



Summary Report: Increasing Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota

Report to the Legislature

As required by Minnesota Statutes, section 122B.117

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As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197: This report cost approximately \$8,781.16 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

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Legislative Charge

Under Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.117, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) must collaborate with the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) and the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE) to publish a summary report of each of the programs they administer and any other programs receiving state appropriations that have or include an explicit purpose of increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of the state's teacher workforce to more closely reflect the diversity of students.

The report must include programs under sections 122A.59, 122A.63, 122A.635, 122A.70, 122A.73, 124D.09, 124D.861, 136A.1274, 136A.1276, and 136A.1791, along with any other programs or initiatives that receive state appropriations to address the shortage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers. [Note: 136A.1276 was only funded once in fiscal years 2018-19. Since this report focuses on grant program data reported through school year 2023-24, 136A.1276 will not be included in this report.]

MDE must, in coordination with OHE and PELSB, provide policy and funding recommendations related to state-funded programs to increase the recruitment, preparation, licensing, hiring, and retention of racially and ethnically diverse teachers and the state's progress toward meeting or exceeding the goals of this section.

The report must include recommendations for state policy and funding needed to achieve the goals of this section, plans for sharing the report and activities of grant recipients, and opportunities among grant recipients of various programs to share effective practices with each other. MDE must consult with the Indian Affairs Council and other ethnic councils along with other community partners, including students of color and American Indian students, in developing the report.

The initial report must also include a recommendation of whether a state advisory council should be established to address the shortage of racially and ethnically diverse teachers and what the composition and charge of such an advisory council would be if established.

MDE must submit the report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over education and higher education policy and finance by November 3, 2025, for the initial report, and by November 3 each even-numbered year thereafter. The report must be available on commissioner's website.

Executive Summary

Minnesota students experience some of the largest opportunity and achievement gaps in the country. Thus, Minnesota's future is dependent on a thriving educator workforce to serve all Minnesota students and families and help close these gaps. Like all states across the nation, Minnesota is facing teacher shortages based on teacher demographics, license areas, school types, and geographic regions, and these are significant stressors for schools and educators ultimately impacting students, families and communities.

Minnesota is implementing policies to expand pathways to the profession to provide equitable access for people from all communities to become licensed educators. The state is also supporting and retaining our teachers through induction and mentoring programs, principal leadership support, and efforts to create culturally sustaining learning and working environments for students, families, and staff. The challenges are complex and multifaceted. The State of Minnesota is committed to addressing these challenges at each stage of an educator's career journey.

Minnesota has a goal, as codified in Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 120B.117, to increase by at least two percentage points annually the percentage of teachers in Minnesota who are of color or who are American Indian to have a teaching workforce that more closely reflects the state's increasingly diverse student population and to ensure all students have equitable access to effective and diverse teachers by 2040.

- Teacher demographics. In the 2024-25 school year, there were 71,214 educators in teaching positions in Minnesota public schools. Of those, 5,240 (7.36%) were teachers of color or American Indian teachers as a combined group. There were 230 (0.32%) American Indian educators assigned to teaching roles.
- Student demographics. In 2024-25, there were 876,746 public school students in Minnesota. Of those, 348,762 (39.78%) identify as students of color or American Indian students as a combined group. There were 31,105 (3.55%) American Indian students.

There is a 32.42-point gap in racial and ethnic demographic representation in the teacher workforce. Using figures from school year 2024-25, Minnesota would need to recruit, prepare, and hire approximately 1,425 teachers of color and American Indian teachers per year to close this gap by 2040 (assuming current teachers of color and American Indian teachers are retained).

This report concludes with [policy and funding recommendations](#) to help Minnesota achieve a vision where every student benefits from a diverse, qualified and thriving educator workforce.

Introduction

Educational research is clear: the most important school-based factor on student achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher (followed closely by the effectiveness of the school principal). Research also indicates that all students benefit from a racially diverse teaching workforce and that students of color and American Indian students benefit even more. For example, in a [Learning Policy Institute research brief](#)¹ published April 2018, Desiree Carver-Thomas summarizes the benefits of having teachers of color and American Indian teachers, including:

- Students of color experience boosts to academic performance, including reading and math test scores, graduation rates, and increased aspirations to attend college.
- Students of color experience socio-emotional and nonacademic benefits such as fewer unexcused absences, lower likelihoods of chronic absenteeism and suspension.
- Students of color and white students report having positive perceptions of their teachers of color, including feeling cared for and academically challenged.

Currently, in Minnesota, only 7.36% of our active teacher workforce identify as a teacher of color or American Indian teacher (TOCAIT) (0.34% identify as American Indian) whereas 39.78% of our students identify as students of color or American Indian students (3.55% identify as American Indian). This shows a statewide demographic representation gap of 32.42% between current teachers and the students in the classroom. In many communities throughout the state, the gap between the racial and ethnic demographics of teachers and their students is much larger than the statewide gap.

There are efforts throughout the state at various levels (state government, school communities, teacher preparation providers) to address these gaps both through increasing the number of teachers of color and American Indian teachers and by supporting and retaining those currently in the teacher workforce.

Concerns about the severe shortage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers and state-funded efforts to address the shortage are not new in Minnesota. In 1991, Minnesota Laws 122A.63 established a teacher preparation grants program to assist American Indian people to become teachers and to provide additional education for American Indian teachers. In that same year, the Collaborative Urban Educator (CUE) program began and continued to evolve through today's Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color grant. Since 2017, state investments have grown in various programs designed to address multiple barriers along the path from recruitment to retention.

For several years, staff at the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the Office of Higher Education (OHE) and the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) have collaborated within and across agencies to focus on educator workforce solutions. In 2023, the Commissioner of Education created the

¹ Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/559.310>.

Educator Workforce and Development Center at MDE to further focus state efforts. Our teams share a vision where every student benefits from a diverse, qualified, and thriving educator workforce.

The phrase “Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers (TOCAIT)” will be used throughout this legislative report to refer to teachers (and sometimes teacher candidates) who identify as American Indian, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander or Two or More Races, consistent with federal reporting requirements. Similarly, “students of color and American Indian students (SOCAIS)” will be used throughout the report to refer to all students who share the same race or ethnic identities listed for TOCAIT.

MDE, OHE, and PELSB recognize the importance and complexity of reporting on racial and ethnic groups. These broad categories mask the diversity among vast cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic diversity within these umbrella groups. Furthermore, race is a social construct, not a biological one, and a person’s identities can be evolving and subjective, leading to accuracy issues and potentially undercounting.

This report requires each of these unique racial/ethnic groups be further grouped together as one body (TOCAIT) to be compared with the remaining racial group (White) for the purposes of tracking the state’s progress to increase the percentage of TOCAIT representation in the state.

The agencies also recognize that American Indians are the Indigenous peoples of this continent and citizens of sovereign nations, an important difference from other racial and ethnic groups in the United States. While Indigenous people may have characteristics of other minoritized groups, the primary characteristic is political. Where possible, data specific to American Indians is either provided in this report or links to other reports are provided.

This report provides summary information about state-sponsored programs administered by MDE, OHE, and PELSB focused on recruiting, diversifying, and retaining the teacher workforce in Minnesota. Additionally, the report includes state level data about the current teacher workforce, including information specific to the goal outlined in the legislation to increase teachers of color and American Indian teachers by 2% annually. Finally, this report includes recommendations for future policy and funding efforts.

The Teacher Journey

There are many terms in the literature to refer to the various stages in an educator's career, including "Talent/Workforce Development," "Teacher pipeline," and "Teacher pathways".

Minnesota has adopted, with permission, language developed by the Minnesota Education Equity Partnership's (MNEEP) #MNTeach2020 campaign to provide a plain language description of a teacher's journey to and through the profession. Each program summarized in this report will refer to these stages as a way of distinguishing among the types of programs Minnesota has sponsored.



Teacher Journey

Explore—Increasing awareness and interest in education careers among a diverse range of individuals through recruitment initiatives such as concurrent enrollment programs in high schools and marketing campaigns. Providing clear opportunities and messaging to help individuals see teaching as a viable and meaningful career path, especially for underrepresented groups.

Become—Preparing teachers through diverse and accessible pathways, ensuring that all teachers are equipped to serve a broad range of students. Emphasizing the importance of multiple quality licensure pathways and eliminating barriers such as financial and institutional obstacles to becoming a licensed teacher.

Grow—Supporting the successful early years of teaching by providing comprehensive induction programs, offering mentorship at all schools, facilitating professional development for new licensure fields, and ensuring a seamless transition from "Become" with the ultimate goals of increasing new teachers' preparedness and reducing attrition rates.

Thrive—Creating a supportive and equitable learning and working environment for educators, where they are valued, have what they need to succeed, and are empowered through teacher leadership opportunities to support the growth of other teachers.

Public Consultation

In the spring of 2025, PELSB and MDE staff met with representatives of Minnesota ethnic councils, the Tribal Nations Education Committee, and leaders from the Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers to provide updates on developing this report and to solicit their feedback on report elements they would find most useful. Feedback from these meetings informed the language choices we made in this report as well as how the data was reported, including:

- Early draft policy and funding recommendations
- Specific requests, such as:
- Where available, reporting data specific to American Indians separate from the combined “Teachers (or students) of color and American Indian teachers (or students)” required in the report
- Where possible, drawing connections between data and the funded programs that may have impacted that data
- Additional program summaries to include that are not directly specified in the statute
- Feedback about the layout and structure of the document, including the data that would be used in the initial report
- Feedback about language use overall

The opportunity to provide feedback is not synonymous with Tribal consultation under Minnesota Statutes, section 10.65.

Teacher Workforce Data

The following statewide teacher workforce data are to illustrate at a high level, the degree to which students have access to a diverse, qualified and thriving educator workforce.

This section of the report is divided into three sub-sections:

- [Racial and Ethnic Demographics of Minnesota Students and Teachers](#)—Focused specifically on the percentage of TOCAIT represented in the workforce and SOCAIS present in Minnesota classrooms.
- [Teacher Journey Statewide Data](#)—Focused on data points aligned with the teacher journey: Explore, Become, Grow, and Thrive.
- [Data from Funded Programs](#)—Focused on data reported by the various state-funded programs.

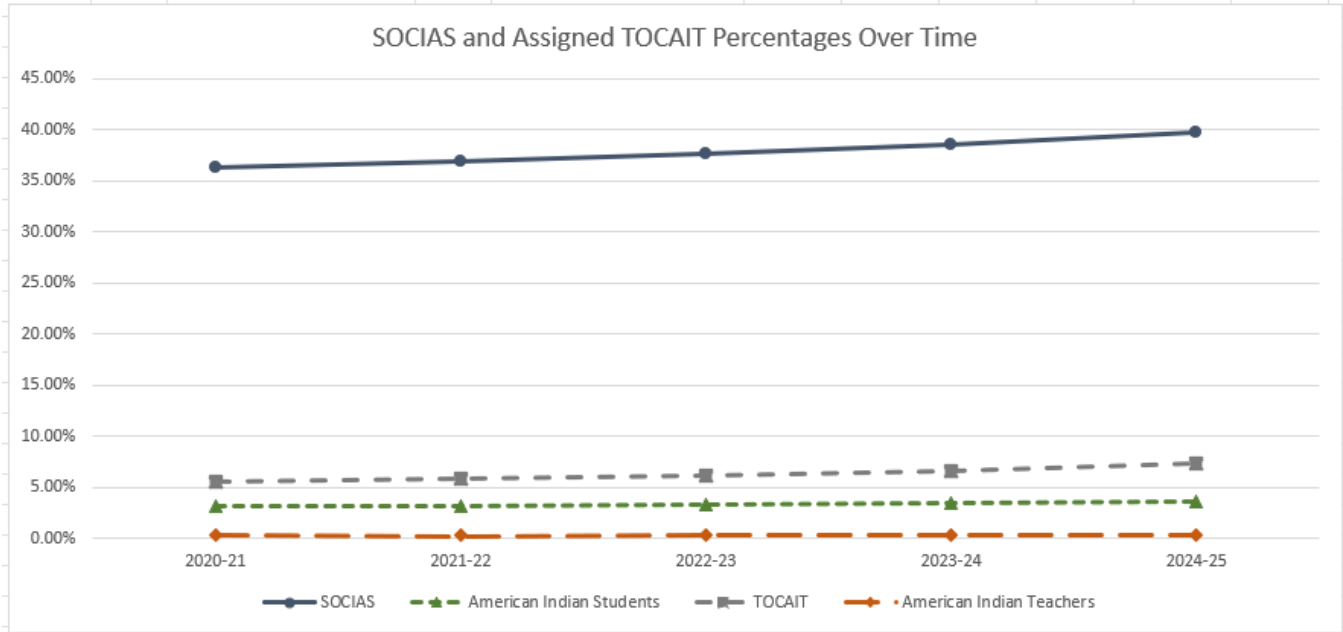
Statewide data for the TOCAIT section comes from K-12 school reporting of staffing data through the Staff Automated Report (STAR) system. STAR is an annual report of licensed and non-licensed staff employed by public school districts. Each year the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) surveys Minnesota school districts, charter schools, and other educational organizations, to ensure each teacher holds the appropriate license for their teaching assignment. Since this data is self-reported, there are some general caveats to consider. The sheer volume of data entry required on behalf of both districts’ staff and PELSB’s Data and Compliance Specialist (DCS) means that human error cannot be eliminated when completing STAR activities. In addition, during the 2024-25 school year, five districts did not submit a completed report which PELSB estimates accounts for approximately 2,000 fewer staff accounted for in the report over the prior year. Teacher demographic information including race/ethnicity is self-reported by teacher candidates at the time of licensure application.

For more information about teacher demographics including individual racial or ethnic groups, there are two resources on PELSB’s website. First, PELSB has a [data dashboard](#) that provides a variety of information. Second, the [PELSB Reports](#) page has several legislative reports, including the most recent Supply and Demand report.

Racial and Ethnic Demographics of Minnesota Students and Teachers

The following graph and table display the percentage of SOCAIS and TOCAIT, as well as the percentage of American Indian students and teachers, in the population of Minnesota public schools over the past five school years. This data is specific to educators *assigned* to teaching positions, meaning this only includes the licensed teachers who were actively serving students at the time.

Percentages of SOCAIS and Licensed and Assigned TOCAIT Over Time

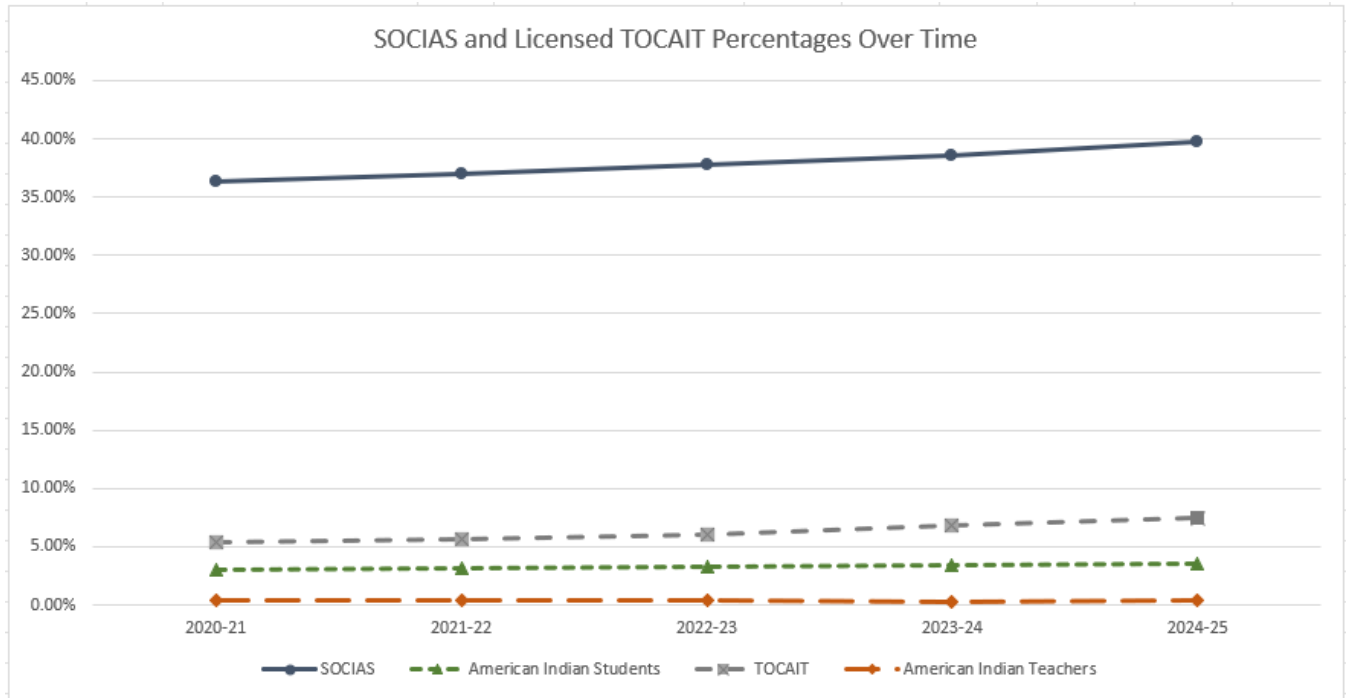


School year	SOCIAS	American Indian Students	TOCAIT	American Indian Teachers
2020-21	36.34%	3.09%	5.54%	0.33%
2021-22	36.96%	3.15%	5.78%	0.30%
2022-23	37.72%	3.27%	6.08%	0.32%
2023-24	38.60%	3.42%	6.61%	0.32%
2024-25	39.78%	3.55%	7.36%	0.32%

Minnesota’s population of SOCAIS increased 3.44% between school year 2020-21 and 2024-25 and the population of TOCAIT increased 1.82% in the same time period.

The following data is similar to the above, but the difference is in which licensed teachers are a part of the data set. In the data above, the data set includes those educators who are *assigned* to teaching positions. In other words, these are the actual working teachers who are in Minnesota classrooms at the time of reporting. The data set below includes *all* TOCAIT individuals with a teaching license.

Percentages of SOCAIS and All Licensed TOCAIT Over Time



School year	SOCIAS	American Indian Students	TOCAIT	American Indian Teachers
2020-21	36.34%	3.09%	5.34%	0.38%
2021-22	36.96%	3.15%	5.68%	0.37%
2022-23	37.72%	3.27%	6.11%	0.35%
2023-24	38.60%	3.42%	6.85%	0.33%
2024-25	39.78%	3.55%	7.50%	0.34%

The SOCAIS data is no different than the first table, but there are slightly higher percentages of TOCAIT and American Indian teachers. The population of all licensed TOCAIT increased 2.16% since 2020-21.

Observations About the Data

The demographics of the student population will continue to shift as we move into the future. According to [projections posted by the Minnesota State Demographic Center](#), by 2040 the percentage of people of color and American Indian people statewide (all age groups) will increase 6.7%.

As a population, SOCAIS in public schools last year were 39.78% of the total public-school population, whereas the data from the state demographer shows that the percentage of people of color and American Indian people

in the entire state 23%. This data indicates the population of children in public schools is more diverse than the state as a whole.

Nonetheless, this report will assume that the student population will be at least 6.7% larger in 2040 than today, the student population in 2040 will likely be above 46.5%.

Since students are only experiencing the teachers who are actively serving as teachers, this report uses 7.36% (the percent of TOCAIT population among licensed teachers assigned to teaching positions) as the starting point and 46.5% as an estimated statewide target, resulting in a representation gap of 39.14%. With 15 years until 2040 and a 2% growth goal per year, hitting that target would close the gap by 30% points, short of full representation but far closer to full representation than we are today.

- Representation gap in 2025—32.42%
- Estimated representation gap in 2040, assuming a 6.7% growth in SOCAIS—39.14%
- Representation gap in 2040 if Minnesota increases the percentage of TOCAIT by exactly 2% annually between now and 2040—9.14%

An increase of 2% of TOCAIT in the total teacher population means an additional 1,425 TOCAIT are needed assuming existing TOCAIT remains in a teaching assignment, which is not realistic given teacher turnover as well as TOCAIT pursue areas of leadership in education including but not limited to serving as school principals, superintendents, or other district-level leadership.

State data shows a 1.82% increase in TOCAIT over the past five years, so a 2% annual growth target is ambitious, requiring significant changes in policies and practices to achieve.

Teacher Journey Statewide Data

In addition to examining the degree to which the percentage of TOCAIT in the teacher population changes over time, our state agency partnership is working toward developing broad measures at each stage of the teacher journey. By tracking additional data points along the journey, we will be better positioned to make data-based decisions as we continuously improve systems to impact teacher workforce shortages including shortages of TOCAIT.

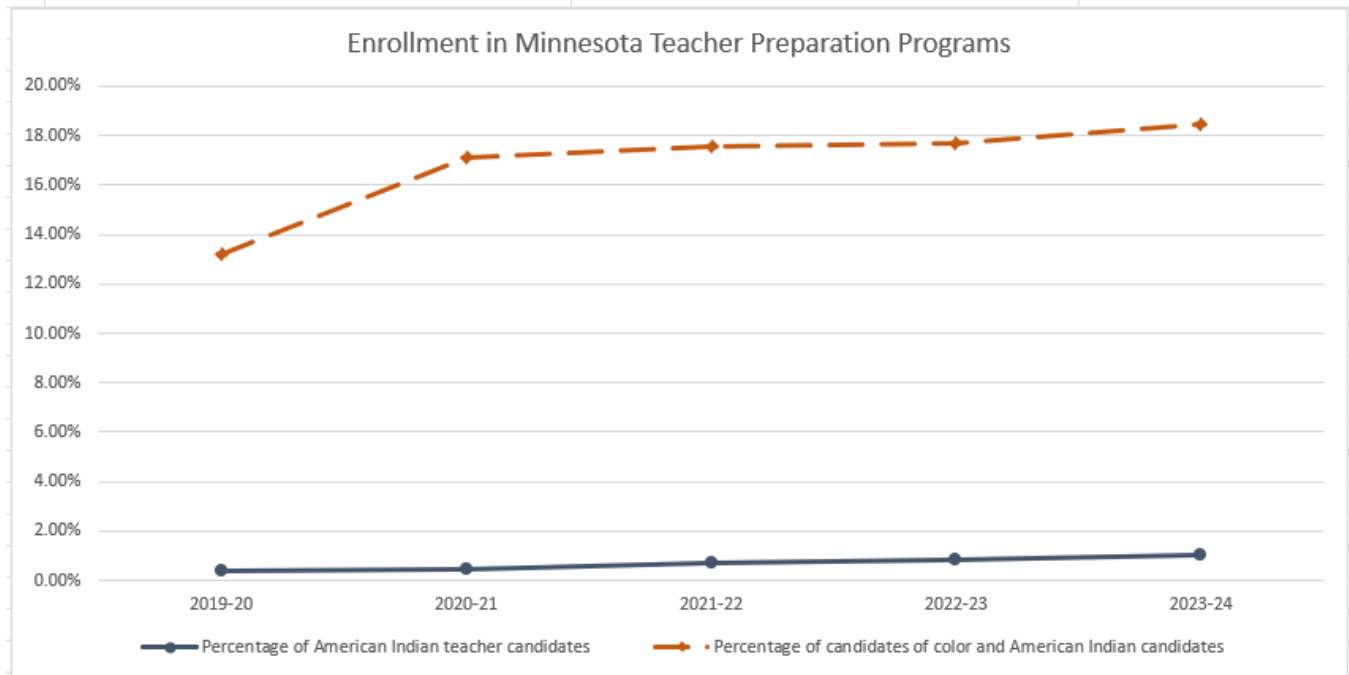
Explore



This stage of the teacher's journey is challenging to measure, as there is no common metric that indicates how many high school graduates, adult career changers, or other populations are thinking about teaching and exploring pathways to becoming a licensed teacher.

PELSB collects a variety of data from board-approved teacher preparation programs through their Data Summary Report (DSR) process. One of those data points is teacher preparation program enrollment. For the purposes of this initial report on TOCAIT, the measure of the degree to which strategies in the Explore phase are successful is ultimately enrollment in a teacher preparation program.

Percentage of Total Enrollment in Minnesota Teacher Preparation Programs



School year	Count American Indian teacher candidates	Percentage of American Indian teacher candidates	Count of candidates of color and American Indian Candidates	Percentage of candidates of color and American Indian candidates
2019-20	36	0.36%	1,340	13.23%
2020-21	59	0.47%	2,142	17.14%
2021-22	84	0.73%	2,026	17.54%
2022-23	91	0.86%	1,865	17.71%
2023-24	96	1.00%	1,767	18.46%

While it is good news that the percentage of TOCAIT candidates enrolling in teacher preparation programs (18.46%) is 2.5 times larger than the current percentage in the teacher workforce (7.36%), it is well below the representation needed to achieve a 2% annual growth target that would result in full racial and ethnic representation in the workforce by 2040.

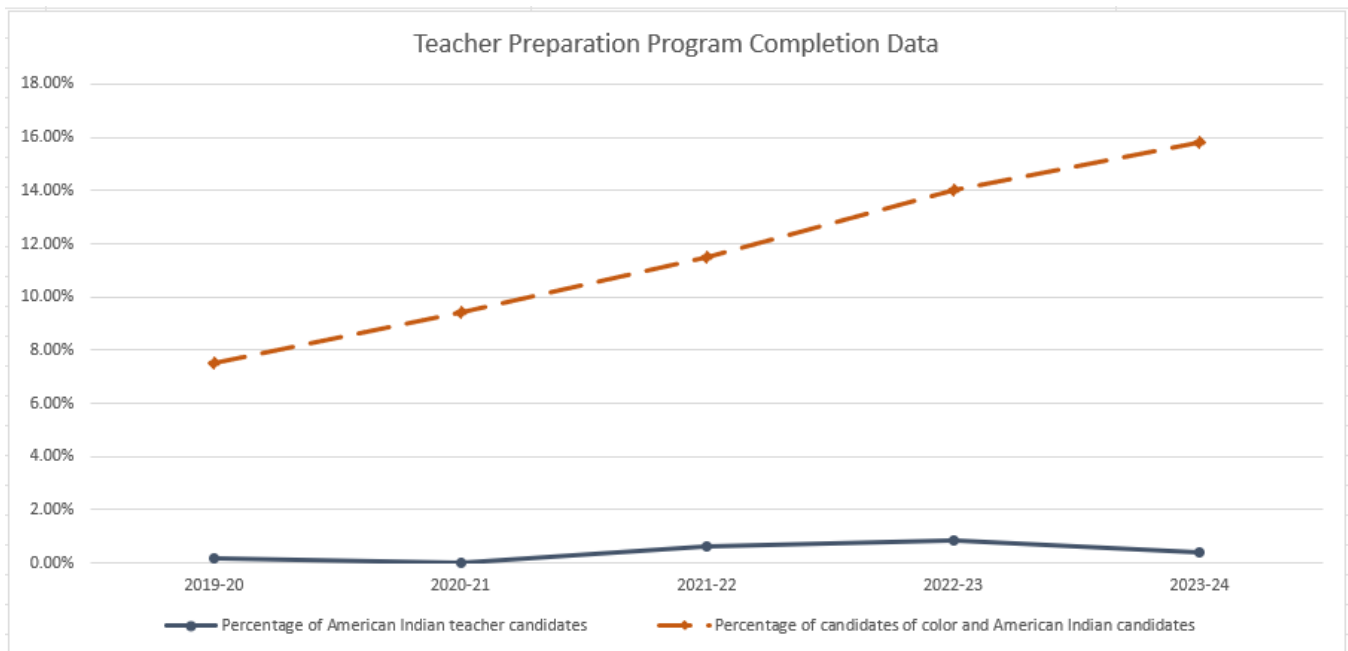
There is an average increase in the percentage of TOCAIT candidates from school year 2019-20 through 2023-24 of 1.31%. The representation of enrolled candidates of color and American Indian candidates must increase at a greater rate in order to achieve the overall goal of this report.

Become



While there are several data points between *enrollment* in teacher preparation program (TPP) and *completing* the program, agency staff will highlight TPP completion data as a measure illustrating the next wave of TOCAIT who are becoming licensed educators. The following data comes from PELSB's DSR reporting.

Percentage of TOCAIT Teacher Preparation Program Completers of ALL Completers



School year	Count American Indian teacher candidates	Percentage of American Indian teacher candidates	Count of candidates of color and American Indian Candidates	Percentage of candidates of color and American Indian candidates
2019-20	5	0.15%	244	7.51%
2020-21	0	0.00%	317	9.40%
2021-22	20	0.64%	362	11.51%
2022-23	25	0.82%	427	14.00%
2023-24	14	0.42%	456	15.79%

Reviewing the table above, we can see a steady increase in the percentage of TOCAIT candidates, with a notable exception of American Indian candidates between 22-23 and 23-24. The percentage of TPP completers over the past five years had an average increase of 2.07%, a promising number should all of these recently licensed educators find teaching positions and stay in the profession.

15.79% is slightly more than double the current percentage of TOCAIT (7.36%) in the profession, suggesting promise for improved demographic representation on the horizon.

Grow



Grow – This stage of the teacher’s journey focuses on the early career of a newly licensed teacher. National data suggests that a high percentage of teachers leave the profession in the first 3-5 years, with TOCAIT leaving at higher rates than their White colleagues. According to Education Resource Strategies (ERS) [*Examining School-Level Teacher Turnover Trends \(2021-24\): A New Angle on a Pervasive Issue*](#)², a study on nine large school districts across the country as well as all teachers across the state of Texas, they found that in 2022-23:

- 23% of teachers left their school
- 30% of rookie teachers left their school
- Schools serving the greatest proportion of students experiencing poverty lost 29% of their teachers while schools with the lowest concentrations of need lost 19%

Common strategies to retain teachers in this stage include access to strong mentoring and induction programs, to high quality instructional materials, and to effective school leadership.

The Learning Policy Institute publishes a fact sheet and interactive tool focusing on the [cost of teacher turnover](#)³, estimating that turnover can cost nearly \$25,000 per teacher in large districts to account for costs of the separation, recruiting, hiring, and training teachers. In addition to financial costs, schools with high rates of

² ERS. (2025). Examining school-level teacher turnover trends (2021-24): A new angle on a pervasive issue. Watertown, MA: ERS. <https://www.erstrategies.org/tap/teacher-turnover-trends-analysis/>.

³ Learning Policy Institute. (2024). 2024 update: What’s the cost of teacher turnover? [Fact sheet].

teacher turnover harm student achievement, according to Deseree Carver-Thomas and Linda Darling-Hammond's 2017 [*Teacher Turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it*](#)⁴.

Our agencies are working to develop the data infrastructure to provide a measure of teacher retention at a state and local level so that we can identify trends and prioritize resources to curtail teacher attrition. A public facing data dashboard or report is not available at the time of this legislative report.

Thrive



Thrive – Our vision for this work is, “Every student benefits from a diverse, qualified and thriving educator workforce,” so this stage is among our ultimate goals for every teacher. However, there are many ways to think about what it means to “thrive” in a profession, including but not limited to job satisfaction, making an impact, compensation, working conditions, and many other factors.

While we have data points to anchor Explore (TPP enrollment), Become (TPP completion) and Grow (teacher retention), we do not yet have a strong data measure for thrive. This is an area our agencies would like to explore more with partners in the field.

Data from Funded Programs

Legislation requires this report to include data on ten programs along with any other programs or initiatives receiving state appropriations to address shortage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers. During public consultation, we added one program (Teacher Recruitment and Marketing Campaign) to the ten required programs. [Appendix A](#) provides an individual program report for all eleven programs, organized by the Teacher Journey stages. MDE, PELSB and OHE manage other educator workforce programs and elected to share information on five additional programs, which can be found in [Appendix B](#). Since there are several data systems and programs that span multiple school years, all individual program reports use school year 2023-2024 (or fiscal year 2024) as a common reporting year unless otherwise noted.

The broad general question “How many TOCAIT did these programs support?” is, perhaps, central to the purpose of this report; however, there are significant challenges involved in consolidating the data across all the funded programs.

⁴ Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/454.278>.

One key challenge is the variation in how each program utilizes the state funds to carry out legislative intent. Across the eleven programs required in this report, there are five unique ways the state funding gets to teacher candidates.

- Competitive grants to pre-K through 12th grade schools, other entities—Grant funds are used in several different ways based on the program and can include direct financial benefits for teacher candidates.
- Competitive grants to teacher preparation programs—A majority of the grant funds are used to provide direct financial benefits to teacher candidates but may also be used to provide other support services.
- Direct financial benefits to teachers and teacher candidates—Teachers and teacher candidates receive funds either directly to the individual or through the teacher preparation providers.
- Direct Aid to eligible pre-K through 12th grade schools—Funds are directly allocated to schools for use in several different ways based on the program and do not include direct financial benefits for teacher candidates.
- Vendor Contracts—Funds are used to support outreach, marketing, and communications efforts.

The difference in how funds are allocated impacts how the financial support is experienced by the TOCAITs being served by the programs. Some programs are direct payments to the candidates themselves (e.g., Underrepresented Student Teacher Grants) while others are grants awarded to institutions and then to candidates (e.g., Grow Your Own). There are also programs that focus on creating environments where TOCAIT can thrive (e.g., Achievement and Integration) that provide more programmatic support compared to the direct financial investment in an individual achieving a license. Therefore, it is difficult to count the number of TOCAIT supported when the programs vary so widely.

The variety of the programs themselves leads to very different data, even when the intended outcome of the program is the same. Some programs are about recruiting and retaining, others are about reducing the financial barrier to teacher preparation, others are about exploring careers in teaching.

To illustrate one example, agency staff asked each leader of the individual programs to report on the number of TOCAIT their program supported. The largest state investment is the Grow Your Own (GYO) grant focusing on increasing teachers of color and American Indian teachers with a focus on serving adults as well as secondary students. GYO student pathway grantees reported that approximately 730 secondary students benefited from programming, approximately 65% of which are SOCAIS (n = 475). The grant provides teaching career exploration activities as well as, for some students, concurrent enrollment opportunities. While approximately 475 SOCAIS were impacted by this program, there's no data nor ability to track data on how many ultimately enroll in teacher preparation programs. However, the GYO adult pathway grants can definitively state that 222 TOCAIT candidates received some form of financial support to pursue a teaching license.

For the above reasons, there's no statistically sound way to add these numbers together to draw a conclusion across multiple programs, at least without a significant investment in a research study for each program. With that said, as reported by programs who collected data from the field, 3,556 people of color and American Indian people were impacted in some way by the programs receiving state appropriations to increase TOCAIT described in [Appendix A](#).

Policy and Funding Recommendations

Minnesota statutes, section 120B.117 directs the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), in coordination with Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) and the Office of Higher Education (OHE), to provide policy and funding recommendations related to state-funded programs that support the recruitment, preparation, licensing, hiring, and retention of racially and ethnically diverse teachers.

In that law, Minnesota has committed to increasing the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers by 2% per year—approximately 1,425 new TOCAIT annually while simultaneously improving retention rates of TOCAIT. To meet this goal, Minnesota must continue to fund programs with an explicit focus on supporting TOCAIT, while also refining policies and practices to address systemic barriers.

The recommendations presented here focus on the educator workforce ecosystem as a whole, not on individual programs. While program-level recommendations are important, those are best identified and refined by program leaders, grantees, and community partners who are most impacted by the work.

The recommendations reflect input from a cross-agency leadership team, program leads, and partners served by the programs. Public consultation also informed recommendations.

The following recommendations are initial, system-level recommendations. They should be understood as mutually reinforcing strategies. Collectively, these recommendations would support overarching goals of

- Continuous improvement by building on the strengths and lessons learned from current implementation, while adjusting to changes in the profession and the broader education ecosystem.
- Access to programs by identifying and addressing gaps in access to state-funded programs, while reducing redundancies that create inefficiencies or barriers for participants.
- Program evaluation and impact by investing in deeper evaluation and impact studies to determine if programs should be scaled or expanded, new programs are needed, programs should be revised or reframed, and programs should be phased out to better allocate limited resources.

Recommendation 1: Establish Ongoing Partnership Opportunities and Communications and Feedback Processes

Minnesota has multiple state-funded efforts across MDE, PELSB, and OHE, but no single body coordinating them. The enterprise currently has established an Interagency Workforce Alignment (IWA) Taskforce to build alignment in the workforce development space, creating a structure for this interagency work related to the workforce to reside. Moving forward, the IWA Taskforce will be the primary driver of interagency workforce efforts. A collective project between IWA Taskforce, multiple state agencies, the Governor's Workforce Development Board, and the Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership has gathered multiple education partners to form a "Committee on Educator Workforce" to develop recommendations related to improving alignment of educator workforce programs, identifying metrics for determining success, and increasing communications.

Public consultation revealed calls for greater community voice, particularly from Tribal Nations, ethnic councils, and community partners. Implementation of this recommendation would establish a team representing districts, higher education, TOCAIT, community groups, and the private sector. The team would build stronger partnerships with non-government organizations and ensure the 2% annual TOCAIT growth goal is guided by sustained, cross-sector leadership. It would be a short-term team goal to take the Committee on Educator Workforce's recommendations along with this report's recommendations to engage partners in order to prioritize recommendations for implementation, eliminate redundancies in recommendations, and to ensure implementation of recommendations maintains focus on not only increasing the educator workforce but also diversifying the educator workforce. Longer term, the team and additional partnership activities would maintain an ongoing focus on aligning initiatives, reducing duplication, and imbedding accountability for diversifying the educator workforce.

This recommendation would impact diversifying the educator workforce by embedding community and Tribal perspectives in decision-making; ensuring ongoing alignment of state policy and funding to TOCAIT needs, and creating accountability and visibility, which strengthens recruitment and retention.

Recommendation 2: Prioritize Programs and Eliminate Redundancies

Currently, multiple programs provide funding to reduce the cost of teacher preparation. Teacher preparation programs (TPPs), districts, and teacher candidates report that overlaps and redundancies in programs create confusion and inefficiency. Some initiatives (e.g., Grow Your Own vs. Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color vs. Student Teacher Grants) serve the same candidates but operate separately. Finally, investment is heavily skewed toward "Become" and preparation programs rather than toward retention, an equally important problem having a thriving and diverse educator workforce. Putting this recommendation into practice would utilize national research to identify which programs and activities (mentoring, residencies, scholarships) have the greatest impact, lead to phasing out or consolidating duplicative programs, and help Minnesota prioritize funding streams with evidence of long-term retention gains. The goal would be to engage partners based on the recommendation above and to use recommendations from this report and from the Committee on Educator Workforce to have policy proposals for the 2028 Legislative Session and budget proposals for the 2029 Legislative Session.

Adopting this recommendation would support diversification of the educator workforce by directing resources to the most effective efforts at recruiting and retaining TOCAIT; eliminating barriers caused by navigating multiple, overlapping programs; and ensuring equitable and sustainable use of limited funds.

Recommendation 3: Invest in Programs and Supports Across the Entire Teacher Journey

To truly build a stable, diverse, thriving educator workforce, Minnesota must invest at all stages of a teacher's journey—from exploring and imaging a career in education; to preparing and getting licensed; to entering and being inducted into the classroom; and to longer-term fulfillment and success in teaching. It is not just about helping candidates finish teacher preparation programs but is also about recruiting them into preparation pathways, setting them up for early career success, and retaining them in education.

As evidenced by the program descriptions in [Appendix A](#), current investments (when compared with need) heavily favor the Become stage and teacher preparation. Retention is equally, if not more, important. The most significant gaps in current resource allocation are Explore (early recruitment) and Thrive (working conditions, leadership development). Following through on this recommendation would ensure adequate funding based on priorities and need for recruitment, preparation, induction, and retention; scale mentorship, induction, and affinity groups that support TOCAIT once in classrooms; and address climate and conditions (such as low pay, lack of administrative support, heavy workload, and inadequate resources) that lead to attrition.

Taking this step would contribute to diversifying the educator workforce through reducing attrition of TOCAIT, ensuring long-term growth in workforce representation; building sustainable pathways, not just short-term entry boosts; and creating environments where diverse teachers thrive, increasing recruitment effectiveness.

Recommendation 4: Address Barriers for Entering and Completing Preparation Pathways

Financial, institutional, and cultural barriers such as high costs and systems that are not culturally responsive prevent many potential teacher candidates from completing preparation pathways. Navigating licensure pathways is complicated—candidates need information on requirements, processes, and options for getting licensed. In many cases, TOCAIT candidates may lack navigational support to apply for aid. Individuals in preparation pathways need wrap-around supports such as childcare, tutoring, academic coaching, and mental health supports. Enacting this recommendation would build clear entry points so individuals raising their hand to teach have access to a pathway, expand financial assistance (scholarships, stipends, loan repayment), provide navigational support such as advising and mentoring, and remove barriers in licensure and admissions processes.

This recommendation strengthens educator workforce diversity by supporting more candidates of color and American Indian candidates as they enter and complete preparation, supporting persistence through to licensure, not just enrollment, and expanding the pool of licensed, diverse teachers in Minnesota.

Recommendation 5: Increase Access to Resources and Programs

Currently, access to programs often depends on capacity of organizations to write and administer grants, or awareness. Using competitive grants as the primary strategy to distribute resources favors districts and TPPs with more resources, leaving smaller communities behind due to a lack of capacity to apply for and administer grants. Carrying out this recommendation would create a need to evaluate competitive vs. formula-based funding to ensure equitable reach and to consider funding streams targeted at districts, TPPs, and individuals simultaneously.

This recommendation could advance efforts to diversify the educator workforce through expanding reach to rural and underserved communities, increasing participation of individuals of color and American Indian people who otherwise cannot access supports, and creating more equitable pathways into teaching statewide.

Recommendation 6: Invest in Educator Workforce Data Infrastructure

Without a robust data infrastructure, Minnesota cannot determine which investments close the representation gap. Current data lacks detail on retention, long-term outcomes, and program effectiveness. Data systems and program evaluation is underfunded because program administrative set-asides are too small. Current set-asides in statute are either identified as amounts inadequate to fund minimal supports or at set 3-5% levels of funds allocated to workforce programs. For example, the GYO program, which manages around 100 active grants annually, only has an allowable administrative set-aside of \$175,000/year, barely enough to run a grant competition annually and provide technical assistance to the program's grantees. If adopted, this recommendation would raise administrative set asides to 5%, which is consistent with most other grant programs or would create a separate, additional allocation of state funds to build and maintain an educator workforce data infrastructure. Additional funds would support building comprehensive impact evaluation capacity in the area of teacher workforce, providing consistent data across the teacher journey and allowing Minnesota to use findings based on data to scale effective programs that best support the preparation and retention of teachers and to sunset less effective ones.

By implementing this recommendation, the state would influence educator workforce diversity by providing clarity on which programs best recruit, prepare, and retain TOCAIT; informing smarter, more targeted investments; and building transparency and accountability through data use to ensure Minnesota meets the 2% annual growth target.

Recommendation 7: Increase Support and Accountability for Districts, School Leaders, and TPPs

Every institution in the education system (districts, school leaders, TPPs) has a role in building a thriving, diverse teacher workforce, but current accountability is uneven. Too often, diversifying the workforce is left to state-level programs, without local responsibility. The execution of this recommendation would require districts and TPPs to set and monitor measurable TOCAIT goals; provide technical assistance, resources, and leadership development to meet goals; and build stronger accountability structures (e.g., reporting progress in Achievement & Integration plans).

This recommendation promotes workforce diversity by embedding responsibility for diversification throughout the education ecosystem, creating systemic rather than programmatic change, and improving retention by ensuring school leaders and climate are part of the solution.

Collectively, these seven recommendations provide a roadmap for Minnesota to meet its statutory charge under section 122B.117. By prioritizing community voice, aligning and streamlining programs, expanding equitable access, strengthening data infrastructure, addressing barriers to preparation, investing across the teacher journey, and embedding accountability at every level, Minnesota can meet its commitment to increase teachers of color and American Indian teachers by 2% annually.

Policymakers should see these recommendations as both responsive to the law's requirements and grounded in research and best practice. Together, they represent a systemic, equity-driven approach that will allow

Minnesota to not only recruit and prepare more TOCAIT, but to create the conditions necessary for them to thrive and lead across the state's schools.

Conclusion

Minnesota's future depends on a strong, diverse, and thriving educator workforce that reflects the state's students. This report highlights both the progress made and the challenges that remain in addressing the significant demographic gap between teachers and students. While the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOCAIT) has grown in recent years, the pace of change falls short of what is required to meet the state's statutory goal of 2% annual growth. With nearly 40% of Minnesota students identifying as students of color or American Indian, compared to just over 7% of teachers, the urgency to act cannot be overstated.

The data make clear that solutions must address every stage of the teacher journey—from early recruitment through long-term retention. Programs such as Grow Your Own, teacher preparation scholarships, and mentoring initiatives demonstrate promising practices, yet their reach and impact are uneven. Investments remain heavily concentrated in preparation, with fewer resources directed toward early recruitment or long-term retention supports. Without stronger attention to the “Explore” and “Thrive” stages, Minnesota risks losing momentum and missing opportunities to cultivate and sustain a truly representative workforce.

The recommendations in this report offer a roadmap for systemic change. Establishing a formal advisory structure will ensure that Tribal Nations, ethnic councils, and community partners shape decisions. Prioritizing programs with demonstrated effectiveness, expanding equitable access to funding, and investing in robust data systems will allow the state to better measure impact and refine strategies. Addressing barriers to preparation and providing comprehensive supports will increase the number of candidates who successfully complete licensure, while strengthening retention efforts will ensure that diverse teachers remain in the profession long term.

Achieving Minnesota's goal of adding approximately 1,425 new TOCAIT each year requires more than incremental progress; it requires sustained, coordinated, and equity-driven action. The strategies outlined here are mutually reinforcing; they build stronger pathways into the profession, remove systemic barriers, and create supportive environments where educators of color and American Indian educators can thrive. By implementing these recommendations, Minnesota can move closer to fulfilling its statutory and moral commitment to ensure every student learns from—and is inspired by—a diverse, effective, and thriving teacher workforce.

APPENDIX A – Individual Program Reports

Explore

The “Explore” stage in a teacher’s journey refers to increasing awareness and interest in education careers among a diverse range of individuals through recruitment initiatives such as marketing campaigns. Providing clear messaging to help individual see teaching as a viable and meaningful career path, especially for underrepresented groups.

Grow Your Own—Student Pathway

Description: GYO grant funds are available to Minnesota school districts, charters, Tribal contract schools, and cooperatives to develop innovative Grow Your Own programs that encourage secondary school students, especially students of color and American Indian students, to pursue teaching. Grantees who receive funds from the program use funds to:

- Support future teacher clubs or service-learning opportunities that provide secondary students with experiential learning that supports the success of younger students or peers and increases students’ interest in pursuing a teaching career.
- Develop and offer postsecondary enrollment options for “Introduction to Teaching” or “Introduction to Education” courses consistent with Minnesota Statutes 2023, [section 124D.09, subdivision 10](#), that meet degree requirements for teacher licensure.
- Provide direct support, including wrap-around services, for students who are of color or American Indian to enroll and be successful in postsecondary enrollment options courses under Minnesota Statutes 2023, [section 124D.09](#), that would meet degree requirements for teacher licensure.
- Offer scholarships to graduating high school students who are of color or American Indian to enroll in board-approved undergraduate teacher preparation programs at a college or university in Minnesota.

Example Activities:

- Future teacher club
- Internships helping plan and lead instruction for younger student
- Enrollment in Intro to Education courses or similar courses
- On campus tours
- Scholarships post-graduation to pursue teaching degrees

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 122A.73](#)

Funding: \$6.4 million in FY24 and \$25 million in FY25. Individual grants for the student pathway capped at \$500,000.

More Information: [Grow Your Own](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- Approximately 750 students have been given opportunities to explore teaching careers.

- Over 65% of the students who have been given the opportunity to explore teaching careers are students of color or Indigenous students.
- Of the students participating in Grow Your Own Programs over 50% plan to continue exploring or pursue teacher licensure.

Concurrent Enrollment Introduction to Teaching Grant

Description: The Minnesota Department of Education offered the Concurrent Enrollment Introduction to Teaching Grant to increase and diversify the teacher workforce in Minnesota. This grant opportunity is for Minnesota school districts and charter schools that partner with eligible postsecondary institutions to develop or expand Concurrent Enrollment “Introduction to Teaching” or “Introduction to Education” courses.

The vision for this program is to encourage all students, especially American Indian students and students of color, to consider teaching as a profession. By offering dual-credit postsecondary courses in high schools, this grant aims to increase the number of historically underserved students who earn postsecondary credit and apply to teacher preparation programs. This grant seeks to provide equitable access to these courses for all students, especially for American Indian students and students of color. The grant program is designed to create a collaborative effort between school districts and postsecondary institutions to ensure successful implementation. Finally, the grant program emphasizes the use of data and feedback to guide the continuous improvement of program offerings and achieve the intended outcomes.

Example Activities:

- Development and implementation of education pathways within secondary schools.
- Creation of councils or committees to provide leadership and insights for the grant project and other "grow your own" teaching initiatives.
- Marketing and promotion of education pathways to students and families of color, including Indigenous students and families.
- Supporting students in the college application process to specific teaching programs and visits to postsecondary campuses.
- Offering paid opportunities to students in education pathways (i.e. stipends for tutoring younger students in district summer programming).

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, section [124D.09, subdivision 10](#)

Funding: \$0.5 million in FY24 and \$0.5 million in FY25

More Information: [Concurrent Enrollment Introduction to Teaching Grant - FY24 and FY25](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- Grants – Since 2018, MDE has done four grant competitions and awarded 40 grants to create concurrent enrollment courses in 100 districts and charter schools. This includes seven new grants in FY24 to implement plans to expand concurrent enrollment in 29 districts and charter schools in FY25.
- Courses – Since 2018, 99 new courses were developed. In FY24, 34 courses were still offered.
- Students – 76 of the 262 students (29%) enrolled in the courses in FY24 are students of color or American Indian students. [Note: Course and student data is collected through Minnesota Common Course Catalogue and may be underreported by as much as 30% due to inconsistent district reporting]

Teacher Recruitment and Marketing Campaign

Description: The 2023 state legislature directed the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board to issue a request for proposals for the purpose of developing and implementing a marketing and outreach campaign to elevate the teaching profession and recruit teachers, especially teachers of color and American Indian teachers, high school and college students who have not chosen a career path, and adults seeking to change.

The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board awarded funds for the continuation and expansion of the Elevate Teaching campaign. The Elevate Teaching campaign continues to mobilize individuals, especially from BIPOC communities, to be champions of the teaching profession. Further, this campaign seeks to transform the public narrative about the profession and to elevate teaching to the reverence it deserves for our children and in our society, starting in Minnesota.

Example Activities:

- Completed Youth as Champions (YAC) 1.0 pilot program & launched YAC 2.0 program.
- Created Youth Key Messaging Kit and Social Media Downloads.
- Champion Toolkit created and translated to three most common non-English languages in Minnesota. Available on program website.
- Over 30 teacher interviews and stories collected and showcased on program website.
- Launched Futuremaker media campaign statewide: billboards, bus stops, buses and digital marketing.

Statute Reference: [Laws of Minnesota 2023, chapter 55](#), article 5, section 65, subdivision 10

Funding: \$0.5 million in FY24 and \$0.5 million in FY25; awarded as two \$250,000 grants each year.

More Information: [View the Elevate Teaching Website](#)

Data from FY2024-25 Implementation:

- 9.1 million impressions across digital, billboard, transit marketing efforts.

Elevate Teaching's efforts aim to uplift the voices of people of color, ensure engagement with diverse groups of stakeholders, and seek input/feedback that the messaging associated with the campaign is representative and resonates with communities of color.

Become

The “Become” stage in a teacher’s journey refers to preparing teachers through diverse and accessible pathways, ensuring that all teachers are equipped to serve a broad range of students. Emphasizing the importance of multiple quality licensure pathways and eliminating barriers such as financial and institutional obstacles to becoming a licensed teacher.

Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color (CUGMEC)

Description: The Collaborative Urban & Greater Minnesota Educators of Color (CUGMEC) Grant Program is intended to support and increase the number of teacher candidates of color and Indigenous teacher candidates at PELSB-approved teacher preparation provider institutions of higher education across the state.

In the 2025 legislative session, this grant was renamed to the Educator Tuition Assistance Program (ETAP) and the agency responsible for implementing the grant has changed from PELSB to MDE.

Example Activities:

- Provide tuition scholarships and direct support expenses for eligible teacher candidates of color or American Indian teacher candidates to pursue a Tier 3 teaching license in Minnesota
- Facilitate activities geared toward recruiting additional eligible teacher candidates to the program
- Provide indirect support for the candidates in the form of mentorship, affinity groups, coaching, advising, peer support, and professional development opportunities

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 122A.635](#)

Funding: \$5.3 million dollars in FY24 and \$5.3 million dollars in FY25

More Information: [Educator Workforce and Development Center](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- 830 teacher candidates of color and American Indian teacher candidates received CUGMEC scholarships across 13 grantee programs.
- 100% of participants either finished their program or returned the following academic year to continue the program in FY24.
- The recruitment rate was 18% in FY23 and 87% in FY24.
- The graduation rate was 59% in FY22, 66% in FY23, and 79% in FY24.
- The licensure rate was 67% in FY22, 51% in FY23, and 85% in FY24.
- The average grant awarded to the teacher preparation provider institution was \$400,000.00.

Underrepresented Student Teacher Grants

Description: The Minnesota Underrepresented Student Teacher Grant (USTG) aims to support students who belong to a racial or ethnic group underrepresented in the Minnesota teacher workforce in becoming teachers. The grant accomplishes this by providing postsecondary financial assistance during the term in which the student is completing the required full-time student teaching experience to obtain a Tier 3 teaching license. Eligible students must be enrolled in PELS approved teacher preparation program at a Minnesota postsecondary institution that requires at least 12 weeks of student teaching and demonstrate financial need as measured by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the state financial aid application.

Example Activities:

- Provide a one-time grant up to \$7,500 to assist with tuition, fees, and other expenses such as housing and transportation.
- Ensure that expected student teachers apply for all other available financial aid by requiring the completion of the FAFSA or the state financial aid application.
- Alleviate student loan debt since the students have access to this other means of financial aid.
- Support teacher candidates in completing requirements for a Tier 3 teaching license.

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 136A.1274](#)

Funding: \$1.9 million in FY24 and \$1.9 million in FY25

More Information: [Minnesota Student Teacher Grants](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- A net total of \$850,178 was disbursed to 131 eligible students across 23 postsecondary institutions.
- The average award amount was \$6,489.91.
- Compared to FY23, there was a 10% increase in the number of students awarded and a 23% increase in the amount of funds disbursed.

Alternative Teacher Preparation Grant Program

Note: This program has not been funded since FY2018-19, so there is no data to report.

Grow Your Own—Adult Pathway

Description: The Grow Your Own (GYO) Adult Pathway Grant provides scholarships and/or stipends to school district employees or community members affiliated with the district/charter/tribal school to pursue an initial teacher license and teach in their communities. Scholarships and/or stipends are designed to reduce if not eliminate the financial burden of teacher preparation or additional certification for educators. Grant funds may also be used to establish innovative expanded GYO programs across one of five licensure pathways.

Example Activities:

- Create and implement a GYO program for school district employees or community members affiliated with a district/charter/tribal school to pursue an initial teaching license, particularly focusing on participants of color or American Indian.
- Provide academic and navigational support to help candidates be successful in their licensure program.
- Offer scholarships and/or stipends to participate in a teacher preparation program (note: 80% of grant funding must be used for participants of Color or American Indian).
- Evaluate the program, including assessing its impact and success, to inform and support future improvements.

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 122A.73](#)

Funding: \$6.4 million in FY24 and \$25 million in FY25

More Information: MDE [Grow Your Own](#) webpages

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- 276 adults received scholarships/stipends to pursue a first-time professional teaching license. Out of those 276 candidates, 222 of those adults (80.4%) identify as people of color or American Indian.
- 92.7% of the program participants are either continuing their licensure program or have completed their licensure program. In FY23, the retention rate was 93% and in FY22 the retention rate was 100%.
- 55 participants completed their programs and received a license. Additionally, 48 were employed either in the district who provided them the scholarship/stipend or in another Minnesota School District.

Minnesota Indian Teacher Training Program (MITTP)

Description: The Minnesota Indian Teacher Training Program (MITTP) provides scholarships to American Indian students who are pursuing any pre-K through grade 12 career in an educational setting. In addition to teaching degrees, other eligible academic programs include, but are not limited to, American Indian language and culture educators, early childhood educators, and K-12 school administration. At least 80% of grant dollars must be used for student scholarships or stipends designed to reduce if not eliminate the financial burden of teacher preparation or additional certification for educators.

Example Activities:

- Provide scholarships to eligible American Indian people to pursue a teaching license or advanced degrees in the K-12 education field (note: 80% of grant funding must be used for this purpose)
- Recruit students to the program and provide wrap-around supports

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 122A.63](#)

Funding: \$2.2 million in FY24 and \$.6 million in FY25

More Information: [MITTP webpage](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- 38 American Indian persons received MITTP scholarships across five joint grantee programs.
- 84% of participants either finished their program or are returning for the following school year to continue the program. In FY23, the retention rate was 76% and in FY22 the retention rate was 86%.
- The average scholarship award was \$10,186.19.

Grow

The “Grow” stage of a teacher’s journey refers to supporting the successful early years of teaching by providing comprehensive induction programs, offering mentorship at all schools, facilitating professional development for new licensure fields, and ensuring a seamless transition from “Become” with the ultimate goals of increasing new teachers’ preparedness and reducing attrition rates.

Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant

Description: The Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant (TMRG) Program provides support for the development and expansion of affinity groups, and teacher induction, mentorship, and retention programs, especially those serving teachers of color and American Indian teachers. It is designed to help develop programs for teachers new to the profession or district, teaching residents, teachers of color, American Indian teachers, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs, or experienced teachers in need of peer coaching.

Pursuant to statute, beginning in 2024, an increased appropriation for this grant program required PELSB to distribute a minimum of \$2,330,000.00 each fiscal year for the development and expansion of mentoring, induction, and retention programs designed for teachers of color or American Indian teachers.

Note: As a result of the 2025 legislative session, the administering agency of this grant changed from PELSB to MDE.

Example Activities:

- Pay a stipend to a mentor who may be a current or former teacher who has taught at least three years and is not on an improvement plan, and/or provide additional stipends as an incentive to mentors of color or who are American Indian
- Financially support professional learning community affinity groups across schools, within, and between districts, for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to come together throughout the school year
- Provide professional development focused on ways to close opportunity and achievement gaps for students of color and American Indian students
- For teachers of color and Indigenous teachers, funds may be used for professional development graduate coursework toward a first master’s degree in a field related to their teaching licensure or toward an additional teaching license

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 122A.70](#)

Funding: \$3.3 million dollars, with \$2.3 million dollars reserved for programs designed for teachers of color or American Indian teachers awarded in FY24; and \$3.3 million dollars, with \$2.5 million dollars reserved for programs designed for teachers of color or American Indian teachers awarded in FY25

More Information: [PELSB Grants Page](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers grant funding supported 1,785 teachers of color and American Indian teachers and 5,708 total teachers across 40 grantee programs.
- The average grant award was \$80,000.00.

Thrive

The “Thrive” stage of a teacher’s journey refers to creating a supportive and equitable learning and working environment for educators, where they are valued, have what they need to succeed, and are empowered through teacher leadership opportunities to support the growth of other teachers.

Come Teach in Minnesota

Description: The Come Teach in Minnesota Program provides funding for districts or charter schools to offer hiring bonuses for teachers who are American Indian or people of color who move to Minnesota from another state or country. Eligible employers may offer a hiring bonus up to \$5,000 for eligible teachers. Additionally, if a teacher who received a hiring bonus successfully completes four years of service in the hiring district or charter school, that teacher can receive a retention bonus equal to their hiring bonus. When an employer hires an eligible teacher, our program processes the reimbursement request to fund the hiring bonus.

Note: This program was not funded for the 2026-27 biennium and beyond.

Example Activities:

- Employers provide a hiring bonus when an eligible teacher is hired
- Employers may also offer a retention bonus to eligible teachers who have worked for up to four years with the hiring district

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 122A.59](#)

Funding: \$0.2 million in FY24 and \$0.4 million in FY25

More Information: [Come Teach in Minnesota](#) webpage

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- 44 teachers of color were offered hiring bonuses
- Of the 44 teachers, 37 are Asian, 4 are Black or African American, 2 are Latine, and 1 is Middle Eastern

Achievement and Integration Program

Description: Eligible districts develop plans and receive funding to increase racial and economic integration of students and decrease academic disparities based on students' diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Plans must include a goal for increasing students' equitable access to effective, more diverse teachers. Funds may be used to recruit and retain teachers of color and American Indian teachers and for professional development to increase achievement of all students, in addition to other studies.

Example Activities:

- Grow your own for paraprofessionals and other staff, specially focusing on BIPOC individuals.
- Mentoring and Coaching of TOCAIT.
- Training for HR Staff/hiring committees to disrupt implicit bias in hiring practices.
- Partnering with local colleges and universities on teacher preparation programs.
- Developing career pathways for students to explore education field.
- Affinity groups to retain Black, Indigenous and people of color staff.

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 124D.861](#) and [124D.862](#)

Funding: \$85 million in FY2024 and \$87 million in FY2025

More Information: [Achievement and Integration Program](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- During the 2023-24 school year, a total of 177 districts participated in the program
 - 130 in Cohort One, which implemented the first year of their current plan cycle
 - 47 in Cohort Two, which implemented the second year of their plan cycle
- After implementing their Achievement and Integration plans for one year, 72% of Cohort One reported being on track to meet their goals by the time their plan ends on June 30, 2026, or already met their goals
- After implementing their Achievement and Integration plans for two years, 76% of Cohort Two reported being on track to meet their goals by the time their plan ends on June 30, 2025, or already met their goals
- 100% of districts have a Teacher Equity goal written into their three-year A&I plan
- FY24 29% of Teacher Equity strategies are specific to the recruitment and retention of TOCAIT educators
- Of the total TOCAIT specific strategies
 - 31.5% Explore
 - Career Exploration courses accessible to students in grades 9-12
 - 12% Become
 - Partnerships with community colleges and universities to increase staff with obtaining teaching license
 - Implementation of Grow Your Own within districts
 - 17.5% Grow
 - Advertising for open positions within community and local colleges
 - Screening applications/ job fairs
 - Mentorship programs for teachers in years 1, 2, and 3
 - Implementation of Grow Your Own within districts

- 39% Thrive
 - Professional Development
 - Mentorships for new hires

Teacher Shortage Loan Repayment Program

Description: Student loan repayment assistance of up to \$1,000 a year (max of five annual awards for an individual) to eligible teachers who belong to a racial or ethnic group underrepresented in the Minnesota teacher workforce, provide classroom instruction in a license field shortage area in Minnesota, or provide classroom instruction in a rural school district. License field shortage areas are identified by PELSB in coordination with OHE and rural school districts are defined in statute as school districts with fewer than 30 resident pupil units per square mile.

Example Activities:

- Provides student loan repayment awards to eligible teachers who met service obligation in previous academic year
- Encourages teachers to serve and continue to serve as eligible teachers in Minnesota

Statute Reference and Funding: Minnesota Statutes, [section 136A.1791](#).

Funding: \$1 million in FY24 and \$1 million in FY25, base funding is \$200,000 per year

More Information: [Minnesota Teacher Shortage Loan Repayment Program](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- 4 American Indian or Alaska Native teachers received TSLRP awards.
- 9 Asian teachers received TSLRP awards.
- 15 Black or African American teachers received TSLRP awards.
- 12 Hispanic or Latino teachers received TSLRP awards.
- 2 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander teachers received TSLRP awards.
- The average award was \$1000.00.

APPENDIX B -- Additional Program Summaries

The following programs are not explicitly designed to increase the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers, though many have that impact and include that as a priority in the program. Agency staff include these programs in this report as a representation of the larger ecosystem of state funded initiatives connected to the teacher workforce efforts.

Grow Your Own – Early Childhood Educators

Description: The Grow Your Own Early Childhood and Family Educator grant program provides grants eligible Minnesota-licensed family child care or licensed center-based child care programs, school district or charter school early learning programs, Head Start programs, institutions of higher education, and other community partnership nongovernmental organizations, to host, build, or expand an early childhood educator preparation program that leads to an individual earning the credential or degree needed to enter or advance in the early childhood education workforce. The goal of the grant program is to develop an early childhood education workforce that more closely reflects the state's increasingly diverse student population and ensure all students have equitable access to high-quality early educators. This grant can help individuals earn a child development associate (CDA) credential, an associate degree in child development/early childhood education, a bachelor's degree in early childhood and family education studies or early childhood licensure programs, or other early childhood credentials.

Example Activities:

- Provide scholarships to participants for training and higher education programs that lead to educators being able to enter or advance in the early childhood education field.
- Provide stipends to participants to cover training and education costs related to the successful completion of education and training requirements.
- Develop unique student teaching and field placement opportunities that provide mentorship and support to participants as they complete training and education requirements.

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 142D.33](#).

Funding: \$2.5 million in FY24 and \$2.5 million in FY25

More Information: [Supporting the Early Care and Education Workforce](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- During the first round of Grow Your Own Early Childhood and Family Educator grant program 13 organizations were awarded grants. These included public schools, child care programs, Head Start, and institutes of higher education.
- Grow Your Own Grant participant data will be available at the end of FY25 as funded programs started in June/July 2024.

Special Education Teacher Pipeline Program

Description: Grant funding is available for districts, charters, collaboratives, and joint eligible applicants to develop a pipeline of trained, licensed Tier 3 or 4 Special Education teachers. Grantees must prioritize Tier 1 and 2 Special Education teachers, then may recruit and support Tier 3 or 4 teachers seeking additional licenses, paraprofessionals, and other non-licensed employees. Funding must be used to support employees who demonstrate a willingness to be a special education teacher after completing the program.

Example Activities:

- Provide scholarships, stipends, or both to reduce the financial barrier of teacher preparation.
- Provide supports for participants, including mentoring, licensure test preparation, and technology support to become a licensed Special Education teacher.
- Recruit students to the program and provide wrap-around supports.

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes, [section 122A.77](#).

Funding: \$20 million in FY24 and \$10 million in FY25 (note: \$0 in FY26, and \$10 million base in FY27 and beyond)

More Information: [Special Education Teacher Pipeline Program](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- 257 employees across more than 150 districts, charter schools and cooperatives received financial support to pursue a special education license in FY24, even though the grant had not been implemented for a full fiscal year.

School Support Personnel Grant

Description: The Student Support Personnel Workforce Pipeline provides grants to institutions of higher education preparing student support personnel to develop a workforce pipeline. The goal of this program is to support students to complete accredited programs and become licensed school psychologists, school nurses, school counselors, and school social workers. In addition to increasing the workforce, the program is intentionally designed to increase the number of student support personnel who identify as people of Color and/or Indigenous. At least 80% of grant funds awarded to each program must be used to cover the cost of program attendance and/or provide paid internships (which are required for degree completion). Many programs are also providing mentoring, additional networking and professional development opportunities, and addressing barriers to licensure.

Example Activities:

- Provide scholarships and/or paid internships to students pursuing degrees in 1 of 4 student support professions (must have strategies to prioritize students who identify as people of color or indigenous)
- Recruit students into the program
- Provide wrap-around supports such as mentoring, affinity groups, licensure exam preparation, job search assistance, social-emotional support
- Provide additional professional growth and identity activities such as facilitating professional development opportunities, covering the cost of professional memberships, attending professional conferences and/or networking events, etc.

Statute Reference: Laws of Minnesota 2024, chapter 115, article 5, section 14.

Funding: \$5 million in FY24 and \$5 million in FY25.

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- 16 accredited program applied and received funds
- 322 students served in fall of 2024, 132 (41%) identify as students of color or Indigenous

Statewide Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program

Description: Administered by MDE, the vision of the Statewide Teacher Mentoring Program is to develop and retain a diverse educator workforce by implementing an induction program that provides culturally responsive learning and inclusive working environments in which students and teachers thrive. The program funds grants for regional induction and mentoring approaches that support new special education teachers and new teachers in other shortage areas, with a focus on educators of color and Indigenous teachers, mentors, and leaders.

Example Activities:

- Guiding the development of an induction vision, mission, and program goals for regional grantees, districts, and charters
- Providing seminars, workshops, and forums for new teachers, mentors, and leaders
- Supporting on-the-ground coaching
- Supporting new teacher orientation and onboarding
- Providing opportunities for regional networking, affinity groups, and communities of practice

Statute Reference: Laws of Minnesota 2023, [chapter 55](#), section 64, subdivision 13

Funding: \$9.94 million in a one-time appropriation for 2024, with funds available through June 20, 2027.

More Information: [MDE Induction and Mentoring Webpage](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- In FY24, all 138 teachers mentored through the program shared the intent to continue working in education for the following school year.
- In FY24, the program provided a culturally responsive teacher induction and mentoring framework to enhance the capacity of Minnesota Service Cooperatives (MSC), LEAs, and school leaders to establish effective induction and mentoring programming.
- In FY24, the program selected ten regional grantees to support districts, charters, and tribal contract schools with induction and mentoring for Tier 1 and Tier 2 special education teachers with a focus on teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

Teacher Residency & Apprenticeship Grants

Description: These grants support the development and implementation of teacher residency and apprenticeship programs in Minnesota. These programs are partnerships between teacher preparation programs and school districts, designed to attract, prepare, and retain a diverse and effective teacher workforce, particularly teachers of color. The planning grants provide funding for institutions and their partners to design new programs, while the implementation grants support existing, named residency programs. Both types of grants aim to expand the number and geographical diversity of these programs and to diversify the educator workforce by attracting and retaining candidates from underrepresented backgrounds. The residency model, which includes a full year alongside an experienced mentor teacher and provides living wages, is highly effective at retaining new teachers in the profession.

Example Activities:

- **Planning Grants:**
 - Participation in the National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR) Residency Foundations course and Design Academy.
 - Stipends and honorariums for planning team members.
 - Candidate recruitment activities and materials.
 - Travel, supplies, and materials for planning meetings.
- **Implementation Grants:**
 - Supports for program participants including stipends, tuition, and mentor compensation.

Statute Reference: Laws of Minnesota 2023, [chapter 55](#), article 5, section 64, subdivision 16

Funding: \$3 million in FY24 and \$3 million in FY25.

More Information: [Educator Workforce and Development Center](#)

Data from FY24 Implementation:

- Both planning and implementation grant activities started during FY24, so no data was collected for FY24.
- Based on July 1, 2024-December 30, 2024, Interim Progress Reports from implementation grantees, grant funds supported 56 residency program participants. Over 60% of participants identified as people of color or American Indian people.

Planning grants were finalized in FY24, and activities primarily began in FY25, so no data was available regarding progress as of June 30, 2024.