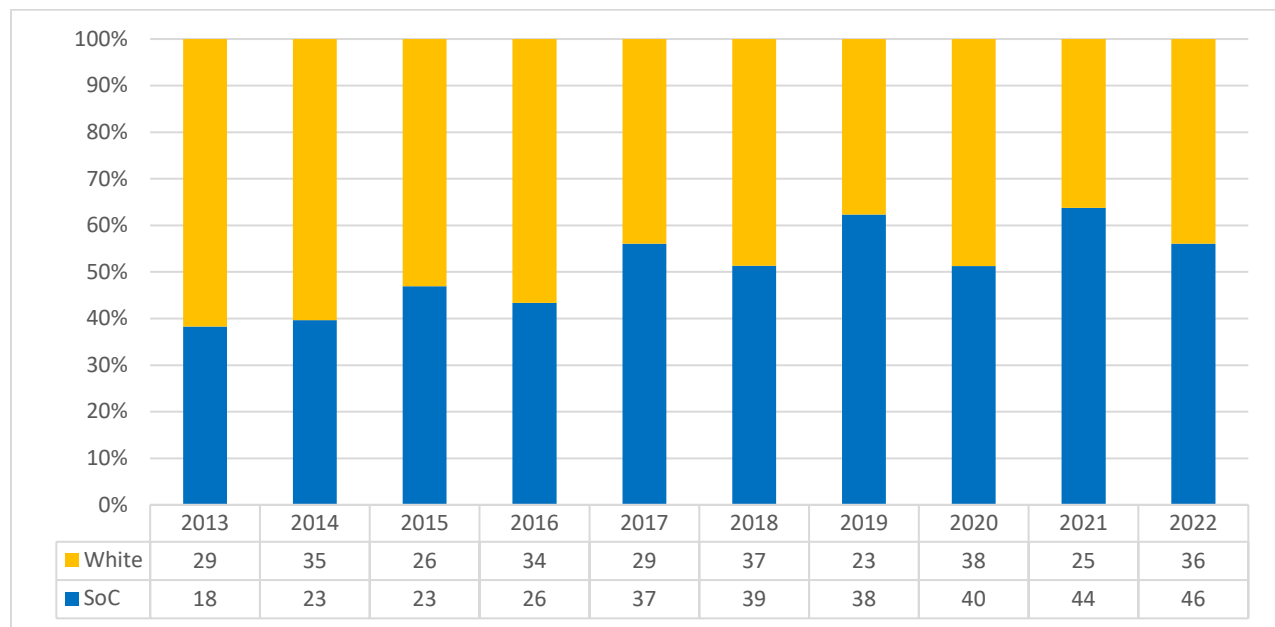
Figure 3: Percentage (%) of UED Program Completers by Race (FY13–22)



⁵ 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. Most teacher candidates graduate after student teaching. However, UED students can graduate without enrolling for student teaching once they earn 120 credits and meet other university degree requirements.⁶ With tiered licensure, a few teacher candidates have decided to earn their bachelor’s degree, gain employment as Tier 2 teachers and enroll as graduate students for student teaching. The number of BIPOC teacher candidates who have graduated from UED has been growing steadily over the years and a majority of graduates each year since 2017 have been BIPOC students (Figure 4). Notably, the number of BIPOC teacher candidates who graduated from the program has marginally increased for the past three years. Of the 82 teacher candidates who graduated with a degree in urban teaching in FY22, 46 were BIPOC candidates, and all of them graduated after successfully registering for their student teaching.

Figure 4: Numbers of UED Graduates by Race, FY13-22)



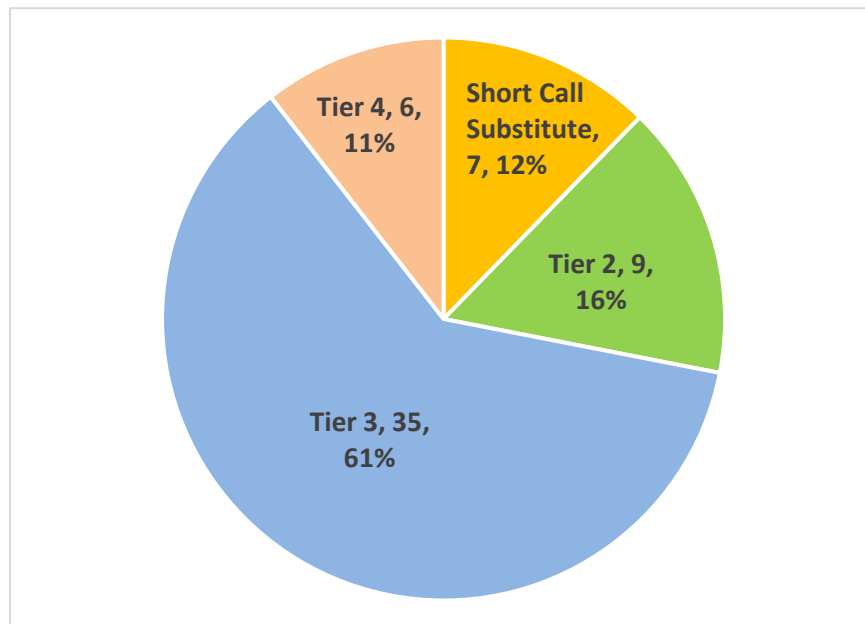
Licensed: Teacher candidates obtain their teacher licensure after successfully completing all required coursework, student teaching, submitting an edTPA portfolio for scoring and passing the Minnesota Teacher Licensing Examinations (MTLE). Many potential teachers shy away or are driven away from teaching because of stereotype threat⁷ and limited success on certification testing that has demonstrated no predictive validity for whether or

⁶ Student teaching is not considered a requirement for graduation but is required for licensure recommendation.

⁷ <https://www.reducingstereotypethreat.org/home>

not a candidate will be an effective teacher.⁸ To this end, the UED offers support to students, especially those individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds to ensure they pass their licensure exams. During the 2021-2022 academic year, the UED subscribed to the www.study.com using funds from a generous donor. This platform contains learning modules and Test Prep material to help prepare candidates to pass their teacher certification exams. However, because of logistical challenges posed by Covid-19 (teacher candidates were not able to take their MTLE/NES exams as test centers were closed), PELSB issued a discretionary variance on licensure application requirements for teacher candidates completing student teaching in the 2020-21 school year.⁹ These variance changes in licensure application requirements resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of teacher candidates who applied and obtained their teaching licensure in FY22 (Figure 5). Overall, 57 teacher candidates applied and received their teaching license in FY22. Of those who received their license, 24 (42%) were BIPOC teacher candidates.¹⁰ Overall, the number of BIPOC teacher candidates who obtained their licensure nearly doubled in recent years, in part due to variance changes; licensed program completers increased from fourteen (14) in FY16 to twenty-four (24) in FY22, accounting for more than 71 percent increase.

Figure 5: Number and Percent of Newly Licensed Teachers, FY22 by License Scope.



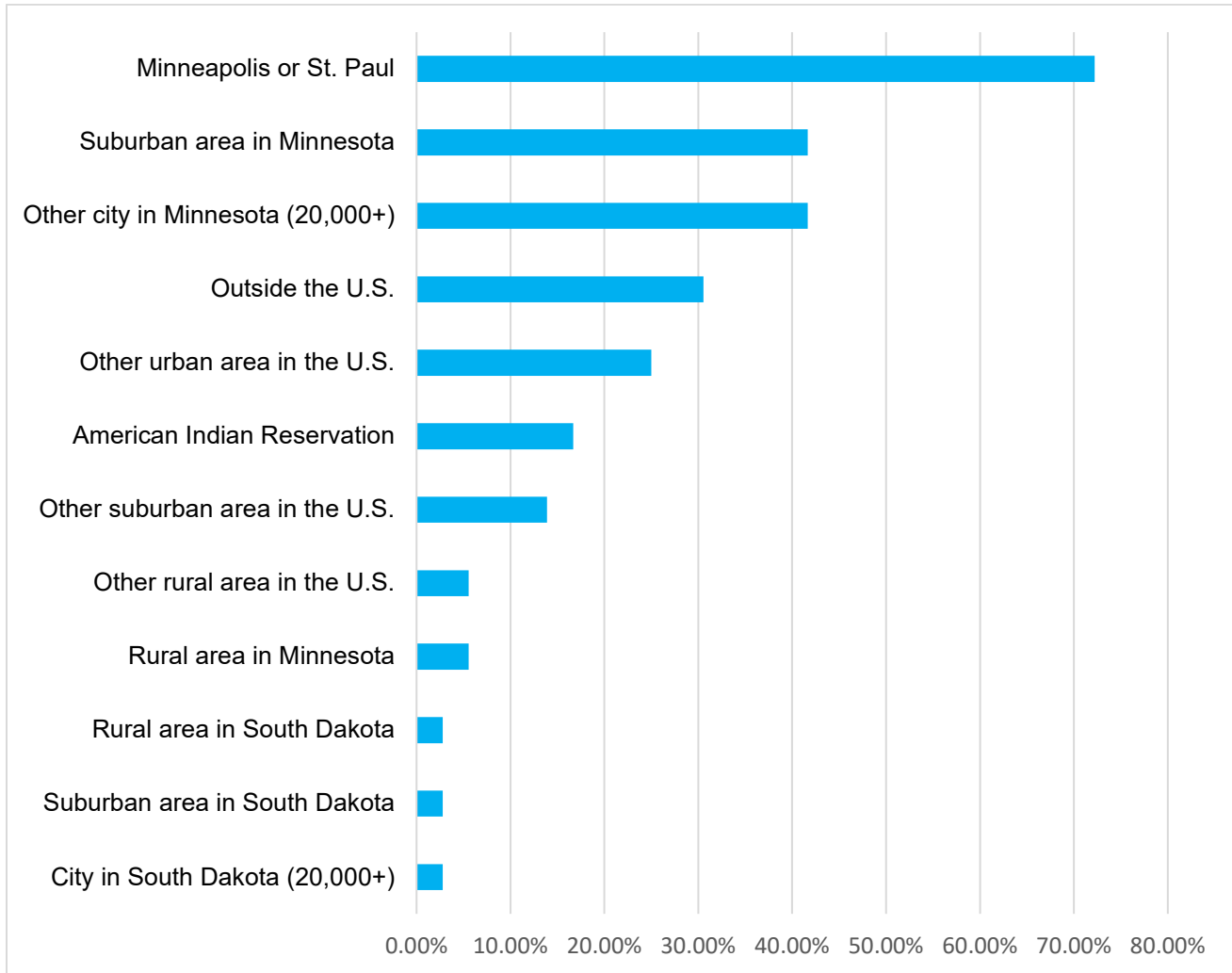
⁸ PELSB in late 2022 acted to address the problem with licensure exams by adjusting cut scores in Minnesota to ensure a 95% pass rate.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ The UED is committed and striving to close this achievement gap in the percentage of BIPOC candidates who successfully complete student teaching and the percentage who earn Tier 3 licensure.

Newly Employed: Most of the UED teacher candidates who obtain their licensure before the start of the school year got employed within the Twin Cities metro area schools. According to the available data, of the 57 teacher candidates who were awarded either an initial license or added another license, 21 of them were employed as teacher on record at a school in Minnesota. Moreover, six (29%) of those newly employed during the 2021-22 school year were BIPOC teacher candidates. According to exit survey¹¹ results of the 2021-2022 teacher graduates, a great majority of the UED teacher candidates completing our programs plan to seek employment within the Twin Cities of Minneapolis or St. Paul, followed by suburban area in Minnesota, or another city in Minnesota (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Where would you consider Teaching? (n=36)

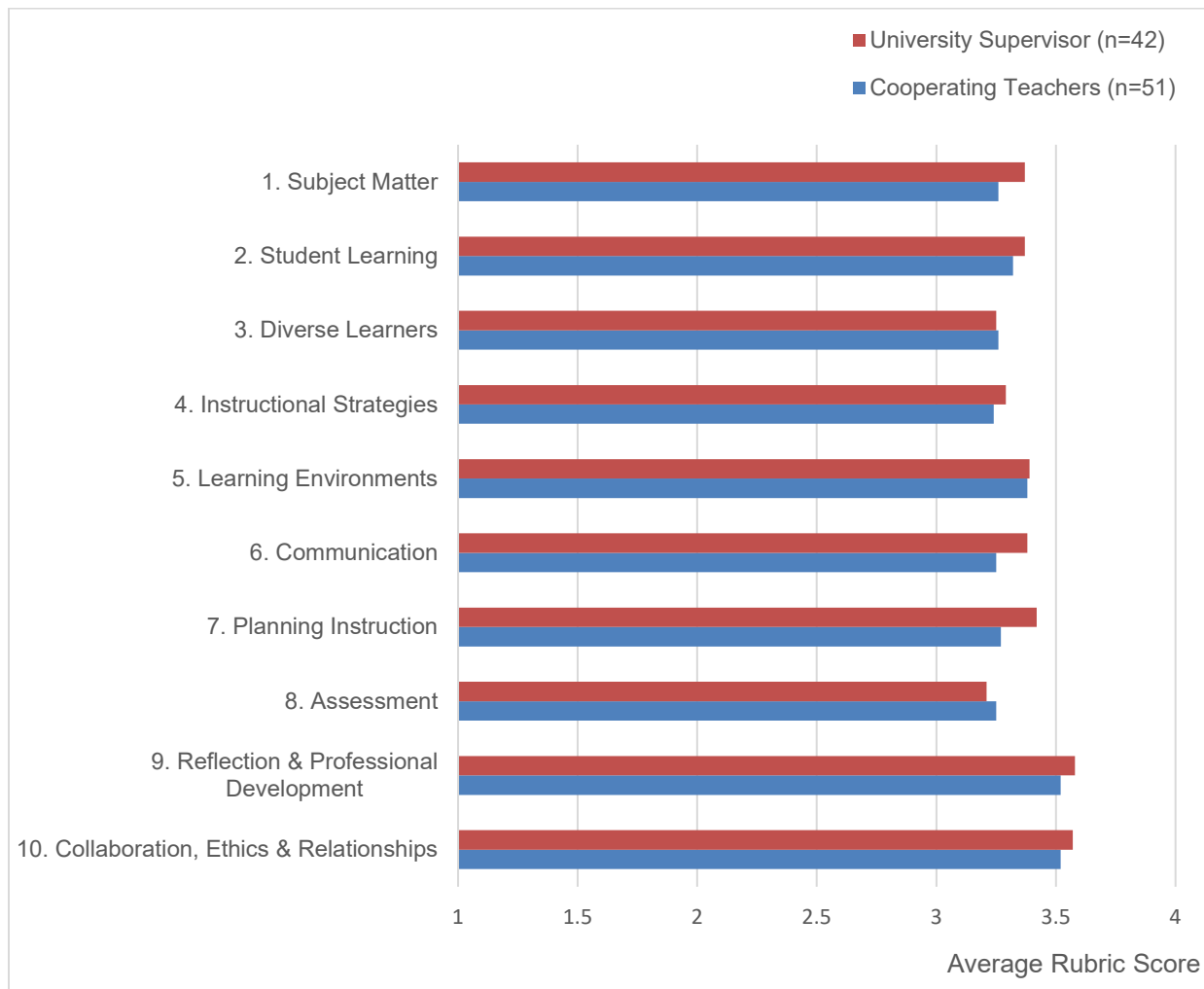


¹¹ The Common Metrics survey instrument used by programs in MN and the Dakotas includes options beyond the Twin Cities metro area

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 the urban teacher education coursework, practicum placement, and student teaching. At the conclusion of the student teaching experience, the cooperating teacher and university supervisor evaluate the student teacher's performance in the classroom using a four-point rating scale: 1=lacking, 2=emerging, 3=proficient, or 4=exemplary. During the 2021-2022 academic year, both cooperating teachers and university supervisors rated the student teachers' teaching skills between "proficient" and "exemplary" on average across the ten standards of effective practice (SEPs) with average ratings ranging from 3.21 to 3.58 (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Overall Evaluation of Student Teaching Candidates, 2021-2022.



FEEDBACK FROM PROGRAM GRADUATES

Given the Covid-19 challenge experienced by school personnel, UED did implement the Exit Survey but not the Transition to Teaching Survey (TTS) and Employer Surveys during academic year 2021-2022. 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. A combined majority (more than 95%) of the graduating students “agree” or “tend to agree” that the urban teacher preparation program equipped them with adequate skills to:

- a) effectively teach the subject matter in the licensure area,
- b) create a learning environment in which differences such as race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and language are respected,
- c) collaborate with teaching colleagues to improve student performance,
- d) use effective communication skills to convey ideas and information to students,
- e) use formative and summative assessments to inform instructional practice,
- f) help students develop critical thinking processes,
- g) help students develop skills to solve complex problems,
- h) seek out learning opportunities that align with professional development goals,
- i) effectively teach students from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds,
- j) develop and maintain a classroom environment that promotes student engagement,
- k) provide students with meaningful feedback to guide next steps in learning,
- l) select instructional strategies to align with learning goals and standards,
- m) regularly adjust instructional plans to meet students' needs,
- n) design long-range instructional plans that meet curricular goals.

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. Areas with largest room for improvement include;

- (i) differentiating instruction for gifted and talented students,
- (ii) differentiating instruction for students with disabilities. Both Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans ensure that a K-12 student who has a disability identified under the law receives specialized instruction or accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment¹², and
- (iii) collaborating with parents and guardians to support student learning.

¹² A summary of the difference between Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans can be accessed at <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/the-difference-between-ieps-and-504-plans>

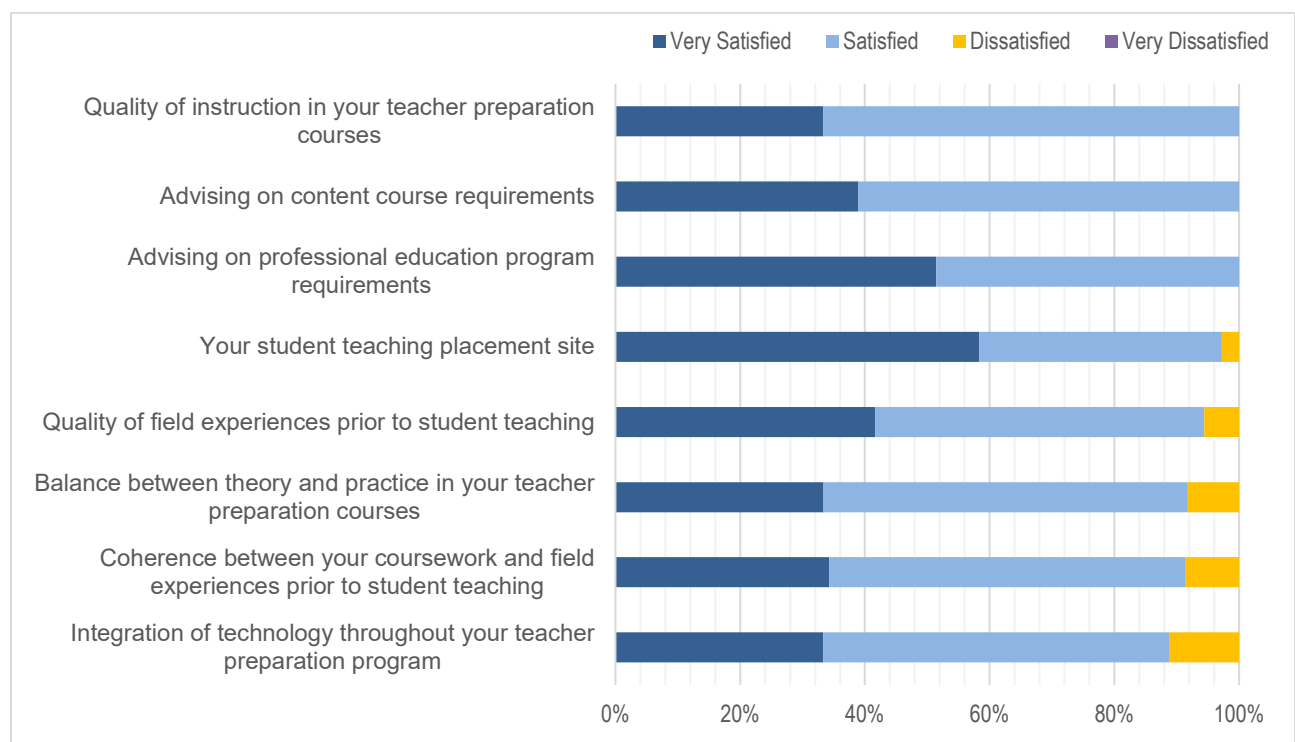
Figure 8: Evaluation of UED Program by Graduating Students (n=35)



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 becomes energized as advocates of the program while enrolled and as alumni. To generate data that informs program improvement, graduating students from the program are required to take the exit survey assessing the quality of the student learning and program effectiveness. During the 2021-22 academic year, a total of 35 students who graduated from UED in 2021-22 completed the exit survey. In the survey, that graduating teacher candidates were asked to rate how they were satisfied with eight key aspects of the teacher preparation program (Figure 9). Overall, a combined majority (89% or more) of the students reported that they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the quality of the program across all the domains with four areas receiving between 97%-100% satisfaction.

Figure 9: How satisfied were you with the following aspects of your Teacher Preparation Program? (n=35)



When asked if they would recommend their teacher preparation program to another prospective teacher, an overwhelming majority (97%) of the exiting students indicated that they would “*definitely*” or “*probably*” recommend the program 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 comments from program completers stating reasons for recommending the Urban Teacher Program to prospective teacher candidates:

- *flexibility, time and value.*
- *The UTP is good preparation for teaching in urban schools and is one of the few programs in the area that specifically focuses on the needs of urban learners. The faculty is excellent and the graduates I've had the pleasure to know and work with are incredible teachers.*
- *Because it's an affordable program and realistic methods, situational method, and the professors have been in and out of the classroom while they are being professors, so they aren't just writing for the textbooks.*
- *The urban education focus is wonderful. It is also very affordable.*
- *I would recommend because it has good faculty who are passionate about what they are teaching. This program also prepares future educators on working with urban students and how to teach to the diverse students that are in the classroom.*
- *Very good place to learn the ins and outs of being an urban teacher. I honestly believe that no college can really do a "GOOD" job because unless you're in the classroom you just don't know what's going on. But Metro's wealth of knowledge from staff and fellow students approximates it best.*
- *I thought the process was laid back and accommodating to all lifestyles!*
- *I liked that with metro classes were offered in the evening and it easily fit my daily schedule. I also liked that professors wanted me to succeed and did what they could to help me succeed in their classes.*
- *The School of Urban Education keeps culturally responsive teaching and multicultural education at the heart of everything. The EDU courses are also offered at accessible times for working folks with many life responsibilities.*
- *This program has shown the unity of working with children in the urban schools. The professors have prepared and gave much knowledge of how to navigate with working with children.*
- *I felt like I was completely guided through the whole program flawlessly. All the professors were very professional and helped us gain the knowledge and the experience required for becoming a teacher.*
- *She is very flexible and has knowledge with the students.*
- *Love the educators and the advisors.*
- *It is a good program with much flexibility to get ahead in life.*
- *Yes, because the program is very supportive and also equips all of their teachers well.*

CONCLUSION

The UED is charged with the mandate of preparing racially and ethnically diverse teachers to teach in urban settings to address the severe shortage of TOCAIT. The UED is committed to expanding the diversity of Metro State's student body, and supporting students from all backgrounds, especially those from underrepresented groups, in their academic and professional journeys. Within a short time, the UED has grown to become the 13th largest overall teacher preparation program in the state. Today, the UED enrolls nearly 50 percent of BIPOC students,¹³ and prepares a higher number and percentage of BIPOC teacher candidates compared to all teacher preparation programs in the state.

Summary of Program Strengths

- The **number and percentage of students of color** or American Indian enrolled in the UED remains highest in the state when compared to enrollments in teacher preparation programs at private and public colleges and universities within Minnesota.
- Through concerted efforts, UED has **closed the graduation and student teaching completion gap** between students of color and white students.
- Through concerted efforts, UED has been slowly **closing the licensure and employment gap** between program completers of color and white completers.
- 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** than most institutions.
- The much **flexibility** and predominance of evening course **scheduling is accommodating** to working individuals, parents, etc.
- Majority of **faculty and support staff** are people of color from a variety of racial and ethnic groups and with **diverse backgrounds**, are **knowledgeable, encouraging and informative** and provide a **hands-on aspect of the teaching program**.

¹³ This milestone was achieved without continued earmarked program funding from the Legislature, without a designated full-time program recruiter, and without implementing admission quotas.

- Early and ongoing field experiences including **student teaching** only in urban settings is another strength of the program. Practicum and student teaching experiences provide teacher candidates with opportunities to learn about teaching and help reduce anxiety among those entering the profession in what are often challenging school environments. Cooperating teachers help teacher candidates to apply their theoretical knowledge into practice and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses before they start the teaching profession.
- Because of its diverse student population, the program has **attracted funding** from the state (CUGMEC grant) and from other benefactors to support recruitment, retention, program completion, and induction of teacher candidates who are of color or who are American Indian. Additionally, several school districts have identified Metro State's School of Urban Education in their applications for Grow Your Own (GYO) state grants as the place for their BIPOC non-licensed staff to earn licensure. Disregarding the amount of funds available, all TOCAIT students are awarded tuition scholarship to cover for some enrolled credits. Moreover, TOCAIT candidates who do not receive the state teacher candidate grant are awarded tuition scholarships for all student teaching credits.

Way Forward

Diversifying the population of teacher candidates is an important goal for teacher preparation programs. 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 increase enrollment, manage costs, and maintain growth—all while enrollments in education courses and programs are plummeting throughout the state and country. Developing and implementing policies for sustained support systems for the UED will go a long way to increase the number and percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teacher candidates thus ensuring 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. More promising are induction and mentoring programs that will require additional resources. In the end, state policy changes and increased investments that support teacher preparation programs and their respective teacher candidates who are of color and American Indian are needed to establish a more engaging context where all learning environments can better support student teachers and colleges of education on the pathway to developing a more collaborative schooling environment.