



# Direct Admissions Minnesota Report

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## **About the Office of Higher Education**

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education is a cabinet-level state agency providing students with financial aid programs and information to help them gain access to postsecondary education. The agency also serves as the state's clearinghouse for data, research and analysis on postsecondary enrollment, financial aid, finance and trends.

The Minnesota State Grant Program is the largest financial aid program administered by the Office of Higher Education, awarding more than \$224 million annually in need-based grants to Minnesota residents attending eligible colleges, universities and career schools in Minnesota. The agency oversees other state scholarship programs, tuition reciprocity programs, a student loan program, Minnesota's 529 College Savings Plan, licensing and early college awareness programs for youth.

## **About This Report**

This is a legislative-mandated report. As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197, this report cost approximately \$6,842.16 to prepare, including staff time.

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## Executive Summary

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All students graduating from Minnesota high schools are “college material.” This core belief drives the Office of Higher Education's Direct Admissions program. Direct Admissions ensures that students from participating high schools will receive a notification early in the fall of their senior year to inform them that there are multiple colleges and universities committed to admitting them based on their academic performance through their junior year and anticipated high school graduation date. Through a personalized communication, co-signed by their high school and the Office of Higher Education, this program allows students to apply with confidence, knowing that the “*will I get in?*” question has already been answered with a “*YES!*”

Direct Admissions Minnesota has great potential to reduce equity gaps by ensuring that all students get timely information about financial aid and a personal message that affirms their readiness for post-secondary education. Direct Admissions Minnesota is a partnership project between K-12 and higher education, led by the Office of Higher Education. Minnesota is leading the way with this growing national higher education approach and public policy movement and has firmly situated the program as a common good benefit to students and families in the state.

The challenges and recommendations highlighted in the following report represent important lessons learned so far in the development and implementation of the program. With planning and assistance from K-12 and postsecondary partners, the Office of Higher Education anticipates evolving Direct Admissions into a more effective and successful program with each successive year. It is possible to expand Direct Admissions to all 800 of Minnesota's public high schools, and the agency recommends scaling the program on a voluntary basis over the next three to five years due to the set-up work required at the local level.

This report fulfills the legislative reporting mandate included in the legislation. By February 1, 2025, the Office of Higher Education shall report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education finance and policy, and higher education on activities occurring. The report must include but is not limited to information about the program design, implementation challenges and recommendations, outcomes, and the feasibility of scaling the program to all public high schools. The full text of the legislation is included in the appendices.

## Introduction and Program Design

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The process of applying for college can be one filled with stress and anxiety, especially for first generation, low income, and historically underserved and excluded populations. Some students self-select out of the process due to perceived barriers, lack of information, or the complexity of the college search process. Students and families may not be aware that they have multiple college options within the state of Minnesota or about the financial aid resources that may be available to them. Direct Admissions seeks to change this by shifting the paradigm of college admissions to empower students with the knowledge that they are college material and that multiple institutions are ready to admit them. Through a personalized communication, co-signed by their high school and the Office of Higher Education, students are given a list of no less than 28 higher education institutions (and up to 55) that have affirmed that they will admit the student upon application and will waive any application fees. This program allows students to apply for free with confidence to their participating college selections of choice, knowing that the *"will I get in?"* question has already been answered with a *"YES!"*.

Direct Admissions Minnesota aims to reduce self-selection bias in college admissions' practices while reducing equity gaps in college enrollment using four strategies:

- Promoting a college-going culture throughout the state;
- Connecting students, families, and schools with colleges and universities earlier, giving families time to consider their options and plan;
- Promoting awareness of financial aid and the importance of completing the FAFSA or the MN DREAM Act application; and
- Showing students that they have access to a certificate, associate degree, or bachelor's degree if they choose to further their education.

The work of Direct Admissions is conducted collaboratively by high schools, OHE, and colleges via seven critical steps, described below:

1. High schools and colleges/universities opt-in to participating in the Direct Admissions program on an annual basis. High schools complete mandatory Data Sharing and Joint Powers Agreements, and colleges/universities complete mandatory Data Sharing Agreements.
2. High schools notify families of the school's participation in the program and give a Tennessen/FERPA notice to opt-out, per local directory/data processes. Excluding students whose families choose to opt-out, high school counselors review end of junior year unweighted cumulative GPA and course grades in three core areas (math, science, and English) to assign participating students to one of the six admission tiers.
3. High schools notify students and their parents or guardians by formal letter, email, and/or portal notification of their "acceptance" for Direct Admissions and available college options.
4. Students respond to the notification and choose the institution(s) they wish to be directly admitted to as a next step in the admissions process.
5. Responses are collected at the high school level, and high schools securely transmit that data to OHE (many do so through their Student Information System).

6. OHE compiles and securely transmits the data and the student's program-calculated GPA to their college selections of choice. If a student chooses to supply optional supplemental information, that gets transferred as well.
7. Colleges contact the student as soon as possible to inform them of next steps in the process. Students are not required to apply to any of the colleges listed on their Direct Admissions letter, nor are students limited to applying to just those colleges they qualify to through Direct Admissions. The program does not limit student choices or minimize the importance of maintaining academic success in the senior year. As such, Direct Admissions materials communicate the following expectations:
  - Students are expected to maintain their academic performance level during their senior year;
  - Students are expected to graduate in late spring or early summer 2025;
  - Students must complete admissions applications and submit any requested additional materials for colleges they are interested in according to the college's application deadlines; and,
  - Students should complete the FAFSA or MN DREAM Act application for financial aid consideration.

Upon applying, Direct Admissions students then move through the same enrollment, financial aid, and orientation processes as any other students at the college of their choice.

## Implementation in Minnesota

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The goal of the Direct Admissions program is to continue to scale until all public high schools are participating. Adding new schools while continuing the participation of current schools requires annual coordination of several key participant groups: (1) K-12 secondary high schools; (2) postsecondary colleges and universities; (3) MDE-approved K-12 technology Student Information Systems (SIS) platforms; and (4) Office of Higher Education.

The 2023-2024 program year had 120 high schools representing 42 counties throughout the state who notified the Office of Higher Education of their desire to participate in Direct Admissions. In assessing work required, staff availability, and timing, nine high schools either chose to delay or were encouraged to delay participation until the 2024-2025 school year. The 120 participating high schools enrolled an estimated 22,505 students with almost half of enrolled seniors (46%) at participating schools identifying as Black, Indigenous, and students of color. Over a third of enrolled seniors (35%) were eligible for free and reduced-price meals. The program year also had 55 colleges and universities participating.

For the current 2024-2025 program year, the Office of Higher Education issued a call to high schools to participate in Direct Admissions Minnesota in February 2024. While nominations were encouraged from guidance counseling offices locally or at the district level, with the support of an administrator, any staff member could complete an application for consideration. For high schools, OHE assured there would be no cost to participate. OHE also offered additional funding to offset costs for high school staff time, e-transcript costs, high school technology changes, and/or related program expenses. OHE's interest form garnered 73 prospective new high schools, and throughout March of 2024, four information sessions hosted 112 secondary community members and college access professionals (with 218 overall RSVPs to the sessions, which were recorded and posted for those unable to attend in real time). Applications ended up totaling 63 new high schools opting into the 2024-2025 program cohort.

While two additional universities inquired this past year, they ultimately chose not to join, yielding the same number of postsecondary participants as the prior year. Direct Admissions postsecondary institutions were asked to waive all applications fees regardless of the date of application and to choose a specific academic tier for which they would directly admit students. Colleges were also asked to proactively follow-up with students shortly after receiving data from the agency, to build early relationships and capacity with students and families. Figure A1 in the Appendices details the organization schema and interplay for the program. This includes:

- The college and K-12 advisory workgroups recommendations and decisions for program implementation to OHE (membership of which is comprised of partners from each sector);
- OHE's recruitment of new, as well as support to existing, high schools and colleges around technical implementation within local SIS platforms (Infinite Campus, jmc, Synergy/Edupoint, Skyward, and PowerSchool); assisting staff with academic review criteria and questions; creating and disseminating communication and marketing material that supports the program; shaping the timeline for survey/letter notifications being sent; the overall transfer of data between high schools/SIS systems and college and university partners; and distributing funding to high schools and districts;
- Districts and high schools coordinating necessary Data Sharing and Joint Powers contractual agreements; staffing and coordinating the program's FERPA notification to families, the academic review



and letter notification processes; following up with colleges and universities on behalf of students regarding transcripts or additional admissions' materials requests; and providing feedback to OHE;

- Public, tribal, and private colleges, universities, and higher education system offices promoting new membership and supporting existent institutions in the work; coordinating necessary Data Sharing agreements; selecting a respective academic tier; staffing and coordinating the program's data retrieval and follow-up communication to students and families; and providing feedback to OHE;
- All the above is to the benefit of students and families, who receive the program notifications and letter surveys; select colleges and universities of choice; and complete any necessary admissions requirements prior to ultimately enrolling in an institution of choice.

Each partner group's primary goals are detailed in the following sections, with OHE serving as the primary collaborator and organizer of program logistics and execution.

## **Advisory Working Groups – K-12 and Postsecondary**

At the outset of the 2024 school year, OHE reconvened two working groups of subject matter experts to continue to assist with program design, anticipate barriers and challenges, and provide on-going feedback about the Direct Admissions program. Volunteers agreed to serve on one of two working advisory groups, one K-12 and the other postsecondary, depending on the area of expertise. These two groups met every other month or on an as-needed basis (if an immediate need arose) to help Direct Admissions be successful, innovative, partner-balanced, and student-centered.

Implementation work group representation includes volunteers from the agency, Minnesota State institutions and the system office, University of Minnesota institutions, the Minnesota Private College Council and member institutions, the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota School Boards Association, and SIS technology partners. A full list of K-12 advisory committee representatives can be found in Table A1 and the Postsecondary advisory committee in Table A2.

The K-12 Working Group primarily focused on the following tasks:

- Identifying measures of success;
- Augmenting outreach activities of the agency and capacity-building with newly joining high schools and districts;
- Integrating the Direct Admissions program with other college preparation and planning activities; and,
- Documenting the work required for participating schools and districts.

The Postsecondary Working Group primarily addressed the following tasks:

- Identifying measures of success;
- Integrating and advancing the Direct Admissions program with existing admissions processes and data systems' optimization; and,
- Documenting the work required for participating colleges.



## Identifying Target Students and High Schools for Direct Admissions

This program seeks to facilitate the transition of high school seniors, particularly students of color, American Indian students, lower-income students, and students utilizing disability services, to a postsecondary program by creating a direct admissions pathway. Per the legislation, the participating high schools should be geographically and demographically diverse. In the information sent to high schools, OHE noted that should more high schools be interested in participating than could be financially supported by the program, preference would be given to schools that are above 30% for free and reduced lunch participation and/or have 30% or more students who were Black, Indigenous, and persons of color. To date, no high school that has had interest in participating has been turned away in any program year. The goal of Direct Admissions includes eliminating disparities in college admissions and enrollment resulting from college knowledge, parent educational attainment, and other factors. Therefore, the program's target student population includes demographic groups with a lower-than-average college-going rate. Direct Admissions is designed to spark and supplement other college exploration activities offered by a high school and is not designed to tell students which college or university they should attend. The program's participating high schools include schools with a significant number of students of color, low-income students, and English language learners from across the state to achieve statewide representation.

Participating high schools were asked to complete six tasks:

1. Review end of junior year unweighted GPA and course grades to see if the student meets the admission criteria of the participating colleges and universities.
2. Notify high school seniors and their parents or guardians of their "acceptance" and encourage them to learn more about the programs offered throughout the participating colleges.
3. Prompt students to respond to the notification and choose the institutions to which they wish to be directly admitted to. Students can choose one or more of Minnesota's colleges or universities, or an "I am not interested in Direct Admissions" option. Once colleges are selected, the specified institutions are to reach out with admissions information post data retrieval and request that students complete the next required step. If a student opts not to make any selections, their information is never shared and they face no adverse impact.
4. Collect the student responses and securely transfer that data to the Office of Higher Education.
5. Send each student's transcript to each college they selected.
6. Collaborate with and provide feedback to OHE regarding implementation, student experience, and opportunities for process and program improvement.

OHE is currently building the 2025-2026 Direct Admissions high school cohort. In addition to those schools choosing to delay or unable to implement in the current 2024-2025 fiscal year but wanting to remain in consideration for the program for the next, the current waitlist for the program includes another 36 high schools who plan to nominate for 2025-2026 fiscal year's start, bringing the initial interest for schools up to 41.

## 2024-2025 Participating High Schools and Community-based Organizations – Geographic and Demographic Representation

At the beginning of the current program year of 2024-2025 the Office of Higher Education had 187 high schools who had indicated interest in conducting the program, detailed in Table A3 of the Appendix. By the end of August 2024, four schools had failed to complete the mandatory contracts with the agency, and one charter high school had closed over the summer, bringing the total to 182 high schools in the cohort. There was attrition of an additional five high schools, all having either unexpected staffing or technology prioritization changes for the year, bringing the total number of high schools who could potentially deliver on the program to 177. These five high schools have chosen to defer participation until the 2025-2026 cohort year. As of mid-January of 2025, 165 high schools have reported data for this cohort year. Thirteen are still in progress as of submission of this report, and data will continue to be collected through the end of June. For reporting purposes, OHE is using the 182 high schools with a contract in place at the school year's start and who could potentially fulfill the program to discuss outcomes for the program year.

The agency's partnership with the nonprofit college access organization College Possible Minnesota continued from the prior program year. The organization amplified the reach of the program to students in 32 of their direct service high schools that were not already participating in Direct Admissions. Through their use of technology, their organization's coaches communicated with students about their Direct Admissions status, built out college lists, and completed other features of the college search process. These College Possible-serving high schools are detailed in Table A4 of the Appendix.

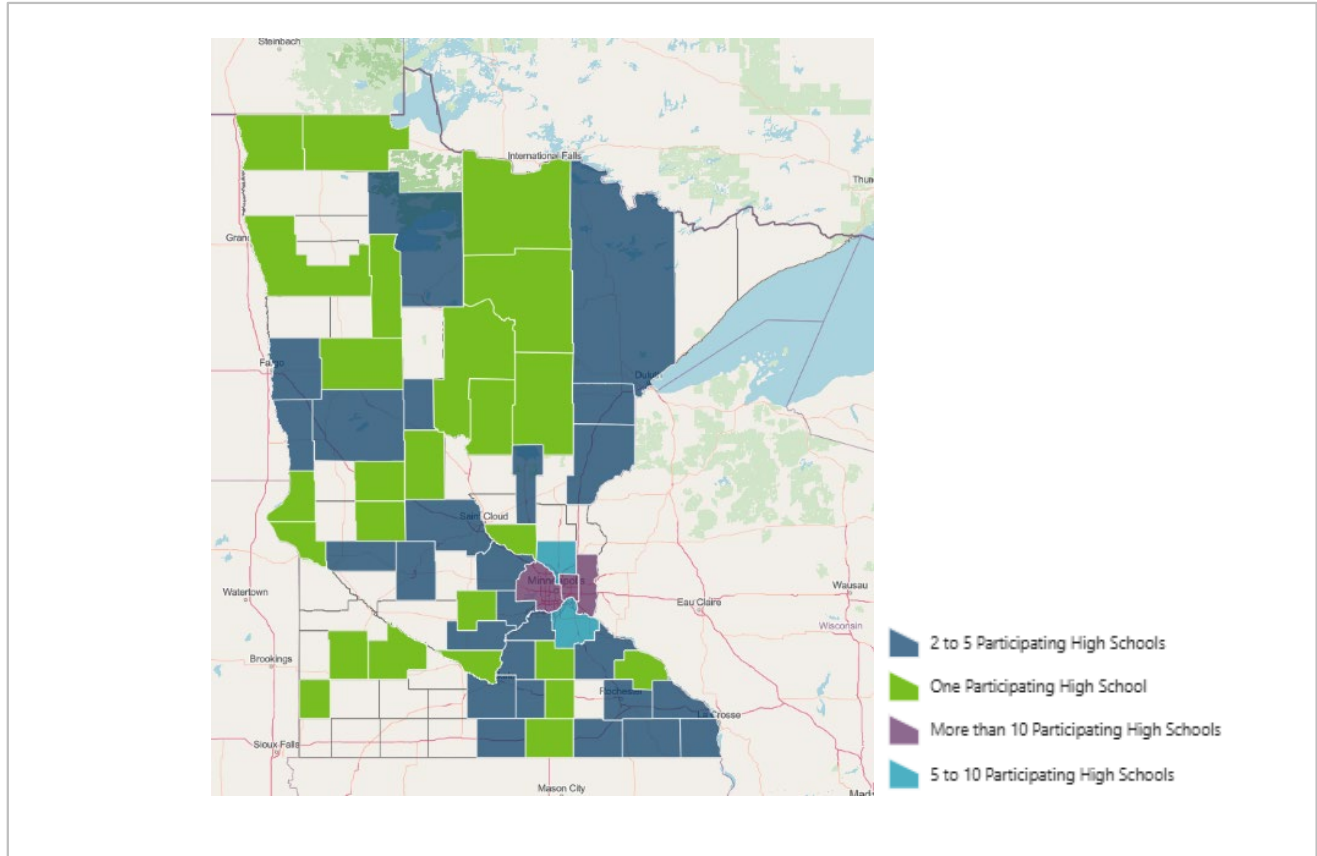
### Sudent Demographics

The 182 participating high schools enroll an estimated 31,172 senior students. Almost half of enrolled seniors (43%, detailed in Table 1) at participating schools are Black, Indigenous, and/or students of color. Over a third of enrolled seniors (36%, detailed in Table 2) at participating schools were eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Of the 182 participating high schools, 100 are located in the seven county Twin Cities region of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington counties. 53% of the students in the 2024-2025 cohort come from this region.

High schools who indicated interest at the outset of summer came from 56 counties across the state. Anticipated and current participation by county is detailed in Figure 1. This data is outlined in Table A3's Participating High Schools for 2024-25.

**Figure 1. Participating Schools by County for Academic Year 2024-2025**



**Table 1. Number of Enrolled Seniors at Direct Admissions Participating High Schools by Race and Ethnicity, 2024-2025**

Race and Ethnicity	Count of Enrolled Seniors	Percent of Total Enrolled Seniors
Black or African American	4,229	14%
American Indian or Native American (Federal Definition)	902	3%
Asian	2,932	10%
Hispanic or Latino	3,972	13%
White	17,449	56%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	36	0%
Two or More Races	1,473	5%
Unreported	179	1%
Total	31,172	100%

Note: Counts based on reported enrollment at end of students' junior year in June 2024 provided by the Minnesota Department of Education. Percentages rounded to nearest whole number.

**Table 2. Number of Enrolled Seniors at Direct Admissions Participating High Schools by Free and Reduced-Price Meals, 2024-2025**

Free and Reduced-Price Meals	Count of Enrolled Seniors	Percent of Total Enrolled Seniors
No	19,914	64%
Yes	11,258	36%
Total	31,172	100%

Note: Counts based on reported enrollment at end of students' junior year in June 2024 provided by the Minnesota Department of Education. Percentages rounded to nearest whole number.

## Requests for Direct Admissions

As of January 17, 2025, 165 high schools reported 47,158 individual requests for Direct Admissions by 7,225 students (approximately 23% of students receiving info about the program).

Of those requests, nearly 60% were requests for admissions to a Minnesota State college (38%) or university (20%). The remaining 42% were distributed to private non-profit colleges and universities (29%), the University of Minnesota (12%, including the Crookston, Duluth, Morris, or Rochester campuses), and tribal colleges (1%), as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Number of Student Admissions Requests via Direct Admissions by Sector, 2024-2025**

Sector	Count of Admissions Requests	Percent of Admissions Requests
Minnesota State 2-Year Colleges	17,850	38%
Minnesota State Universities	9,427	20%
University of Minnesota	5,526	12%
Private Colleges and Universities	13,481	29%
Tribal Colleges	621	1%
I am not interested in direct admissions	253	0%
Total	47,158	100%

Based on an academic review, students could be eligible for direct admissions to up to 55 colleges (postsecondary participants are detailed in Table A5 of the Appendix). Each participating college opted into one of six academic tiers that best aligns with their admissions standards and enrollment goals.

The percentage of student distribution requesting information by tier is detailed in Table 4. The process for establishing these academic tiers is described in the next section. A little over 40% of students requesting direct admissions at one or more participating colleges were in Tier 6 (cumulative unweighted grade point average of 3.50 or higher and a C average in all math, English, and science core courses taken in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades) as

shown in Table 4. The next largest group was students in Tier 5 (27%, cumulative unweighted grade point average of 3.0 or higher), followed by the open-access Tier 1 (17%, cumulative unweighted grade point average lower than 2.50).

**Table 4. Number of Students Requesting Direct Admissions by Academic Tier, 2024-2025**

Academic Tier	Unweighted Grade Point Average (4.0 scale; must include Pass/No Pass Grades)	Course Grades: Math, English, and Science Courses Taken in 10 <sup>th</sup> and 11 <sup>th</sup> Grades	Number of Colleges Selecting this Academic Tier	Unduplicated Count of Students Requesting Direct Admissions	Percent of Total Students Requesting Direct Admissions
1	Less than 2.50 GPA	No course grade requirements	28	1,204	17%
2	2.50-2.74	No course grade requirements	8	493	7%
3	2.75-2.99	No course grade requirements	5	306	4%
4	2.75-2.99	C average or higher in all 3 course subject areas	1	335	5%
5	3.00-4.00	No course grade requirements	13	1,950	27%
6	3.50-4.00	C average or higher in all 3 course subject areas	1	2,938	41%
All	n/a	n/a	55	7,226	100%

## Participating Direct Admissions Postsecondary Partners

Each year, public and private non-profit colleges and universities are eligible to participate in Direct Admissions. Participation was stable at 55 this year, with no colleges or universities withdrawing from the program and no additional institutions joining the program.

To participate, postsecondary institutions are required to complete six tasks:

1. Waive all application fees for all Direct Admissions students, regardless of the date of application.
2. Choose a specific academic tier for which they would directly admit students.
3. Receive data from OHE identifying the students choosing to be directly admitted to their institution.
4. Follow-up with the student in a timely manner with information regarding completion of the institution's application. To minimize the amount of data each high school needs to share with OHE and the participating colleges, students were asked to complete the institution's application for admissions or additional information requested via forms by published deadlines to secure their spot.

5. Work with the student and their high school counselor should unusual circumstances occur. Should a college have concerns regarding the admissibility of a Direct Admissions student, the college would work with OHE, the high school, and student to address unusual circumstances and challenges to the best of their ability.
6. Collaborate with and provide feedback to OHE regarding implementation, student experience, and opportunities for process and program improvement.

Colleges were not asked to admit the student into a specific academic program or to lower their academic standards. In addition to the annual program kick-off, college partners had monthly best practices sessions, opportunities for staff trainings conducted by the agency, and materials to support their individuated community outreach.

## Academic Measures

The academic tiers remained the same as the prior two years. Participating colleges were required to “opt into” one of the academic tiers or groupings as shown in Table 5. The percentage of admissions requests and of total students requesting Direct Admissions to institutions has remained nearly proportional by tiers and to institutional types over the three cohorts so far.

**Table 5. Direct Admissions Academic Tiers, 2024-2025**

Academic Tier	Unweighted Grade Point Average (4.0 scale; Must Include Pass/No Pass Grades)	Course Grades: Math, English, and Science Courses Taken in 10 <sup>th</sup> and 11 <sup>th</sup> Grades	Number of Colleges Selecting this Academic Tier	Total Colleges Appearing on the Student's Notification
1	Less than 2.50 GPA	No course grade requirements	28	28
2	2.50-2.74	No course grade requirements	8	36
3	2.75-2.99	No course grade requirements	5	41
4	2.75-2.99	C average or higher in all 3 course subject areas	1	42
5	3.00-4.00	No course grade requirements	13	55
6	3.50-4.00	C average or higher in all 3 course subject areas	1	55*

Note: \*Bethel University and Bethel Online are in different tiers for the current program year.

## K-12 Technology Infrastructure

One of the goals of Direct Admissions has been to use technology to ease the burden on K-12 and college staff. High schools were encouraged to leverage their existing Student Information System (SIS) vendor if possible. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) currently lists five approved SIS vendors that are compliant with

the requirements of technology from the U.S. Department of Education, referred to as “Ed-Fi”. Ed-Fi data submission involves uploading student-level data from a district, high school, or charter school's SIS directly to MDE's Ed-Fi servers. The steps to complete this process are unique to each SIS vendor. SIS vendors provide specific set-up guidance to their districts and charters on uploading data. The five vendors include: Infinite Campus, jmc, PowerSchool, Skyward, and Synergy/Edupoint. Building this functionality into existing K-12 SIS technologies minimizes the need for additional data sharing while also allowing the program to leverage existing K-12 communications through functionality in the SIS platforms.

At the year’s outset, OHE contacted the five SIS vendors and discussed compatibility of their SIS system and the school needs for Direct Admissions. The distribution of schools across the five platforms is detailed in Table 6.

**Table 6. Participating High Schools in Direct Admissions  
by Student Information System, 2024-2025**

Student Information System	Number of Direct Admissions High Schools
Infinite Campus	103
Jmc	21
PowerSchool	14
Skyward	14
Synergy/Edupoint	30
Total	<b>182</b>

The Direct Admissions program within the Infinite Campus (103) and jmc (21) SIS platforms were operational for the current program year. PowerSchool worked with OHE’s data team on an SIS-specific internal report and training, and successfully launched at the outset of fall 2024. Skyward is in initial design phase for building the program within the SIS for the fall of 2025. Synergy/Edupoint has been unresponsive to repeated agency outreach attempts. OHE staff provided the technical specifications required for the project to all SIS vendors, who in turn identified or are working on identifying existing functionality within their system to meet the requirements as well as functionality that would need to be developed. The technology developed was integrated into their software platform and made available to all their contracted high schools who participate in the program, at no cost to the schools.

In the event the high school felt they were unable to utilize their SIS due to staffing or other mitigating factors, an alternative process is maintained by the agency. OHE worked with school and district staff to first identify similar functionality within their local SIS, usually a report or query that had the data needed to execute the program’s academic review. Schools were then given the option of completing the academic review via use of an Excel spreadsheet that OHE created, or by manual review. Notifications to students were also distributed via a Google Forms survey which collected student responses. Data files were created as part of the SIS software for transfer to OHE. OHE provided templates and instructions for creating the data file and uploading their student responses via secure web portal. The secure data portal served as the main hub for the exchange of data between high schools, OHE, and colleges. OHE monitored program activity via the data uploads to ensure fidelity



of implementation and to troubleshoot participation at a student or school level as needed. Figure A2 in the Appendices details the overall Direct Admissions data flow for the program, including the transitions between the various program partners:

- OHE has Joint Powers and Data Sharing Agreements in place for high schools, as well as Data Sharing Agreements with colleges, to securely transfer the data received via the student selection process;
- Districts and high schools use local technology to send a FERPA template notification to families to opt-out of the program;
- Districts and high schools use their local SIS platform or OHE-managed technology to produce a Direct Admissions report to conduct the academic review for student tier placement; generate the electronic student survey notification (printed letters are optional); and encourage students to respond within the platform or technology used to select institution(s) of preference;
- Districts and high schools use local technologies to send transcripts or work with students in submitting additional admissions' materials requested;
- Public, tribal, and private colleges and universities securely retrieve transferred student data in a timely manner and contact students through local communication and follow-up efforts regarding any specific next steps or applications needs.

## Program Outcomes

### Measures of Success: Implementation in the 2024-2025 Program Year

Success for Direct Admissions in 2024-2025 is measured by fidelity of implementation as well as student outcomes. Success in implementation of the program is achieved when the milestones shown in Table 7 are met. The program was successfully implemented for 2024-2025, with the exception of the number of participating high schools, which fell just short of the goal.

**Table 7. Milestones of Successful Implementation and Results for 2024-2025**

Milestone	Success Threshold	Results
College Participation	Continued participation by 50 or more Minnesota colleges	55 colleges participated in 2024-2025
High School Participation	200 or more high schools agree to participate	187 high schools sought to participate; 182 participated and 178 have the potential to fulfill program outcomes (with 165 schools reporting data as of submission of this report)
High School Participation	Geographic distribution achieved	High schools who indicated interest at the outset of summer comprised 56 counties across the state. Among students enrolled in grade 12 at a participating high school in 2024-2025, 53% of students attended a school in the 7-county Twin Cities region, and 47% were from among the remaining 49 counties.
High School Participation	More than 30% of students enrolled in 12 <sup>th</sup> grade at a participating high school are: 1) Eligible for free and reduced-price meals, OR 2) Are students from historically underserved populations	Of students enrolled in 12th grade at a participating high school, 43% identify as Black, Indigenous, and students of color, and 36% are eligible for free and reduced-price meals
Academic Tiers	Academic tiers are agreed to by all colleges and understood by participating high schools	Tiers agreed to by colleges opting in, and academic tier distribution results remained statistically proportional to the past two years. College survey data to follow in early Spring 2025
Academic Tiers	Academic tiers understood by participating high schools	Academic tier distribution results remained statistically proportional to past two years. High school survey data to follow in Spring 2025
Work Required	Work required of participating high schools and colleges is reasonable	High school survey data to follow in Spring 2025

Milestone	Success Threshold	Results
Launch date	First letters go to students in October 2024	First letters went out in August 2024

While this table is a point-in-time update on deliverables and student impact, there are numerous components the agency is gauging. OHE annually surveys both high school and college staff participating in the program to determine if the program met its implementation goals in the areas of academic tier thresholds, the reasonableness of work required, responsiveness of the agency and third parties, and program launch timing. In terms of program awareness and development as outcomes, 2024-2025 also saw a good deal of collaboration within the working groups for both K-12 and higher education partners, national media coverage highlighting the program and sharing phenomenal student stories, and continued progress with SIS technology vendors for future program development.

# Understanding Participation and Impact of Direct Admissions

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## Measures of Success: Student Outcomes for 2023-2024 Program Year

The success of Direct Admissions is measured by the following student outcome indicators:

- Number of admissions inquiries between October through July of the program year,
- FAFSA completion rate (indirect outcome),
- High school completion rate of seniors (indirect outcome),
- Immediate college enrollment rate of seniors, and
- Immediate in-state college enrollment rate of seniors.

When possible and appropriate, outcome indicators will be disaggregated by race and ethnicity, gender, free and reduced-price meals eligibility, school and district, and geography.

The following section presents data on two outcome metrics for Direct Admissions. These outcome metrics are:

- Percent of students that filed the FAFSA,
- Enrollment in a Minnesota college or university in fall after high school (preliminary data).

To evaluate the impact of the Direct Admissions program, outcome metrics are shown for participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students as compared to non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at participating high schools in 2023-2024. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on high school enrollment, high school graduation, and college enrollment, it should be noted that these outcomes do not control for all other forces potentially impacting the outcomes measured during this period.

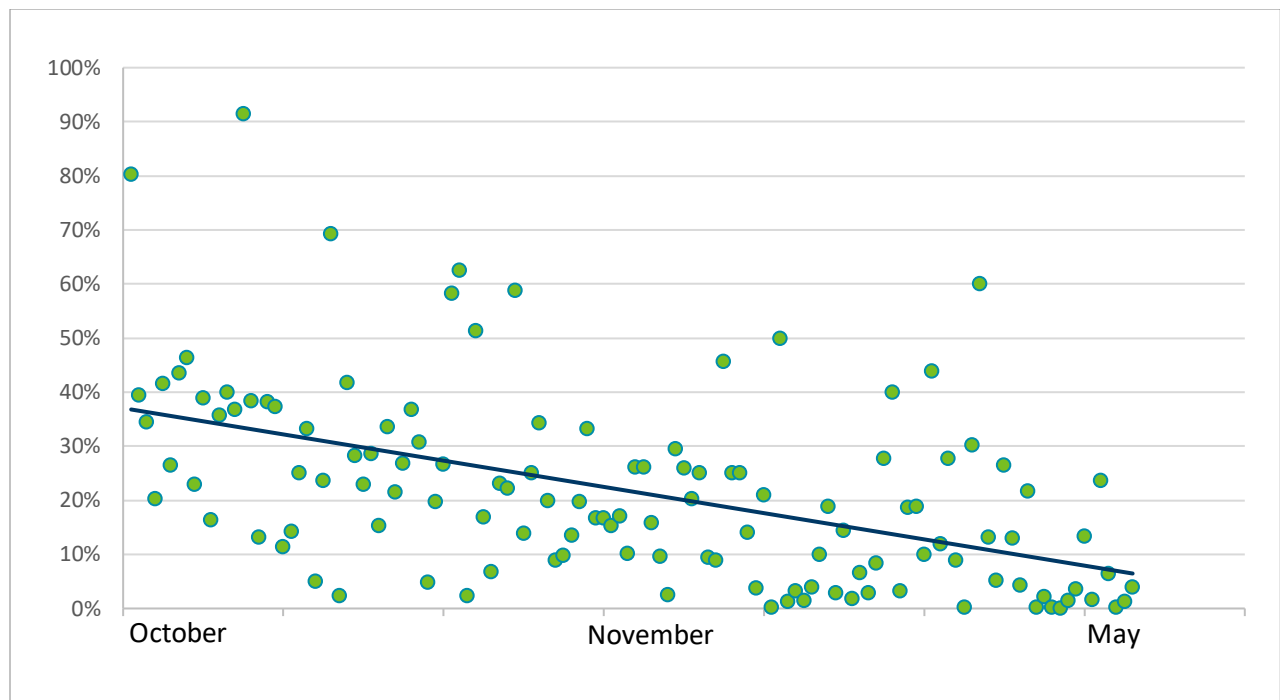
## Summary of Outcomes

Overall, students participating in Direct Admissions generally had higher FAFSA filing rates and higher college enrollment rates as compared to non-participants. This remained largely true when data was disaggregated by sex, race and ethnicity, and eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. In addition, high schools participating in Direct Admissions during the 2023-2024 academic year had higher FAFSA filing rates and higher college enrollment rates as compared to the two years immediately preceding participation in Direct Admissions.

In the 2023-2024 school year 120 high schools participated in Direct Admissions and over 20,000 students received a personalized Direct Admissions letter. Of those students, 4,858 students requested Direct Admissions to a participating college or university. The 4,858 students represent 22% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in participating high schools in 2023-2024. Participation rates varied by timing of the student notification. The program year ended with 34,712 total inquiries from 120 reporting high schools. On average, students participating in Direct Admissions selected four institutions they wished to request proactive admissions from. Of all students responding, 85% chose ten or less institutions to request proactive admission to, and 18% chose only one institution.

As more schools participate in Direct Admissions, and as schools participate longer, it is expected that the participation rate will increase due to better awareness of the program; earlier set-up and implementation of the program; and improved integration with district-sponsored college and career exploration activities. Statistics about participation by school can be found on Figure 2.

**Figure 2 Percent of 12th Grade Students Participating in Direct Admissions at Participating High Schools by Date Survey First Sent, 2023-2024**



Note: OHE received a greater number of data transmissions between October and November than between November and May. X axis does not reflect a consistent distribution of time.

## Data Sources

Data to determine outcomes of students participating in Direct Admissions comes from the following sources:

- Direct Admissions student participation data was collected by OHE from the student's high school.
- Enrollment data for all 12<sup>th</sup> graders enrolled at a Minnesota public or charter school and their demographics was provided by the Minnesota Department of Education. This is the same file used by OHE for Minnesota's FAFSA Completion Goal reporting.
- FAFSA information was provided by the U.S. Department of Education to the Office of Higher Education for all Minnesota residents. OHE receives this file in order to administer state financial aid programs.
- Data on preliminary college enrollment was drawn from the Office of Higher Education's MN Aid system which includes all students enrolled in college between July 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024 and eligible for a Minnesota State Grant by having enrolled in a Minnesota institution participating in state financial aid and completing the FAFSA or other state aid application.

- Data on college enrollment in Minnesota is drawn from the Office of Higher Education’s student-level enrollment database. This data is submitted by colleges following the end of each academic term. Fall term data is not yet available for students enrolled in grade 12 in 2023-2024.
- Data on college enrollments outside of Minnesota will be drawn from Minnesota’s Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDs) which receives data on Minnesota students enrolling in college outside of Minnesota from the National Student Clearinghouse. This data is not yet available for students enrolled in grade 12 in 2023-2024.

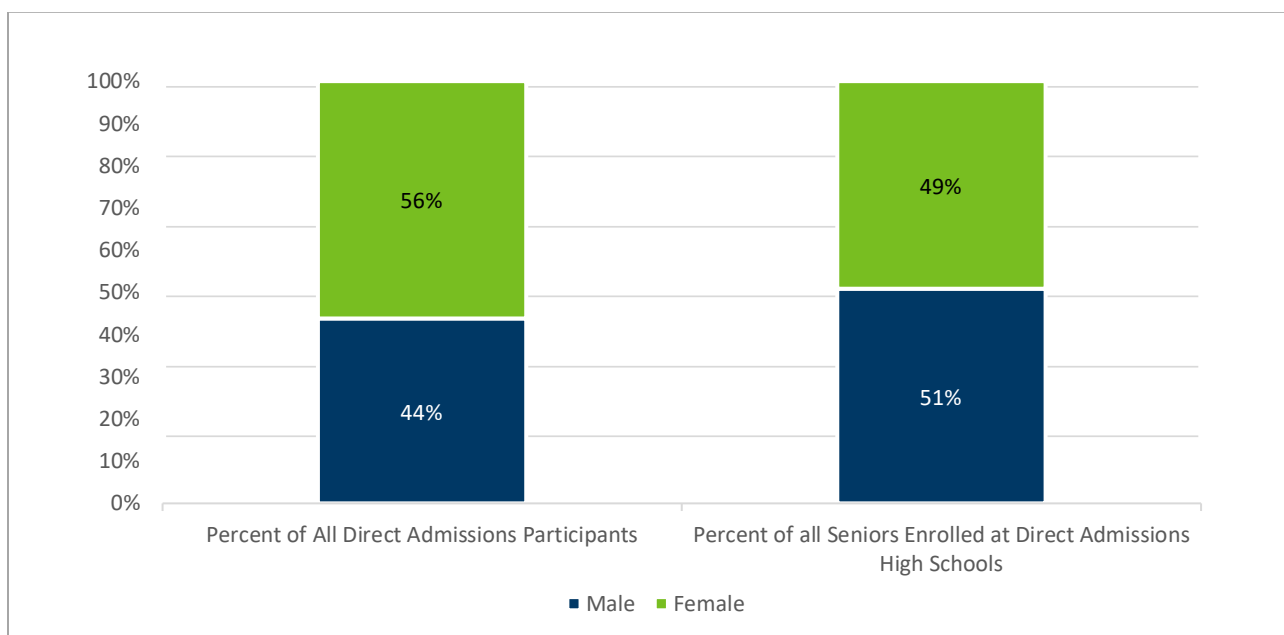
## Demographics of Participants

The following section presents data on the demographics of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students participating in Direct Admissions.

### Gender

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 56% identified as female, and 44% as male as shown in figure 3. This distribution varies from all enrolled 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, of whom 49% identified as female and 51% as male. As a result, the participation rate in Direct Admissions was lower for students identifying as male (16%) as compared to those students identifying as female (22%).

**Figure 3 Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Participating in Direct Admissions by Sex 2023-2024**

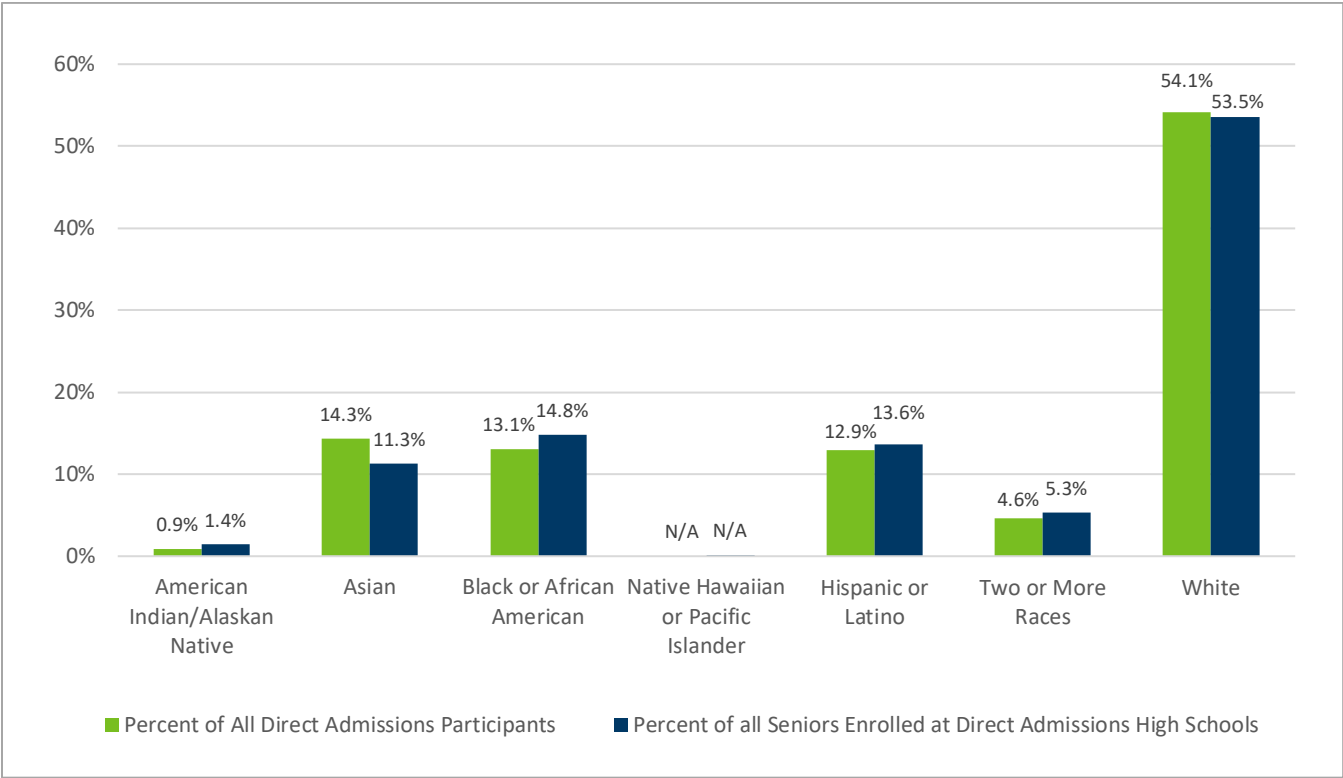


### Race and Ethnicity

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 54% identified as White, 13% as Hispanic or Latino, 13% as Black, 14% as Asian, 5% as two or more races, and <1% as American Indian or Alaskan Native (per federal definitions of American Indian and Alaskan Native). Fewer than 10 students identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

This distribution varies from all 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at participating high schools of whom 54% identified as White. The slight over-representation of students identifying as White or Asian compares to underrepresentation of students identifying as Hispanic or Latino (14%), Black or African American (15%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (1%) as illustrated in figure 4. As a result, the participation rate in Direct Admissions was lower for students identifying as Hispanic or Latino (18%), Black or African American (17%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (12%) as compared to those students identifying as White (19%).

**Figure 4 Percentage of 12th Grade Students Participating in Direct Admissions by Race and Ethnicity 2023-2024**

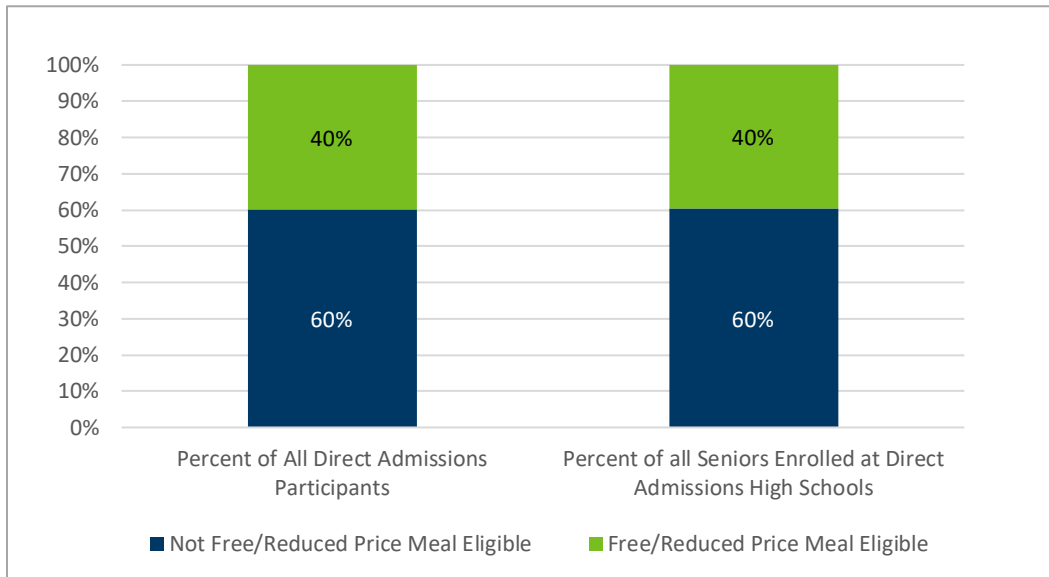


**Free or Reduced-Price Meal Benefit Eligibility**

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 40% were eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits, and 60% were not eligible. This distribution mirrors the distributions for all 12th grade students at participating high schools as illustrated by Figure 5. As a result, the participation in Direct Admissions is similar for eligible students (19%) as compared to ineligible students (19%).



**Figure 5 Percentage of 12th Grade Students Participating in Direct Admissions by Free or Reduced-Price Meal Eligibility 2023-2024**



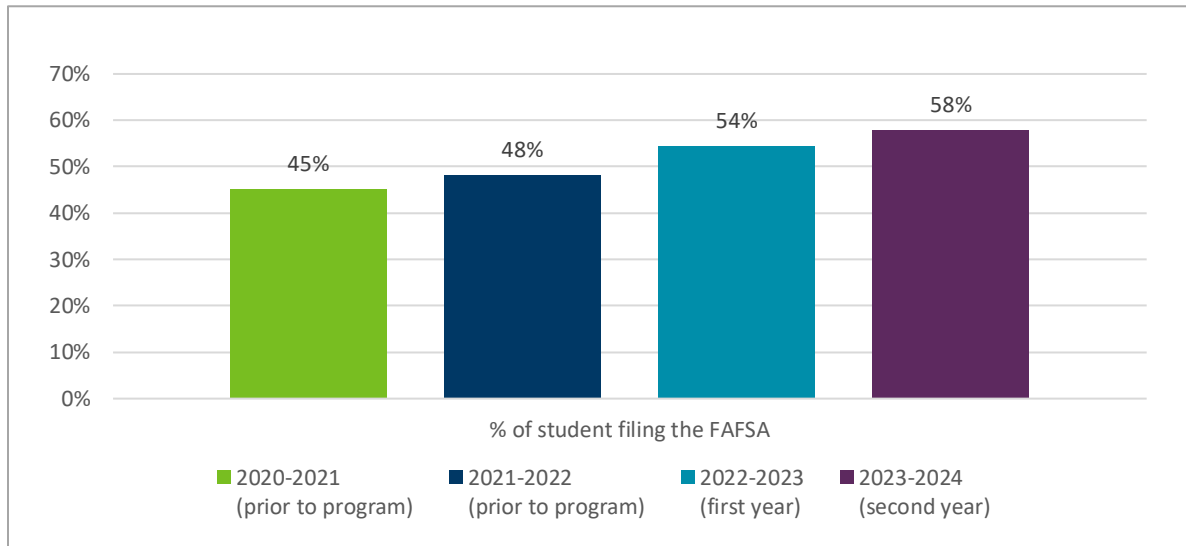
## Filed the FAFSA

One measure of intent to enroll in college is student completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or state aid application. While not all students complete the FAFSA or state aid application, it is a requirement to be eligible for federal and state financial aid. It may also be required by the college to receive institutional grants and scholarships. To allow appropriate comparisons given the limitations discussed, data from the three preceding years is included in this analysis.

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 76% filed a FAFSA as compared to 50% of all 12<sup>th</sup> grade high school graduates. Overall, the portion of 12th grade students at a participating high school who filed a FAFSA increased steadily from 45% in 2020-2021 (prior to DA program) to 58% in 2023-2024 (the second year of the program), illustrated in figure 6. It should be noted that this increase in FAFSA completion is particularly significant given that there were well documented delays in the launch of the FAFSA application due to challenges with the federal implementation of the FAFSA Simplification Act. According to the National College Attainment Network (NCAN) which tracks FAFSA completion rates for graduating high school seniors, there was an overall decrease of -7.4% nationally in FAFSA completion rates for 2023-2024 cohort. According to NCAN estimates, Minnesota overall had a decrease of -6.3% for the class of 2024 cohort, making it even more noteworthy that the Direct Admissions schools saw increases in FAFSA completion<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> National College Attainment Network. (2024, February 2). NCAN's FAFSA tracker - 2024-25 FAFSA cycle. National College Attainment Network. Retrieved February 13, 2024, from <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/bill.debaun.national.college.access.network/viz/NCANsFAFSATracker-2024-25FAFSACycle/HomePage>

**Figure 6 Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at a Direct Admissions Participating High School Filing a FAFSA Over Time**

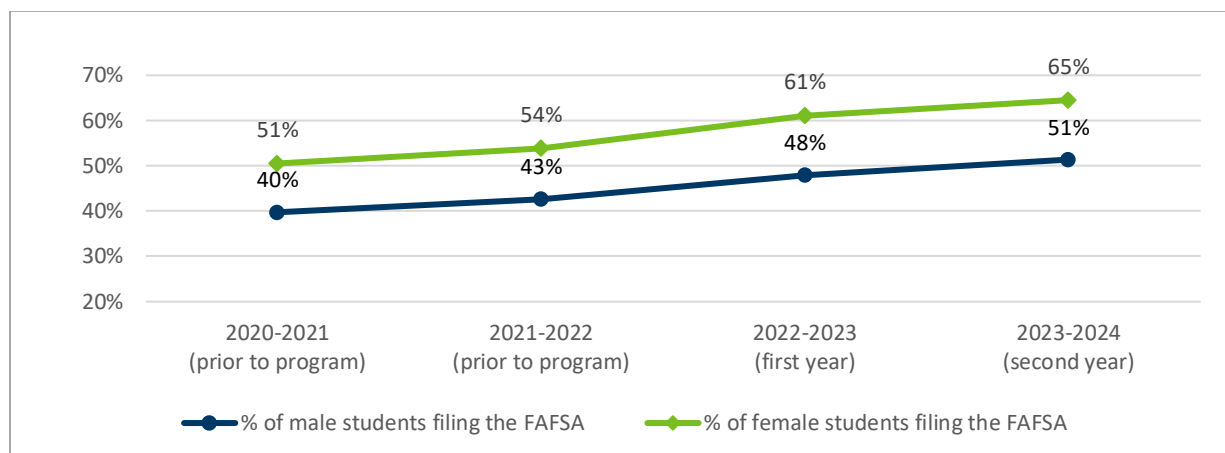


### FAFSA Filing by Sex

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 70% of students identifying as male and participating in Direct Admissions filed a FAFSA as compared to 48% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as male at a participating high school. This compares to 80% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as female and participating in Direct Admissions as compared to 60% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as female at a participating high school.

Overall, 51% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as male at a participating high school in 2023-2024 filed a FAFSA, which compares to 48%, 43% and 40% in the preceding three years, as shown in Figure 7. In comparison, 65% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as female at a participating high school in 2023-2024 filed a FAFSA, which compares to 61%, 54% and 51% in the preceding three years.

**Figure 7 Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at a Direct Admissions Participating High School Filing a FAFSA Over Time by Sex**

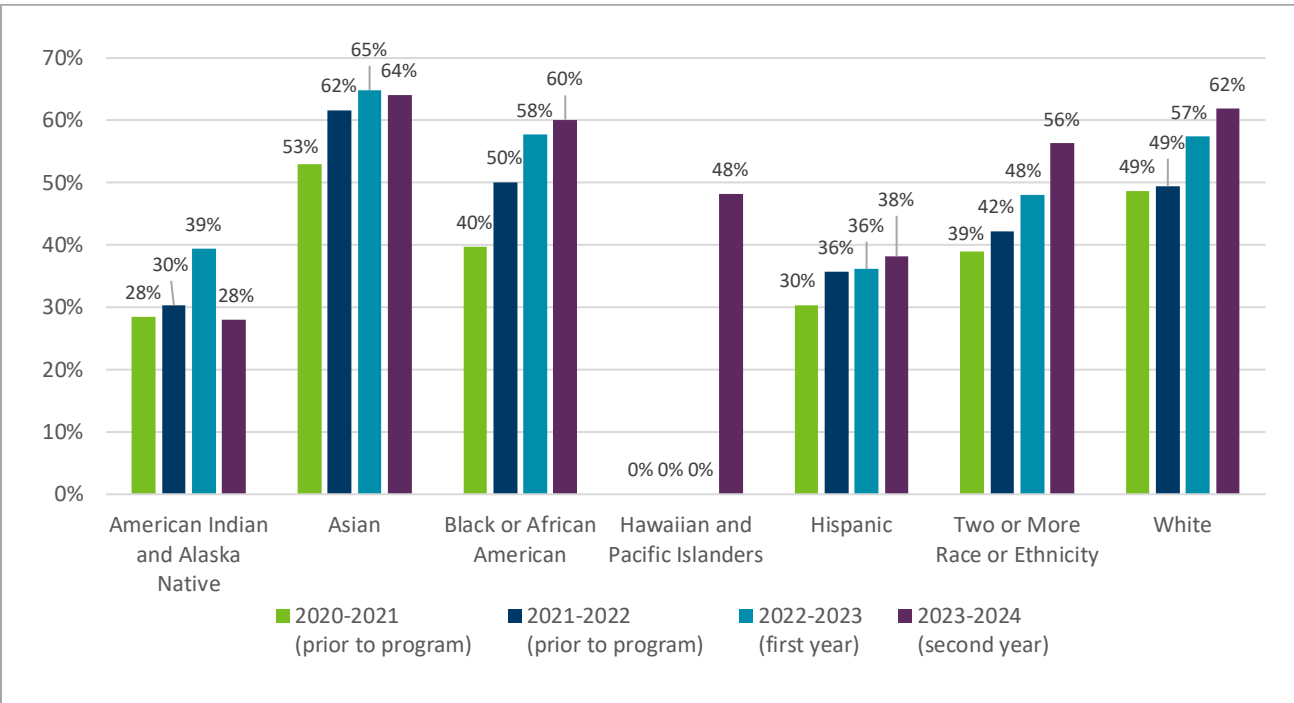


## FAFSA Filing by Race and Ethnicity

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 77% of students identifying as Asian filed a FAFSA, as compared to 60% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as Asian at a participating high school. Higher completion rates were found across all race and ethnicity groups among participants as compared to non-participants. Participants identifying as White, Black or African American, two or more races or Hispanic or Latino also had FAFSA filing rates (77%, 83%, 76%, and 60% respectively) that exceeded those of their non-participating peers (58%, 55%, 52%, and 33% respectively).

Overall, 64% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, both participants and non-participants, identifying as Asian at participating high school in 2023-2024 filed a FAFSA, which compares to 65%, 62%, and 53% in the preceding three years, as shown in figure 8. In comparison, the increase over time in FAFSA filing rates is seen for all race and ethnicity groups except for American Indian and Alaska Native students, for whom the rates decreased during 2023-2024.

**Figure 8 Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at a Direct Admissions Participating High School Filing a FAFSA Over Time by Race and Ethnicity**

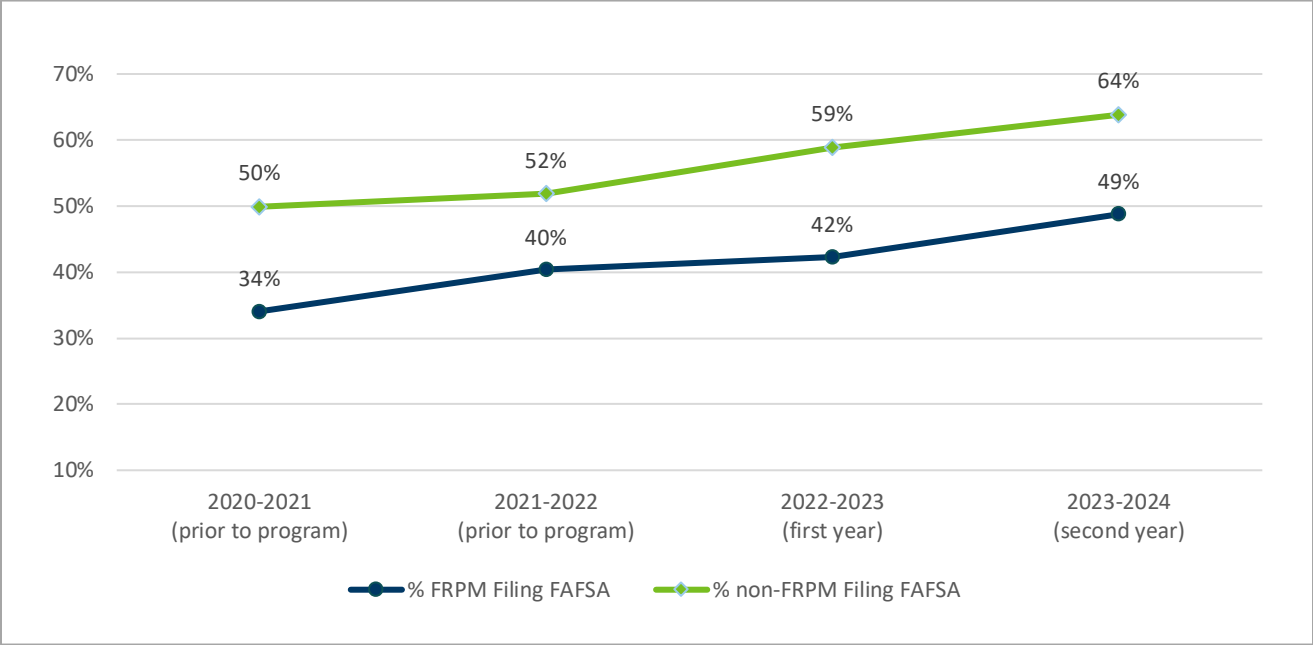


## FAFSA Filing by Free or Reduced-Price Meal Benefit Eligibility

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 72% of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals filed a FAFSA, as compared to 43% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students eligible for free or reduced-price meals at a participating high school. This compares to 78% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals and participating in Direct Admissions, as compared to 61% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals at a participating high school.

Both students eligible for free or reduced-price meals and those not eligible showed increases in FAFSA filing rates over the most recent three years. Overall, 64% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals at participating high school in 2022-2023 filed a FAFSA, which compares to 59%, 52%, and 50% in the preceding three years, as shown in figure 9. In comparison, 49% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students eligible for free or reduced-price meals at participating high school in 2023-2024 filed a FAFSA, which compares to 42%, 40%, and 34% in the preceding three years.

**Figure 9 Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at a Direct Admissions Participating High School Filing a FAFSA Over Time by Free or Reduced-Price Meal Benefit Eligibility**

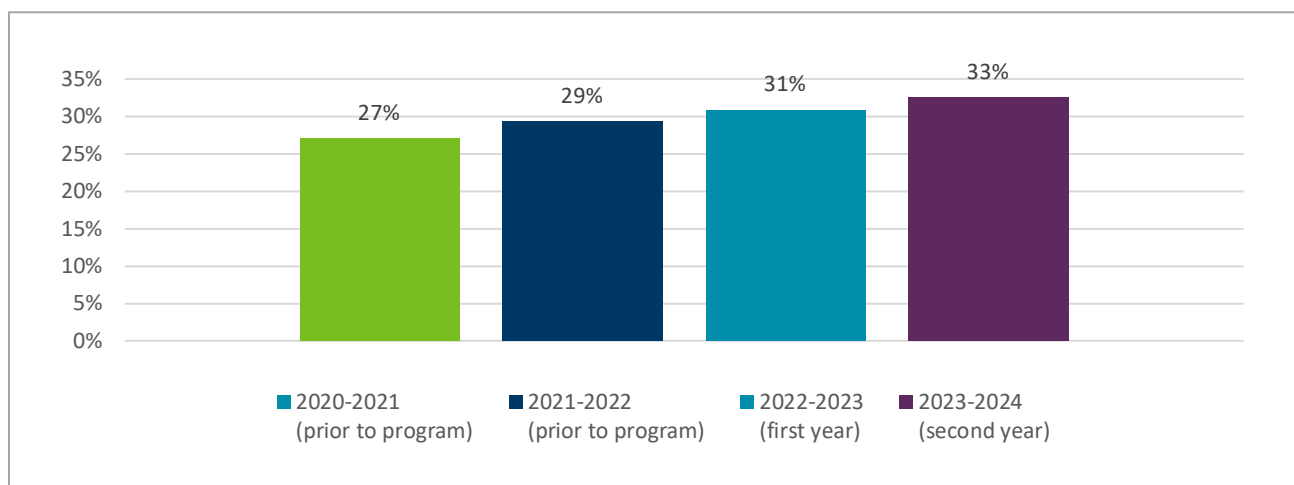


**Enrollment in a Minnesota College in Fall after High School (preliminary data)**

Preliminary fall enrollment in college is measured by presence of a State Grant record for the student. All Minnesota high school graduates who are Minnesota residents and whose families meet income requirements are eligible for a Minnesota State Grant if enrolling at a participating college. This number would not include students who choose to enroll in college in another state, students who enroll in college but did not apply for state financial aid using the FAFSA or state aid application, or students who do not file the FAFSA by choice due to family income and perceived aid. These numbers will likely only increase as final data becomes available throughout the year, a metric that will be reflected in next year’s annual report.

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 46% were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation as compared to 28% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at a participating high school. Overall, 33% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at participating high school in 2023-2024 were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation, which compares to 31%, 29%, and 27% in the preceding three years, as shown in figure 10.

**Figure 10 Percentage of Students at a Direct Admissions Participating High School Enrolling in a Minnesota College Following High School Graduation (Preliminary Data) Over Time**

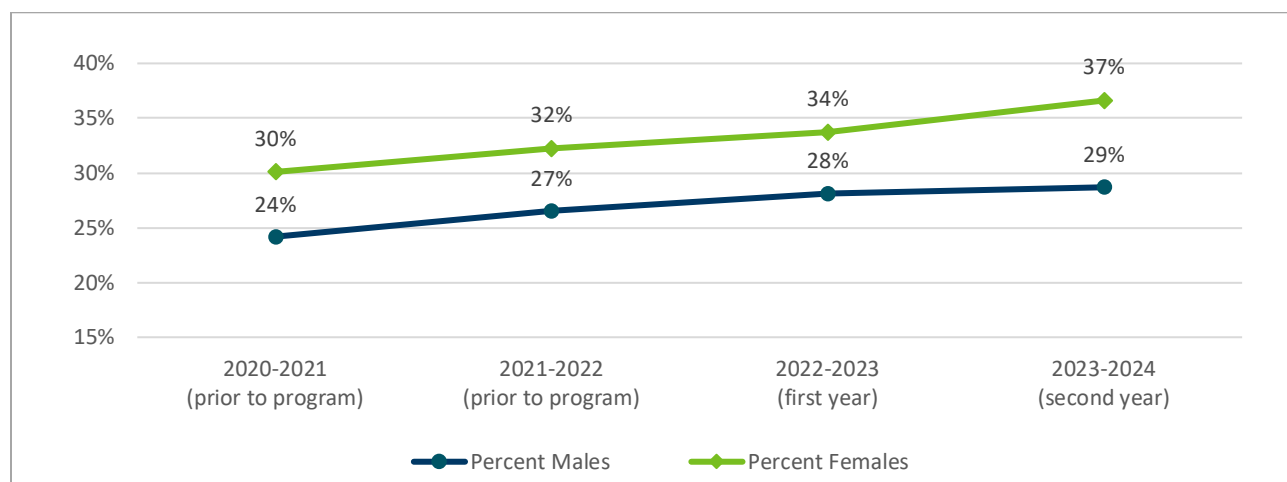


### Enrollment in a Minnesota College in Fall after High School (preliminary data) by Sex

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 47% of students identifying as male were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation as compared to 25% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as male at a participating high school. This compares to 53% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as female and participating in Direct Admissions as compared to 32% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as female at a participating high school.

Overall, 29% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as male at a participating high school in 2023-2024 were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation, this compares to 28%, 27%, and 24% in the preceding three years, as shown in figure 11. In comparison, 37% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as female at a participating high school in 2023-2024 were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation, which compares to 34%, 32%, and 30% in the preceding two years.

**Figure 11 Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at a Participating High School Enrolling in a Minnesota College (Preliminary Data) Over Time by Sex**

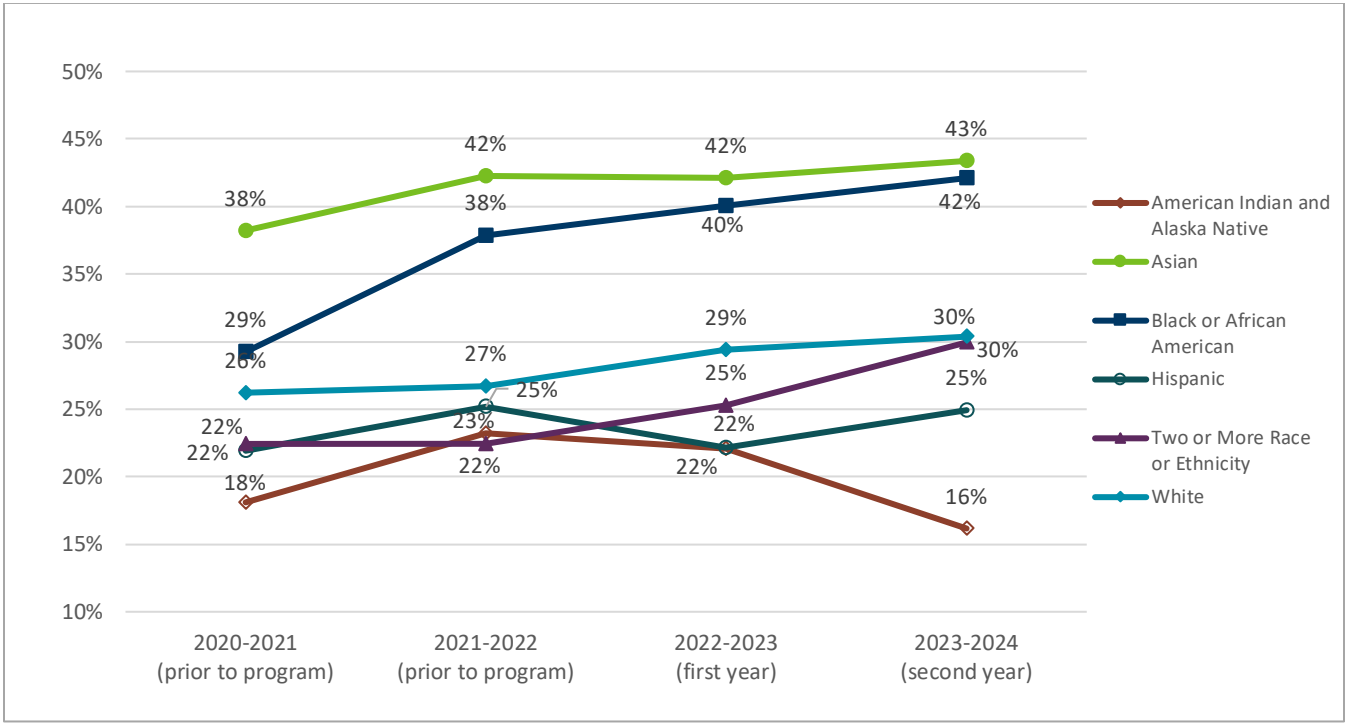


# Enrollment in a Minnesota College in Fall after High School (preliminary data) by Race and Ethnicity

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 63% of students identifying as Black or African American were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation as compared to 38% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students identifying as Black or African American. Higher preliminary enrollment rates were found across all race and ethnicity groups among participants as compared to non-participants. Participants identifying as White, Asian, two or more races or Hispanic or Latino also had preliminary enrollment rates (46%, 57%, 47%, and 47% respectively) that exceeded those of their non-participating peers (27%, 39%, 27%, and 20% respectively).

Overall, 42% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, both participants and non-participants, identifying as Black or African American at participating high school in 2023-2024 were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation, which compares to 40%, 38%, and 29% in the preceding three years, as shown in figure 12. In comparison, the increase over time in preliminary enrollment rates is seen for all races and ethnicity groups except students identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native for whom the rates decreased for the last two years.

**Figure 12 Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at a Direct Admissions Participating High School Enrolling in a Minnesota College (Preliminary Data) Over Time by Race and Ethnicity**



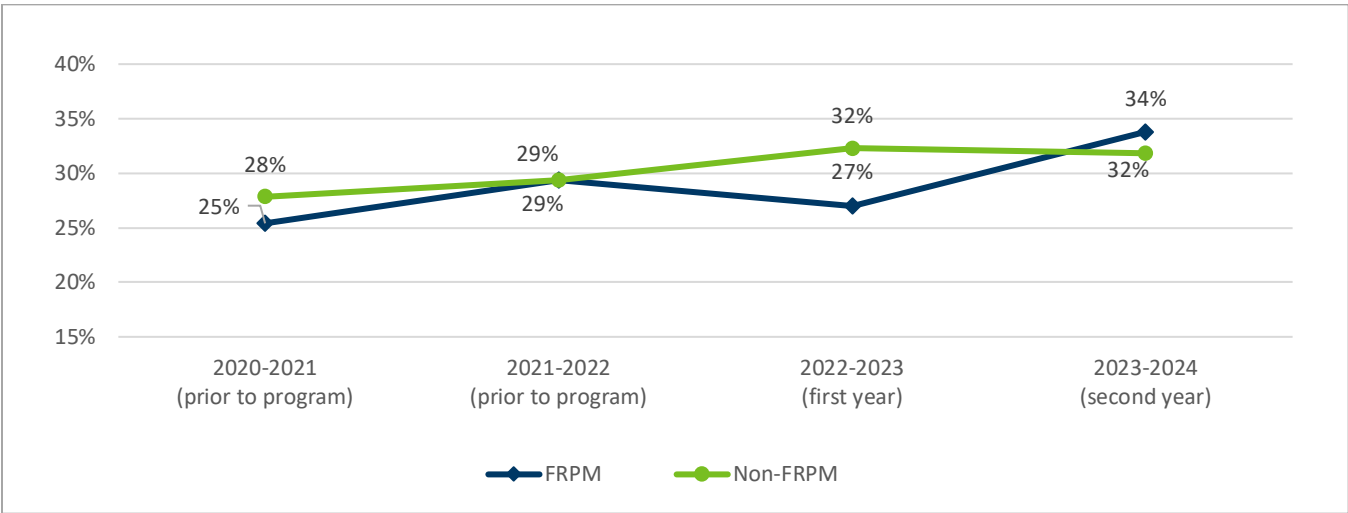
Note: As the program continues to expand, OHE will continue to assess and identify possible areas for intervention when there are disparate outcomes for particular student populations. While the overall trends identified in this year's report are positive for almost all categories of students, the findings for Native American students indicate a need for further study for this population. An important disclaimer is the number of students in the program's overall cohort. In terms of Native American students by year, the 2022-2023 program cohort had 99 students (1%); 2023-2024 had 579 students (3%); and the current program year of 2024-2025 has 902 students (3%), a sizable increase over the course of the last two program years.

# Enrollment in a Minnesota College in Fall after High School (preliminary data) by Free or Reduced-Price Meal Benefit Eligibility

Of 2023-2024 Direct Admissions participants, 54% of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation as compared to 29% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students eligible for free or reduced-price meals. This compares to 48% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals and participating in Direct Admissions and 28% of non-participating 12<sup>th</sup> grade students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals at a participating high school.

Both students eligible for free or reduced-price meals and those not eligible showed increases in preliminary enrollment over the most recent four years. Overall, 32% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students not eligible for free or reduced-price meals at participating high school in 2023-2024 enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation, which compares to 32%, 29% and 28% in the preceding three years, as shown in figure 13. In comparison, 34% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students eligible for free or reduced-price meals at participating high school in 2023-2024 were found enrolled in a Minnesota college in fall after high school graduation, which compares to 27%, 29% and 25% in the preceding three years.

**Figure 13 Percentage of 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at a Direct Admissions Participating High School Enrolling in a Minnesota College (Preliminary Data) Over Time by Free or Reduced-Price Meal Benefit Eligibility**



## Future Research

Additional data elements will be added as the identified data sources are made available to OHE. These future additional indicators will include:

- High school completion rate of seniors (indirect outcome),
- Immediate college enrollment rate of seniors (final data), and
- Immediate in-state college enrollment rate of seniors (final data).

In addition, OHE will add data disaggregated by school/district and geography when possible and appropriate.



## Challenges and Recommendations

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The Direct Admissions program grew substantially from the pilot year of 2022-2023 and the second cohort of 2023-2024. This growth afforded thousands more students the opportunity to benefit from the program but also required significant resources of time and staff capacity for OHE to ensure successful expansion of the model.

OHE is committed to learning as the program grows and to continuous improvement of the program delivery model so that all partners (students, high schools, and participating colleges and universities) continue to benefit. A critical component to scaling the program is to be transparent about the challenges encountered in the early years as well as identification for strategies to address those challenges.

Based on the student outcome data, Direct Admissions continues to be a successful state initiative with significant promise to improve the college admissions experience for Minnesota high school students. That promise will only be enhanced as OHE continues to make process improvements in the following four areas: administration, communications with students, technology, and fidelity of implementation.

### Administration

One of the greatest challenges in administering the program remains K-12 staffing. Direct Admissions is not an expensive program to administer, but its success relies on high school counselors and related staff allocating approximately 40 to 80 hours to set up and execute the program. Implementation of Direct Admissions requires that high schools complete their assessment of each student's on-track for graduation status as well as the assignment of each student to an academic tier between June and mid-October. In addition, staff ensure FERPA notifications/Tennessen warnings are sent to families prior to testing and calibrating the software used in notifying students. Given that most staff are contracted through June of the academic calendar year, and then do not return until August, some of this work must occur either at the end of the school year or immediately at the outset of the next. For schools with limited staffing, finding the hours needed can be a challenge. Schools have the option of contracting for work in July, but not all staff are available. Funding provided by the state can be utilized for reimbursing schools for some of the hours required of staff. Once a school has completed its first year in the program, the need for staff time is reduced in subsequent years as set-up tasks only need to be maintained. However, time is still required to complete the assessment of students' on-track for graduation status, as well as the assignment and quality assurance of each student to an academic tier. In addition, unplanned staff outages or turnover set back a few schools or districts that were otherwise initially on track to meet the preferred October notification sending timeline.

To address some of the abovementioned staffing challenges from the prior program year, the building of a "team roster" at the local level was created through the program application process for newly joining high schools. In the event a staff member went on leave or took a new role elsewhere, additional contacts were already known to the agency. More frequent and consistent trainings were also offered for newly joining high schools. All trainings were recorded and posted to various agency channels. A robust mentor cohort was established this year, with a dozen mentors from veteran high school participants connecting with new high schools to share best practices and tips at monthly virtual sessions. Colleges also had crossover sessions

established throughout the year which ensured consistent messaging and insight into any staff changes that may have occurred.

Another administrative challenge was delay in completing the necessary contracts to allow for data sharing and fund transfers. Both Joint Powers and Data Sharing Agreements are needed to ensure secure data transfer and compliance are met, in addition to remuneration for program costs. For this year, three high schools were discontinued for not fulfilling the contracts in enough time to successfully launch the program.. The sheer number and volume of contracts for the program requires a great deal of agency time. Streamlining these processes will be critical as the program scales. Efforts to streamline continued this past year as the contracts were combined into a single document for the primary school signatory, as well as sent in the month preceding the summer break.

A final administrative challenge is the sending of student transcripts to college postsecondary partners. Unlike for our SIS partners, there is no universally approved slate of e-transcript vendors for high school or district partners to utilize, and with numerous vendors in the space, there are also varying costs, practices, and processes for students to obtain and route their official transcript to Direct Admissions postsecondary partners of their choice. Some high school partners choose to utilize their program funding for an e-transcript vendor service, though the costs usually exceed the program funding allocated to high schools.

## Communications with Students

The success of Direct Admissions relies on strategically timed and easily understood communication for students and their parents. In this area, several challenges occurred, largely around getting the Direct Admissions notifications and information to students prior to November. Numerous web-based, print, and social media assets were created and translated to support the initial Direct Admissions communication to students. Despite these tools, and even with program staff support, several high schools and districts were late in getting their communications out to students.. This was largely due to understanding the technology involved in sending out initial communications, and occasionally to staffing changes or unavailability on a short-term basis. Other times, this staffing unavailability was due to loss of key staff in technology or communications' areas of the secondary schools.

One of the ongoing goals for the program is ensuring that students understand what the Direct Admissions program offers and what their next steps should be. Behavioral “nudging” of students to act in a timely manner to select their colleges of choice remains key. Overall, the agency has started to build out better brand awareness and has expanded program outreach efforts broadly. Additionally, specific resources have been developed for earlier grades, particularly with tools around types of participating higher education institutions and ways to pay for college. This year, the most successful high schools leveraged every channel available to them, including print and social media, advisory meetings for seniors, press releases, and more. Earlier introduction and awareness of the program will continue as it grows and becomes imbedded in the college-going fabric of the high schools.

There's also more work to do in collaborating on the college side of communications with students. High school staff have requested that communications following the initial notification be standardized on a set timeline (e.g., prompts 3-5 days after sending the initial notification). Anecdotal reports from some high school

counselors reported that some students were confused about institution-specific next steps, ranging from applying for free to the college with a promo code to confirming their data in a college-specific portal. On the college side of communications with students, there remains a need to continue to build out more resources to aid students and families in understanding the program and its nuances across institutions. As such, the agency built out or enhanced several resources. New communication vehicles included a student center for the program, piloting podcasts on college search and fit factoring, new video content on the program and financial aid, and sustaining the junior year marketing campaign for participating high schools.

## Technology

Direct Admissions uses local SIS platforms and data sharing agreements with high schools and districts to assess and share the data needed to ensure students get their program survey notifications in a timely fashion. The success of the program is dependent on high schools having implemented and being aware of information, software updates, and processes within their local SIS technology to complete the academic review and send notifications to students. Without the ability to produce these reports, alternatively maintained technology and manual review are needed at the high school. Thus, another anticipated challenge is for the Office of Higher Education to onboard and create additional training manuals for the remaining SIS vendors who will be rolling out the program in the next school year. This set-up can be quite substantial at the outset as there are multiple steps involved. First, a school must assess if the student is on-track for graduation through the academic planner tool. The academic planner details the graduation requirements for the district, the courses that meet those requirements, and the student's course enrollments and grade information. Once set up, on-track for graduation is assessed via a report. Next is the assignment to academic tiers for Direct Admissions. The system should have a pre-programmed report that reviews the students unweighted cumulative GPA and course grades in English, math, and science to assign the academic tiers. Both of these reports are then reviewed and quality assured by counselors for accuracy and student placement. Without the ability to produce these reports, high school counselors must manually review the on-track for graduation status, likely in an Excel spreadsheet, and manually review the unweighted grade point average and course grades to assign tiers. The manual review process increases the time needed for staff to set-up the program prior to the start of each academic year. For the current program year, two of the five MDE-approved SIS vendors have built Direct Admissions into their technology platforms, and a third has the report component of the academic review completed. A fourth has begun production. The remaining SIS vendor has been largely unresponsive to the agency's attempts to connect and engage in dialogue. The hope is that by the start of the fall semester, four of the five SIS partners will have the program built within their technology platforms, and there will also be a simplified, streamlined tier structure for the academic review as well.

The sheer amount of program data is immense, and the agency continuously evaluates how to leverage economies of scale. We are working on streamlined efficiencies for our SIS partners and OHE-managed tools and have plans to centralize several operations and processes that should reduce the program onus on SIS and high school partners while ensuring student selections and survey data make their way to college partners as quickly as possible.

## Fidelity of Implementation

The final area of program challenges involves fidelity of implementation. For Direct Admissions to be successful, it is critical that the program provide information to the student as soon as possible once the student begins their senior year. Ideally, seniors in the 2024-2025 academic year should have received their Direct Admissions notifications between August and October. These notifications were sometimes delayed when schools were not able to complete set up tasks during the summer. Additionally, several schools did not complete the initial contractual steps, and several more failed to implement the sending of communications altogether in the program year. A goal for future years will be to ensure that all notifications are sent to students and parents by October 31<sup>st</sup> at the latest to build on existing College Knowledge month activities and to take full advantage of program benefits (including application fee waivers and connecting to college staff early in senior year). This also ensures that students have the program information prior to participating in events planned at or by their school in early fall. This is essential given the admissions' profession's landscape of the fall, when college fairs, large-scale college access events, and external vendor timelines go into effect. One unanticipated challenge of the program is that of changing the paradigm of college admissions and student skepticism and disbelief about the ease of the process. On occasion the agency or high school partners field questions around the veracity of the program, namely that it seems too good to be true. As students learn more and engage in the program, their enthusiasm only grows.

## Recommendations

The challenges discussed in the prior section are not insurmountable, and with planning and assistance from K-12 staff, SIS technology vendors, and postsecondary partners, OHE anticipates evolving Direct Admissions into a more effective and successful program each year. Recommendations to address these challenges include the following:

- Add 100 additional high schools to the upcoming year's cohort of participants, bringing the number of participating high schools to around 300 in 2025-2026, and continue to incorporate private/parochial high schools who have interest in the program. Broaden alternative learning centers/program, online high school, tribal affiliated, and competency-based high schools' participation;
- Through efforts to centralize the survey sending process, the agency intends to explore summary data reporting available to high schools and college partners;
- The agency also intends to implement a simplified, streamlined tier structure for the academic review, one that supports fidelity of implementation and communication with the public as the program continues to scale;
- Continue to work with high schools earlier in the year to ensure key benchmarks and deliverables are met for initial program set-up and academic survey delivery prior to November 1st;
- Continue to work with schools to ensure full use of existing SIS technology to support Direct Admissions, including on-boarding additional SIS vendors and leveraging manuals and supplemental tools to actualize the program;
- Continue to standardize student communications and communication timelines with regards to initial prompts for follow-up at specified times from high school staff; initial contact from colleges; and

integrated follow-up messaging with FAFSA, MN DREAM Act, North Star Promise, Pell Grant, and State Grant information;

- Continue to expand upon and create new marketing content to augment program partner needs;
- Continue to sustain communities of practice for secondary partners that support the work and allow for organic best practices' sharing. These communities also serve as a "mentor program" for newly joining high schools to connect with veteran high school participants;
- Integrate more intentional crossover time between the two working advisory groups, in addition to a few optional all-participant virtual gatherings throughout fall months;
- In terms of prospective program partners, continue to expand to include longstanding community-based college-access organizations (CBOs), including Get Ready, Achieve, Blandin Foundation, and MN TRIO (more particularly for TRIO programs, Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search partners);
- For calendar outreach events and avenues (both virtual and off-site), continue to establish an OHE Direct Admissions' presence and brand-awareness at the following hallmarks of the admissions' calendar year: the fall's Minnesota School Counselors Association annual conference; Minnesota's National College Fair in October; the Minnesota Association for College Admissions Counseling's fall and spring Minnesota Education Fairs; and the Minnesota Association for Counselors of Color fall and spring college fairs;
- Collaborate with the Minnesota Department of Education in College Knowledge Month/Minnesota Goes to College Efforts throughout October.

## Scaling Direct Admissions Statewide

It is possible to scale Direct Admissions to all 800+ of Minnesota's public high schools (approximately 70,000 high school seniors). The Office of Higher Education recommends scaling the program over three to five years to all high schools due to the set-up work required and maintaining it as a voluntary program for schools to opt into. Faster scaling may be possible but would require increasing the Direct Admissions budget to support additional agency staff needed to run the program and to ensure fidelity of operation, appropriate use of data, and technology enhancements.

## Next Report

The next report on Direct Admissions Minnesota is due to the Legislature by February 1, 2026.

## Appendix A. Direct Admissions’ Participating High Schools, Community-based Partner Direct Service High Schools, and Colleges’ Tables

Figure A1. Direct Admissions Minnesota – Organizational Structures Diagram 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

### Direct Admissions Minnesota – Organizational Structures Diagram

updated: 08/01/2023

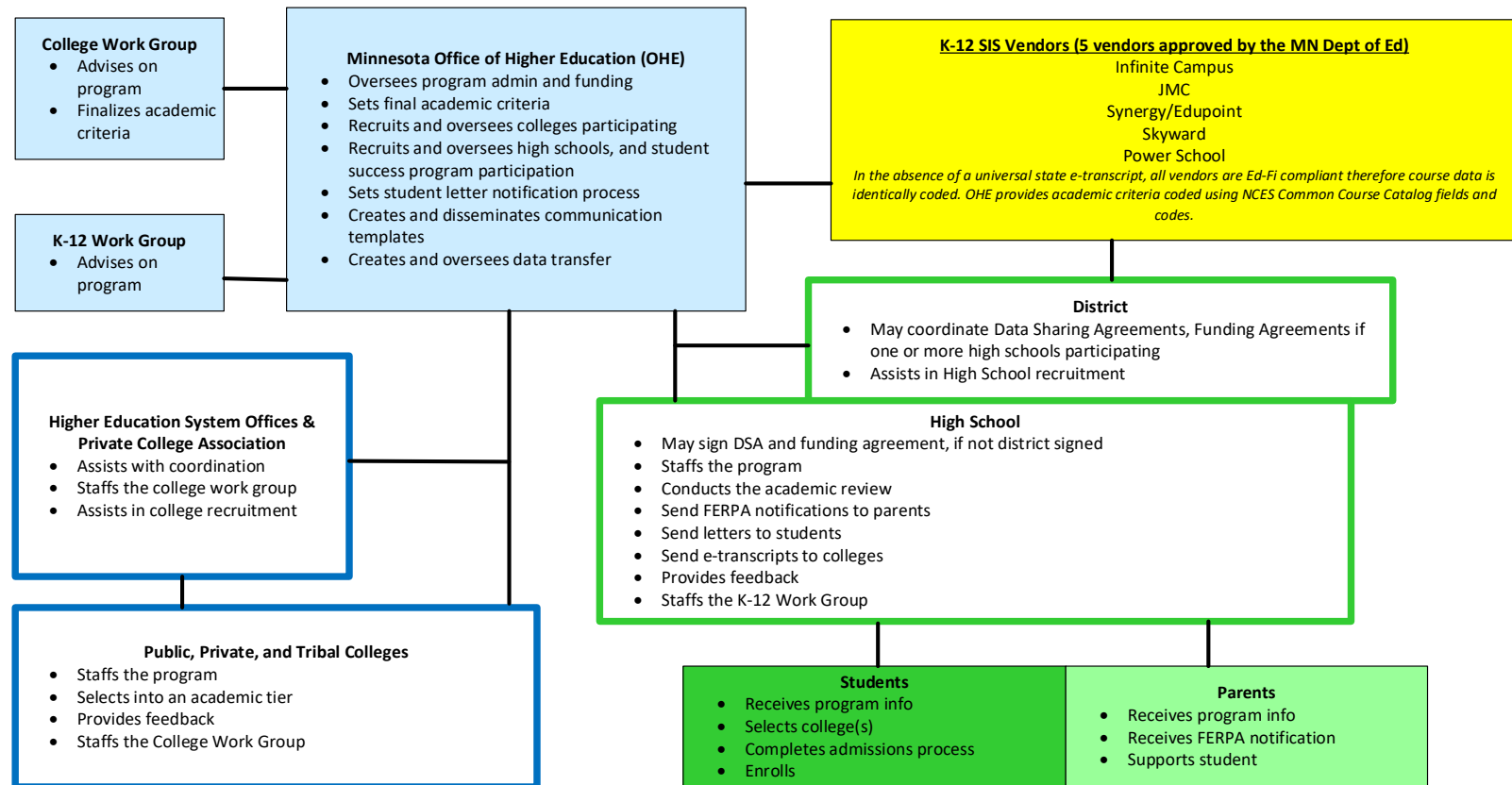
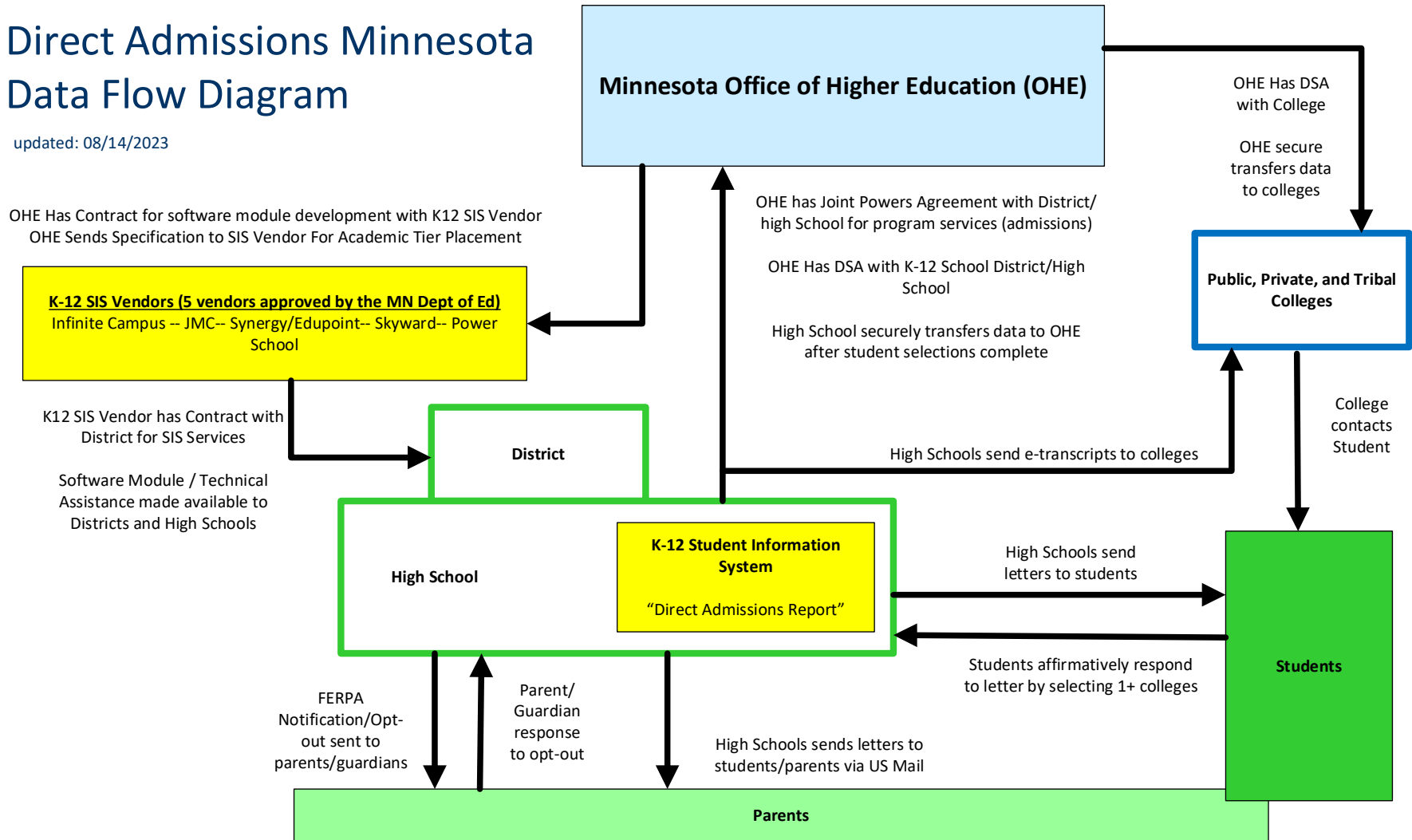


Figure A2. Direct Admissions Minnesota – Data Flow Diagram 2023-2024 and 2024-2025

## Direct Admissions Minnesota Data Flow Diagram

updated: 08/14/2023





**Table A1. Members of K-12 Secondary Advisory Workgroup of Direct Admissions, 2024-2025**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Joshua Omang	Detroit Lakes Senior High
Paul Marlin	Waseca Public Schools
Hannah Ramsey	Banaadir Academy
Emily Owens	Venture Academy High School
Brooke McGuire	Waseca Public Schools
Eric Gordee	Infinite Campus
Tiffany Gustin	Minnesota School Boards Association
Beth Barsness	Minnesota Department of Education
Jessica Cabeen	Austin Online Academy
Elizabeth (Lizzie) McNamara	Minneapolis Public Schools
BG Tucker	College Possible
Lindsay Pluger	College Possible
John Eschenbacher	Saint Paul Public Schools
Libby Fahrenkamp	Outreach & Marketing, Office of Higher Education
Aaron Salasek	Direct Admissions Coordinator, Office of Higher Education

**Table A2. Members of Postsecondary Advisory Workgroup of Direct Admissions, 2024-2025**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Robert Gould	Augsburg University
Stephanie Ruckel	Augsburg University
Jeff Lemke	Bethany Lutheran College
Christine Barnhouse	University of Saint Thomas
John Manning	Minnesota Private College Council
Ali Pickens-Opoku	Minnesota State System Office
Cynthia McDonald	Dunwoody College of Technology
Jennifer Hewerdine	Ridgewater College
Bib Lo	Saint Paul College
Alicia Zeone	Rochester Community and Technical College
John Brown	Saint Cloud State University
Tracy Diefenbach	White Earth Tribal and Community College
Ben Groff	Bethel University
Jen Rancour	Pine Technical College
Melissa Bert	University of Minnesota Morris
Libby Fahrenkamp	Outreach & Marketing, Office of Higher Education
Aaron Salasek	Direct Admissions Coordinator, Office of Higher Education

**Table A3. Participating High Schools for 2024-2025 (county indicated, alpha order by high school)**

<b>County Name</b>	<b>School Name</b>	<b>Direct Admissions Status</b>
Ramsey	622 Online High School	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	A. G. A. P. E. Teen Parent	Participating 2024-25
Washington	Access	Participating 2024-25
Freeborn	Albert Lea Area Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	ALC Gateway to College	Participating 2024-25
Stearns	Apollo Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Mower	Austin Area Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Mower	Austin Online Academy	Participating 2024-25
Mower	Austin Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Banaadir Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Clay	Barnesville Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Beacon ALP	Participating 2024-25
Sherburne	Becker Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Swift	Benson Area Learning Center	OHE Deferred start to 2025-2026
Swift	Benson Secondary	OHE Deferred start to 2025-2026
Faribault	Blue Earth Area Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	BlueSky Charter School	Participating 2024-25
Douglas	Brandon-Evansville High School	Participating 2024-25
Wilkin	Breckenridge Area Learning Program	Participating 2024-25
Wilkin	Breckenridge Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Brooklyn Center Early College Academy	OHE Deferred start to 2025-2026
Hennepin	Brooklyn Center High School	OHE Deferred start to 2025-2026
Wright	Buffalo Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Dakota	Burnsville High School	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 before launch
Hennepin	Camden High School (formerly Henry High)	Participating 2024-25
Goodhue	Cannon Falls Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Anoka	Centennial Area Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Anoka	Centennial High School	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Central Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Olmsted	Century Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Carver	Chanhassen High School	Participating 2024-25
Carver	Chaska High School	Participating 2024-25
Saint Louis	Chisholm Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Choice Academy	Participating 2024-25
Clearwater	Clearbrook-Gonvick Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Carlton	Cloquet Area ALC	Participating 2024-25
Carlton	Cloquet Senior	Participating 2024-25
Anoka	Columbia Heights Senior High	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 after launch
Ramsey	Community of Peace Academy High School	Participating 2024-25

County Name	School Name	Direct Admissions Status
Ramsey	Community School of Excellence High School	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Como Park Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Creative Arts Secondary School	Participating 2024-25
Pine	Crossroads Area Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	CVA Fusion High School (9-12)	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	CVA PASCAL Middle & High School (6-12)	Participating 2024-25
Becker	Detroit Lakes Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Eagle Ridge Academy Charter School	Participating 2024-25
Pine	East Central Senior Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Washington	East Ridge High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Eden Prairie Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Edina Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Edison High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	FAIR High	Participating 2024-25
Rice	Faribault Senior High	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 after launch
Polk	Fertile-Beltrami Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Washington	Forest Lake Area High School	Participating 2024-25
Sibley	GFW High School	Participating 2024-25
McLeod	Glencoe-Silver Lake Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Goodhue	Goodhue Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Gordon Parks High School	Participating 2024-25
Itasca	Grand Rapids Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Harding Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Dakota	Hastings Alternative Center	Participating 2024-25
Dakota	Hastings High School	Participating 2024-25
Clay	Hawley Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Otter Tail	Henning Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Heritage Academy High	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	High School for Recording Arts	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Highland Park Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Hill-Murray	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Hmong College Prep Academy HS	Participating 2024-25
Dakota	HOA High School (Hastings Online)	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	HOPE Community Academy High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Hopkins Senior High	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 after launch
Houston	Houston Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Humboldt High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Insight School of Minnesota	OHE Deferred start to 2025-2026
Carver	Integrated Arts Academy	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Jefferson Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Olmsted	John Marshall Senior High	Participating 2024-25

County Name	School Name	Direct Admissions Status
Ramsey	Johnson Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Scott	Jordan High School	Participating 2024-25
Otter Tail	Kennedy High School (Fergus Falls)	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Kennedy Senior High (Bloomington)	Participating 2024-25
Fillmore	Kingsland Junior/Senior High School	Participating 2024-25
Kittson	Kittson Central Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Washington	Lakes International Language Academy Upper School	Participating 2024-25
Sibley	Le Sueur - Alternative Learning Cooperative	Participating 2024-25
Le Sueur	Le Sueur-Henderson High School	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	LEAP High School	Participating 2024-25
Winona	Lewiston-Altura Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Koochiching	Littlefork-Big Falls Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Blue Earth	Mankato East Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Blue Earth	Mankato West Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Lyon	Marshall High School	Participating 2024-25
Olmsted	Mayo Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Aitkin	McGregor Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Steele	Medford Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Saint Louis	Mesabi East Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Mille Lacs	Milaca 7-12 Online	Participating 2024-25
Mille Lacs	Milaca Area Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Mille Lacs	Milaca Secondary High	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Minnesota Online High School	Participating 2024-25
Houston	Minnesota Virtual Academy High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Minnetonka Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Pope	Minnewaska Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Olmsted	MNSync Online Secondary (formerly RPS Online High School)	Participating 2024-25
Clay	Moorhead High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	MPS Online 6-12	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	MTS High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	New Code Academy High School	Participating 2024-25
Kandiyohi	New London Alternative School	Participating 2024-25
Kandiyohi	New London-Spicer Sr.	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	North High (Minneapolis)	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	North Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Cass	Northland Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Open World Learning Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Big Stone	Ortonville Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Anoka	PACT Charter Secondary	Participating 2024-25

County Name	School Name	Direct Admissions Status
Washington	Park High School	Participating 2024-25
Otter Tail	Parkers Prairie Secondary	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 before launch
Crow Wing	Pequot Lakes Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Wright	Phoenix Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	PIM Arts High School	Participating 2024-25
Pipestone	Pipestone Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Wabasha	Plainview-Elgin-Millville High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Prairie Seeds High School Academy	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 before launch
Scott	Prior Lake High School	Participating 2024-25
Saint Louis	Proctor Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Beltrami	Red Lake Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Redwood	Red Rock Central Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Richfield Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Winona	Riverway Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Robbinsdale Armstrong Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Robbinsdale Cooper Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Robbinsdale Virtual Academy	Participating 2024-25
Olmsted	Rochester Alternative Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Rockford Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Roosevelt High	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Roseville Area Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Fillmore	Rushford-Peterson Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Saint Paul Online High School	Participating 2024-25
Scott	Shakopee High School	Participating 2024-25
Dakota	Simley Senior High	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 after launch
Anoka	SLP Schools Online Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	South High	Participating 2024-25
Dakota	South St. Paul High School	Participating 2024-25
Washington	South Washington Alternative High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Southwest High	Participating 2024-25
Washington	SoWashCo Online 9-12	Participating 2024-25
Houston	Spring Grove Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Anoka	Spring Lake Park Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Washington	St Croix Valley Area Learning Cntr.	Participating 2024-25
Stearns	St. Cloud Area Learning Center	District Deferred start to 2025-2026
Anoka	St. Francis High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	St. Louis Park Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Wright	St. Michael-Albertville Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Nicollet	St. Peter High School	Participating 2024-25
Todd	Staples-Motley Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Washington	Stillwater Area High School	Participating 2024-25
Houston	Summit Learning Program	Participating 2024-25

County Name	School Name	Direct Admissions Status
Carver	SWMetro ALC	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 after launch
Hennepin	Takoda Prep	District Deferred start to 2025-2026
Washington	Tartan Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Stearns	Technical Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Wright	Terra Nova School	Participating 2024-25
Beltrami	TrekNorth High School	Participating 2024-25
Le Sueur	Tri-City United High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Ubah Academy	Participating 2024-25
Faribault	United South Central High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Venture Academy High School	Participating 2024-25
Wadena	Verndale Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Carver	Waconia High School	Participating 2024-25
Wadena	Wadena-Deer Creek Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Roseau	Warroad High School	HS Deferred start to 2025-2026 before launch
Waseca	Waseca Area Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Waseca	Waseca Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Washburn High	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	Washington Technology Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Watershed High School	Participating 2024-25
Hennepin	Wellstone International High	Participating 2024-25
Traverse	Wheaton Secondary	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	White Bear Area Learning Center	Participating 2024-25
Ramsey	White Bear Area Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Winona	Winona Senior High	Participating 2024-25
Washington	Woodbury High School	Participating 2024-25
Goodhue	Zumbrota-Mazeppa Senior High	Participating 2024-25

**Table A4. Participating College Possible-serving High Schools 2024-2025 Academic Year**

- Champlin Park
- Park Center
- Aim Academy
- Battle Lake High School
- Blaine High School
- Blooming Prairie High School
- Cambridge-Isanti High school
- Columbia Heights
- Coon Rapids High School
- Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
- Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton High School
- Eveleth-Gilbert Senior High
- Farmington High School

- Frazee High School
- Fridley High School
- Lakeville North
- Lakeville Pathways Academy
- Lakeville South
- Le Roy-Ostrander High School
- Metro Schools
- Mt. Iron-Buhl High School
- Orono High School
- New Prague High School
- Perham High School
- Red Wing High School
- RTR High School
- Sartell High School
- St. Charles High School
- Tower View Alternative High School
- Triton High School
- Virtual Heights Secondary
- Wayzata High School
- Worthington High School

**Table A5. Participating Colleges and Universities 2024-2025 Academic Year  
(Fall 2025 Admissions) Sorted by Sector and Name**

Sector	Institution
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Alexandria Technical & Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Anoka Technical College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Anoka-Ramsey Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Bemidji State University
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Central Lakes College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Century College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Dakota County Technical College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Hennepin Technical College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Inver Hills Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Lake Superior College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Metropolitan State University
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Minneapolis College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Minnesota North College

Sector	Institution
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Minnesota State College Southeast
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Minnesota State Community and Technical College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Minnesota State University, Moorhead
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Minnesota State University, Mankato
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Minnesota West Community & Technical College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Normandale Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	North Hennepin Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Northland Community & Technical College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Northwest Technical College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Pine Technical & Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Ridgewater College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Riverland Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Rochester Community and Technical
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Saint Paul College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	South Central College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Southwest Minnesota State University
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	St. Cloud State University
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	St. Cloud Technical & Community College
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities	Winona State University
Private College	Augsburg University
Private College	Bethany Lutheran College
Private College	Bethel University
Private College	College of Saint Benedict
Private College	College of St. Scholastica, The
Private College	Concordia College
Private College	Concordia University, St. Paul
Private College	Dunwoody College of Technology
Private College	Gustavus Adolphus College
Private College	Hamline University
Private College	Minneapolis College of Art and Design
Private College	Saint John's University
Private College	Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
Private College	St. Catherine University
Private College	University of St. Thomas



Sector	Institution
Private College	Northwestern Health Sciences University
Tribal College	Red Lake Nation College
Tribal College	White Earth Tribal & Community College
University of Minnesota	University of Minnesota, Crookston
University of Minnesota	University of Minnesota, Duluth
University of Minnesota	University of Minnesota, Morris
University of Minnesota	University of Minnesota, Rochester

## Appendix B. Direct Admissions Student Letters Tiers 1 through 6

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### Direct Admissions Student Letter Text

Dear [Name],

Congratulations! Based on a review of your high school transcript, you are on track to graduate in 2024-2025 and are eligible to participate in the Minnesota Direct Admissions\* program! We want to make sure that you know **all Minnesota high school graduates are college material**. As you begin planning for your future, you should know that you have already met the admissions criteria for many colleges and universities in Minnesota. This letter contains a list of colleges and universities that want you to know that the answer will be "YES!" if you decide to apply.

The Direct Admissions program has taken the worry out of knowing where you stand. You can choose to apply to one or more of the schools listed on this letter and know that you'll be granted admission. You have a couple of next steps:

- Review your personalized list of colleges and universities below and confirm that you would like to learn more about one or more of the colleges and universities to which you have been directly admitted. After you confirm your interest, each college or university that you select will email you information about your next steps. You don't have to decide where you want to go yet – this step just lets the colleges know you are considering them as an option.
- Review your institution's application deadlines and be sure to respond to the college or university's email to finalize your FREE application and interest of enrollment. If a college or university requires submission of additional materials (i.e. essay, test scores, or letters of reference), you must submit the required materials by their process. Please note: Although your application fees will be waived, **you must still meet the application deadlines**, even if you are applying through Direct Admissions.
- You can speed up the FREE application process by **completing the optional survey** after you have made your college and university selections.
- Check out the **Direct Admissions Student Center** at <https://www.myhighered.mn.gov/direct-admissions-student-center> to find more guidance on each college and university's next steps. You can also explore and compare your many options with the College Search Tool, create a student account to save your information, and hear from other students about their experience with the program.
- **Get help paying for college!** You can apply for both state and federal financial aid by completing your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the MN Dream Act application. Remember to fill out the FAFSA when it opens or check out our FAQ for more information!

You can also look into the other great higher education options in Minnesota if the college or university you are most interested in doesn't appear on this list.

\*Please see website and program FAQ for more information. Some restrictions may apply, or additional information may be required for admission into specific majors or programs.

Based on your academic record, you qualify for Direct Admissions at the following colleges and universities:

**Public and Tribal Two-Year Colleges**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ✓ Alexandria Community and Technical College | ✓ Minnesota West Community and Technical College |
| ✓ Anoka Technical College                    | ✓ Normandale Community College                   |
| ✓ Anoka-Ramsey Community College             | ✓ North Hennepin Community College               |
| ✓ Central Lakes College                      | ✓ Northland Community and Technical College      |
| ✓ Century College                            | ✓ Pine Technical and Community College           |
| ✓ Dakota County Technical College            | ✓ Red Lake Nation College                        |
| ✓ Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College   | ✓ Ridgewater College                             |
| ✓ Hennepin Technical College                 | ✓ Rochester Community and Technical College      |
| ✓ Inver Hills Community College              | ✓ St. Paul College                               |
| ✓ Lake Superior College                      | ✓ South Central College                          |
| ✓ Minneapolis College                        | ✓ White Earth Tribal and Community College       |
| ✓ Minnesota State College Southeast          |  |

**Public Four-Year Universities**

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ✓ Bemidji State University             | ✓ University of Minnesota, Crookston |
| ✓ Metropolitan State University        | ✓ University of Minnesota, Duluth    |
| ✓ Minnesota State University Mankato   | ✓ University of Minnesota, Morris    |
| ✓ Minnesota State University Moorhead  | ✓ University of Minnesota, Rochester |
| ✓ Southwest Minnesota State University | ✓ Winona State University            |
| ✓ St. Cloud State University           |                                      |

**Private Colleges and Universities**

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ✓ Augsburg University            | ✓ Gustavus Adolphus College               |
| ✓ Bethany Lutheran College       | ✓ Hamline University                      |
| ✓ Bethel University              | ✓ Minneapolis College of Art and Design   |
| ✓ College of Saint Benedict      | ✓ Northwestern Health Sciences University |
| ✓ The College of St. Scholastica | ✓ Saint John's University                 |
| ✓ Concordia University St. Paul  | ✓ Saint Mary's University of Minnesota    |
| ✓ Concordia College              | ✓ St. Catherine University                |
| ✓ Dunwoody College of Technology | ✓ University of St. Thomas                |

Your future is bright and on behalf of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, we congratulate you for being on the right track for college in the fall of 2025!

Sincerely,

Dennis W. Olson, Commissioner, Office of Higher Education

School Official Name & Title

## Tier 1 Letter

Based on your academic record, you qualify for Direct Admissions at the following colleges and universities:

### Public and Tribal Two-Year Colleges

- ✓ Alexandria Technical and Community College
- ✓ Anoka Technical College
- ✓ Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- ✓ Central Lakes College
- ✓ Century College
- ✓ Dakota County Technical College
- ✓ Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
- ✓ Hennepin Technical College
- ✓ Inver Hills Community College
- ✓ Lake Superior College
- ✓ Minneapolis College
- ✓ Minnesota North College
- ✓ Minnesota State College Southeast
- ✓ Minnesota State Community and Technical College
- ✓ Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- ✓ Normandale Community College
- ✓ North Hennepin Community College
- ✓ Northland Community and Technical College
- ✓ Northwest Technical College
- ✓ Pine Technical and Community College
- ✓ Red Lake Nation College
- ✓ Ridgewater College
- ✓ Riverland Community College
- ✓ Rochester Community and Technical College
- ✓ Saint Cloud Technical and Community College
- ✓ Saint Paul College
- ✓ South Central College
- ✓ White Earth Tribal and Community College

## Tier 2 Letter

Based on your academic record, you qualify for Direct Admissions at the following colleges and universities:

### Public and Tribal Two-Year Colleges

- ✓ Alexandria Technical and Community College
- ✓ Anoka Technical College
- ✓ Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- ✓ Central Lakes College
- ✓ Century College
- ✓ Dakota County Technical College
- ✓ Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
- ✓ Hennepin Technical College
- ✓ Inver Hills Community College
- ✓ Lake Superior College
- ✓ Minneapolis College
- ✓ Minnesota North College
- ✓ Minnesota State College Southeast
- ✓ Minnesota State Community and Technical College
- ✓ Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- ✓ Normandale Community College
- ✓ North Hennepin Community College
- ✓ Northland Community and Technical College
- ✓ Northwest Technical College
- ✓ Pine Technical and Community College
- ✓ Red Lake Nation College
- ✓ Ridgewater College
- ✓ Riverland Community College
- ✓ Rochester Community and Technical College
- ✓ Saint Cloud Technical and Community College
- ✓ Saint Paul College
- ✓ South Central College
- ✓ White Earth Tribal and Community College

### Public Four-Year Universities

- ✓ Saint Cloud State University
- ✓ Southwest Minnesota State University

### Private Colleges and Universities

- ✓ Bethany Lutheran College
- ✓ Bethel University Online
- ✓ The College of St. Scholastica
- ✓ Concordia University St. Paul
- ✓ Dunwoody College of Technology
- ✓ Northwestern Health Sciences University

## Tier 3 Letter

Based on your academic record, you qualify for Direct Admissions at the following colleges and universities:

### Public and Tribal Two-Year Colleges

- ✓ Alexandria Technical and Community College
- ✓ Anoka Technical College
- ✓ Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- ✓ Central Lakes College
- ✓ Century College
- ✓ Dakota County Technical College
- ✓ Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
- ✓ Hennepin Technical College
- ✓ Inver Hills Community College
- ✓ Lake Superior College
- ✓ Minneapolis College
- ✓ Minnesota North College
- ✓ Minnesota State College Southeast
- ✓ Minnesota State Community and Technical College
- ✓ Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- ✓ Normandale Community College
- ✓ North Hennepin Community College
- ✓ Northland Community and Technical College
- ✓ Northwest Technical College
- ✓ Pine Technical and Community College
- ✓ Red Lake Nation College
- ✓ Ridgewater College
- ✓ Riverland Community College
- ✓ Rochester Community and Technical College
- ✓ Saint Cloud Technical and Community College
- ✓ Saint Paul College
- ✓ South Central College
- ✓ White Earth Tribal and Community College

### Public Four-Year Universities

- ✓ Bemidji State University
- ✓ Metropolitan State University
- ✓ Minnesota State University Moorhead
- ✓ Saint Cloud State University
- ✓ Southwest Minnesota State University
- ✓ University of Minnesota, Crookston
- ✓ Winona State University

### Private Colleges and Universities

- ✓ Bethany Lutheran College
- ✓ Bethel University Online
- ✓ The College of St. Scholastica
- ✓ Concordia University St. Paul
- ✓ Dunwoody College of Technology
- ✓ Northwestern Health Sciences University

## Tier 4 Letter

Based on your academic record, you qualify for Direct Admissions at the following colleges and universities:

### Public and Tribal Two-Year Colleges

- ✓ Alexandria Technical and Community College
- ✓ Anoka Technical College
- ✓ Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- ✓ Central Lakes College
- ✓ Century College
- ✓ Dakota County Technical College
- ✓ Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
- ✓ Hennepin Technical College
- ✓ Inver Hills Community College
- ✓ Lake Superior College
- ✓ Minneapolis College
- ✓ Minnesota North College
- ✓ Minnesota State College Southeast
- ✓ Minnesota State Community and Technical College
- ✓ Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- ✓ Normandale Community College
- ✓ North Hennepin Community College
- ✓ Northland Community and Technical College
- ✓ Northwest Technical College
- ✓ Pine Technical and Community College
- ✓ Red Lake Nation College
- ✓ Ridgewater College

- ✓ Riverland Community College
- ✓ Rochester Community and Technical College
- ✓ Saint Cloud Technical and Community College

- ✓ Saint Paul College
- ✓ South Central College
- ✓ White Earth Tribal and Community College

#### **Public Four-Year Universities**

- ✓ Bemidji State University
- ✓ Metropolitan State University
- ✓ Minnesota State University Moorhead
- ✓ Saint Cloud State University

- ✓ Southwest Minnesota State University
- ✓ University of Minnesota, Crookston
- ✓ Winona State University

#### **Private Colleges and Universities**

- ✓ Bethany Lutheran College
- ✓ Bethel University Online
- ✓ The College of St. Scholastica
- ✓ Concordia University St. Paul

- ✓ Dunwoody College of Technology
- ✓ Northwestern Health Sciences University
- ✓ Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

## **Tier 5 Letter**

Based on your academic record, you qualify for Direct Admissions at the following colleges and universities:

#### **Public and Tribal Two-Year Colleges**

- ✓ Alexandria Technical and Community College
- ✓ Anoka Technical College
- ✓ Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- ✓ Central Lakes College
- ✓ Century College
- ✓ Dakota County Technical College
- ✓ Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
- ✓ Hennepin Technical College
- ✓ Inver Hills Community College
- ✓ Lake Superior College
- ✓ Minneapolis College
- ✓ Minnesota North College
- ✓ Minnesota State College Southeast
- ✓ Minnesota State Community and Technical College

- ✓ Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- ✓ Normandale Community College
- ✓ North Hennepin Community College
- ✓ Northland Community and Technical College
- ✓ Northwest Technical College
- ✓ Pine Technical and Community College
- ✓ Red Lake Nation College
- ✓ Ridgewater College
- ✓ Riverland Community College
- ✓ Rochester Community and Technical College
- ✓ Saint Cloud Technical and Community College
- ✓ Saint Paul College
- ✓ South Central College
- ✓ White Earth Tribal and Community College

#### **Public Four-Year Universities**

- ✓ Bemidji State University
- ✓ Metropolitan State University
- ✓ Minnesota State University Mankato
- ✓ Minnesota State University Moorhead
- ✓ Saint Cloud State University
- ✓ Southwest Minnesota State University

- ✓ University of Minnesota, Crookston
- ✓ University of Minnesota, Duluth
- ✓ University of Minnesota, Morris
- ✓ University of Minnesota, Rochester
- ✓ Winona State University

#### **Private Colleges and Universities**

- ✓ Augsburg University

- ✓ Bethany Lutheran College

- ✓ Bethel University
- ✓ Bethel University Online
- ✓ College of Saint Benedict
- ✓ The College of St. Scholastica
- ✓ Concordia College
- ✓ Concordia University St. Paul
- ✓ Dunwoody College of Technology

- ✓ Gustavus Adolphus College
- ✓ Hamline University
- ✓ Minneapolis College of Art and Design
- ✓ Northwestern Health Sciences University
- ✓ Saint John's University
- ✓ Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
- ✓ St. Catherine University

## Tier 6 Letter

Based on your academic record, you qualify for Direct Admissions at the following colleges and universities:

### Public and Tribal Two-Year Colleges

- ✓ Alexandria Technical and Community College
- ✓ Anoka Technical College
- ✓ Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- ✓ Central Lakes College
- ✓ Century College
- ✓ Dakota County Technical College
- ✓ Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
- ✓ Hennepin Technical College
- ✓ Inver Hills Community College
- ✓ Lake Superior College
- ✓ Minneapolis College
- ✓ Minnesota North College
- ✓ Minnesota State College Southeast
- ✓ Minnesota State Community and Technical College

- ✓ Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- ✓ Normandale Community College
- ✓ North Hennepin Community College
- ✓ Northland Community and Technical College
- ✓ Northwest Technical College
- ✓ Pine Technical and Community College
- ✓ Red Lake Nation College
- ✓ Ridgewater College
- ✓ Riverland Community College
- ✓ Rochester Community and Technical College
- ✓ Saint Cloud Technical and Community College
- ✓ Saint Paul College
- ✓ South Central College
- ✓ White Earth Tribal and Community College

### Public Four-Year Universities

- ✓ Bemidji State University
- ✓ Metropolitan State University
- ✓ Minnesota State University Mankato
- ✓ Minnesota State University Moorhead
- ✓ Saint Cloud State University
- ✓ Southwest Minnesota State University

- ✓ University of Minnesota, Crookston
- ✓ University of Minnesota, Duluth
- ✓ University of Minnesota, Morris
- ✓ University of Minnesota, Rochester
- ✓ Winona State University

### Private Colleges and Universities

- ✓ Augsburg University
- ✓ Bethany Lutheran College
- ✓ Bethel University
- ✓ Bethel University Online
- ✓ College of Saint Benedict
- ✓ The College of St. Scholastica
- ✓ Concordia College
- ✓ Concordia University St. Paul
- ✓ Dunwoody College of Technology

- ✓ Gustavus Adolphus College
- ✓ Hamline University
- ✓ Minneapolis College of Art and Design
- ✓ Northwestern Health Sciences University
- ✓ Saint John's University
- ✓ Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
- ✓ St. Catherine University
- ✓ University of St. Thomas

## Appendix C. Legislation for Direct Admissions Minnesota

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### 136A.84 DIRECT ADMISSIONS PROGRAM.

Subdivision 1. **Authorization.** The commissioner shall administer the direct admissions program in consultation with stakeholders, including Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the University of Minnesota, the Student Advisory Council under section 136A.031, the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Minnesota School Board Association, to automatically offer conditional admission into an eligible public or nonprofit institution as defined under section 136A.103, paragraph (a), located in Minnesota, to Minnesota high school seniors based on a student's high school grade point average, high school and college transcript information, standardized tests, statewide assessments, and other measures as determined by stakeholders.

Subd. 2. **Implementation.** The program shall establish and, to the extent feasible, implement a process for leveraging existing kindergarten through grade 12 and higher education student information systems to automate the admissions process for students. The program must specifically evaluate the impact this process has on outcomes for students with lower levels of college knowledge, low-income students, and students from populations underserved in higher education. The office shall attempt to achieve statewide representation and may prioritize program participants to include high schools with a significant number of students of color, low-income students, or both.

Subd. 3. **Information.** The commissioner shall provide information about the Minnesota state grant program and the North Star Promise and encourage students to determine their eligibility for financial aid based on FAFSA and state financial aid application completion.

Subd. 4. **Report.** Annually, by February 1, the Office of Higher Education shall report to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education finance and policy and higher education on activities occurring under this section. The report must include but is not limited to information about implementation, recommendations, and outcomes.

**History:** 2023 c 41 art 2 s 25





2025