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## **Grow Your Own Grant (GYO) Pathway for Students – FY25**

Report to the Legislature

As required by Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 122A.73

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As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197: This report cost approximately \$1,920.20 to prepare, including staff time, printing, and mailing expenses.

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

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## Legislative Charge

Under Minnesota Statutes 2025, section [122A.73, subdivision 6](#), Grow Your Own (GYO) grant recipients must annually report to the commissioner on their activities within the grant, including number of participants, the percentage of participants who are of color or American Indian, and an assessment of program effectiveness, including participant feedback, areas for improvement, the percentage of participants continuing to pursue teacher licensure, and, where applicable, the number of participants hired in the school or district as teachers after completing preparation programs. The commissioner must publish a report for the public that summarizes the activities and outcomes of grant recipients and what was done to promote sharing of effective practices among grant recipients and potential grant applicants.

## Executive Summary

Minnesota's GYO grant is focused on increasing the number of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota. The grant expands pathways to the profession for secondary students and adults by reducing financial barriers of entry and providing programming to support future teachers. This report focuses on fiscal year 2025 (FY25) activities for all grantees implementing from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2025. This includes:

- Five programs that received funding in the winter of FY22 (FY22 cohort)
- Six programs that began July 1, 2022 (FY23 cohort)
- 10 programs that began July 1, 2023 (FY24 cohort)
- Four programs that began July 1, 2024 (FY25 cohort)

The GYO student pathway grant includes 31 districts, charters, or cooperatives (grantees) serving 1,878 students, over 71% of whom identify as students of color or American Indian. A majority of students reported plans to continue exploring careers in education.

## Introduction

GYO programs are partnerships between educator preparation programs and schools to recruit and prepare local community members (e.g., paraeducators, non-certified school staff, high school students, or other community members affiliated with the district) to enter the teaching profession and teach in their communities.

Minnesota began offering districts and charter schools the opportunity to receive state grant funds for GYO programs in the 2016-17 school year. Minnesota's GYO grant program offers districts and charter schools two pathways—one for adults and one for secondary students.

## GYO Pathway for Students

Grants up to \$500,000 are available to eligible applicants to create a GYO program to provide secondary students, especially students of color and American Indian students, opportunities to explore and pursue teaching careers. Grant activities include future teacher clubs, service-learning opportunities, postsecondary or

concurrent enrollment options that meet degree requirements for teacher licensure, direct supports/wrap-around services that give access and support in postsecondary or concurrent enrollment options, and scholarships to teacher preparations programs or schools with articulated transfer pathways to teacher preparation programs within Minnesota.

To be eligible for award, an eligible applicant (school district, charter school, cooperative unit, or Tribally Controlled School), must meet specific equity requirements. When supporting future teacher clubs, service-learning opportunities, or postsecondary/concurrent enrollment options, the percentage of students of color or American Indian students participating must be the same as or greater than that of the district. When providing direct support/wrap-around services and scholarships, all students must be students of color or American Indian students.

### **Application and Award**

MDE must give priority to eligible applicants with the highest total percentage of students of color and American Indian students. To determine this, MDE ranks applicants into quintiles (five equal groups) based on percentage and assigns priority points as follows: quintiles with the most students of color receive five priority points, the next quintile receives three priority points, the middle quintile receives one priority point, and the remaining quintiles do not receive priority points.

To the extent that there are sufficient applications and to the extent practicable, MDE must also award an equal number of grants between districts in greater Minnesota and those in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. To meet this requirement, MDE confers an award to the highest scoring applications from each group in alternating fashion.

### **Program Practices**

In addition to administering the grant, MDE is also charged with promoting effective practices among grant recipients and potential grant applicants. MDE conducted several activities to this end, including but not limited to:

- 2019–current – Created and maintained a [dedicated MDE webpage](#) to share high-level information about the program. A newsletter about GYO and other efforts to address teacher workforce shortages have also been in use for several years.
- February 2021 – Partnered with [New America](#) on a two-part GYO webinar series—one focused on adult pathway programs and the other focused on programs for students. The series featured panelists from Minnesota and around the country.
- August 2021 – Provided public informational webinar about the FY22 grant opportunity.
- December 2021 – Provided an opportunity for FY22 grant applicants to provide feedback about the administrative decisions (e.g., capping the grant at \$750,000) MDE made for the grant competition. The intent was to learn about the opportunities, barriers, and subsequent implications of MDE’s administrative decisions so that changes could be made ahead of FY23 competition.
- December 2021 – Provided public informational webinar about the FY23 grant opportunity.

- February 2022 – Provided a networking opportunity for FY22 grantees to learn about the mechanics of the grant, connect with fellow grantees, build relationships, solve problems of practice, and learn more about the program.
- July 2022 – Provided an opportunity for FY22 and FY23 grant applicants to provide feedback about the administrative decisions (e.g., capping the grant at \$750,000) MDE made for the grant competition. The intent was to learn about the opportunities, barriers and subsequent implications of MDE’s administrative decisions so that changes could be made ahead of FY24 competition.
- October 2022 and March 2023 – Provided a networking opportunity for all current student pathway grantees (FY22 and FY23) to connect with each other and share practices, challenges and successes around the various program elements while also problem solving and addressing questions.
- November 2022 – Provided public informational webinar about the FY24 grant opportunity, including sharing two new resources from New America:
  - [GYO Educators: A Toolkit for Program Design and Development](#) (web resource)
  - [GYO Educators: Opportunities and Challenges for Strengthening Teacher Preparation](#) (webinar)
- November 2022 – Provided a networking opportunity for FY22 and FY23 grantees to learn about the mechanics of the grant, connect with fellow grantees, build relationships, solve problems of practice, and learn more about the program.
- October 2023 – Provided a networking opportunity for FY22, FY23, and FY24 grantees to learn about the mechanics of the grant, connect with fellow grantees, build relationships, solve problems of practice, and learn about the program.
- January 2024 - Ongoing – Provide Community of Practice sessions for active grantees.

## Report Methods and Limitations

This document is a consolidated report providing an analysis section that includes tables directly answering the questions listed in statute. Each grantee was also asked to provide a summary of their program located in the Appendices.

It is important to note that **the results only reflect activities from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025 (FY25)**, and only include activities from the five FY22 grantees, six FY23 grantees, 10 FY24, and four FY25 grantees.

FY22 grantees began their grant in the winter of 2021-22 due to the timing of the competition. Otherwise, FY23, FY24, and FY25 grantees began on July 1 of their first fiscal year.

FY26 grantees were awarded funding that began on July 1, 2025, and are not included in this report.

Certain data elements were reported inconsistently across grantees. MDE staff contacted grantees to correct data if there were reporting errors. The reported data was sent to MDE through an annual program report survey, including subsequent corrections to the reports facilitated by MDE staff.

## Analysis

A total of four student pathway grants were awarded in FY25, adding to the five programs from FY22, six programs from FY23, and 10 programs from FY24, representing a total of 25 grantees around the state. One additional award was initially approved for funding, but the district elected to decline funding. Two grantees

received multiple awards between FY22-25 (Burnsville and Minneapolis), so this report will reference 22 programs being implemented.

Three grantees partnered with other eligible applicants to implement a GYO program, thus a total of 30 participating districts, charters, cooperatives, and Tribally-Controlled Schools across the state. Thirteen participating schools are in the Twin Cities seven-county metro area, and nine are from Greater Minnesota.

Only the fiscal host representing the 22 programs will be listed in the following data. For a full list of participating schools, view the [Appendices](#).

## **Pathways to Support Student Learners Supported by the Grant**

Districts who received student pathway GYO grants in FY25 were able to use funding in the following ways:

- Supporting future teacher clubs and/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.
- Developing and offering postsecondary and/or concurrent enrollment options for "Introduction to Teaching" or "Introduction to Education" courses consistent with Minnesota statute 2025, section 124D.09, subdivision 10, that meet degree requirements for teacher licensure.
- Providing direct support, including wrap-around services, for students of color or American Indian students to enroll and be successful in postsecondary/concurrent enrollment options courses under section 124D.09 that would meet degree requirements for teacher licensure.
- Offering scholarships to graduating high school students of color or American Indian students to enroll in board-approved undergraduate teacher preparation programs at a college or university in Minnesota or at an institution that has an articulated transfer pathway with a board-approved teacher preparation program.

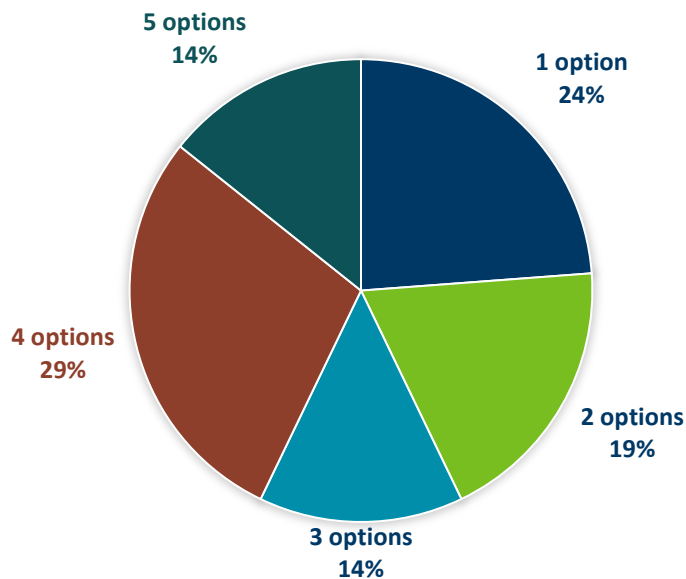
Of the 22 grants, nine provided future teacher clubs, 17 provided service-learning opportunities like internships, 16 provided postsecondary/concurrent enrollment options, 11 provided direct support for PSEO/concurrent enrollment students, and 12 provided scholarships to graduates pursuing education degrees.

### Frequency of Each Opportunity Type in Participating Programs



Grantees are required to offer at least one of the five program options (future teacher clubs and service-learning opportunities, such as internships; PSEO/concurrent enrollment courses; direct support, such as wrap-around services; and scholarships). Of the 22 programs in effect during FY25, five of the programs offered only one program option, four programs offered two program options, three offered three program options, six offered four of the five program options, and three offered all five options for students to explore and pursue teaching careers.

### Number of Program Options Offered

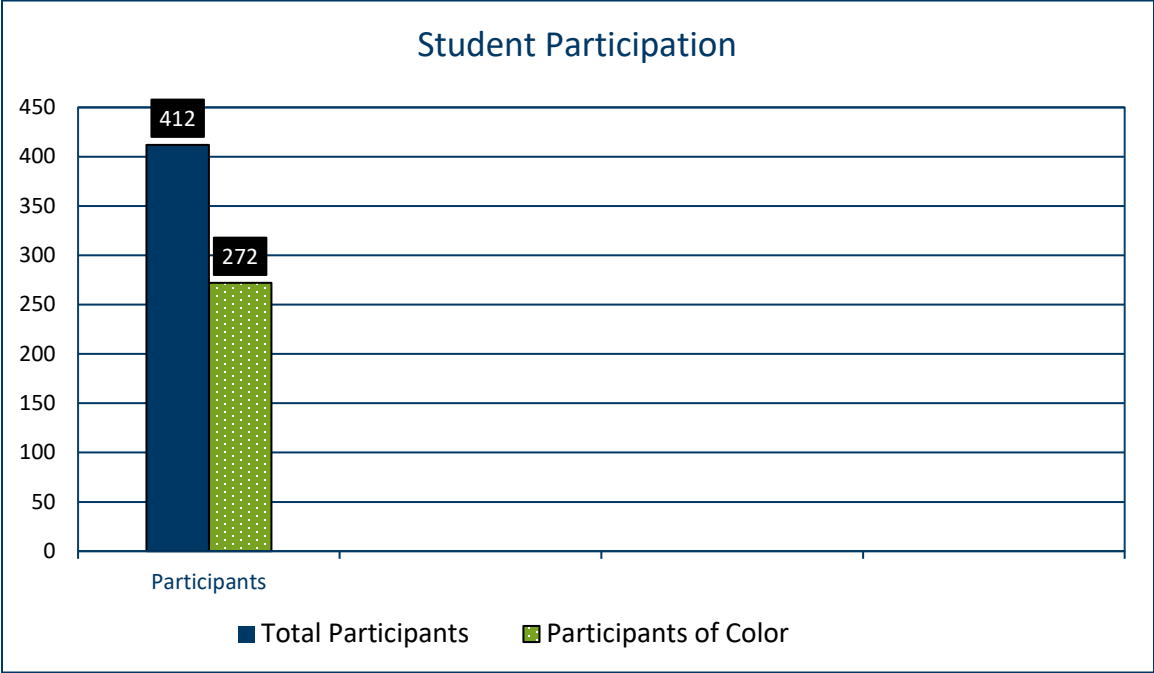


Over 1,800 students participated in at least one program option provided across the 22 districts with over 1,300 of those students being students of color or American Indian students. This is an increase of over 1,000 students from FY24. The percentage of students who identify as people of color or American Indian also continues to increase, rising to over 71 % in FY25. Should these students continue to matriculate into a teacher preparation program and become licensed teachers, the demographics of participating students is promising for the program’s purpose to “develop a teaching workforce that more closely reflects the state’s increasingly diverse student population.”

For a full list of program opportunities, refer to the [Appendices](#).

### Future Teacher Clubs

Future teacher clubs meet during or after school and provide participating students with a variety of activities to support exploration of teaching careers. Club activities include participation in Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) education-focused competitions, college visits, and opportunities to tutor peers and younger students. Over 400 students participated in future teacher clubs in nine of the grant programs during the 2024-25 school year. Nearly 300 of the students, or over 66% of the participating students in the nine programs were students of color or American Indian students.



Information provided by programs in the annual report documents that regular attendance fluctuated and that some programs only offered the club for one semester while others operated with weekly meetings for at least one hour. Reports also identified scheduling as one of the most consistent barriers for the clubs, resulting in experimentation with meeting formats including:

- During class with permission
- Across lunch periods

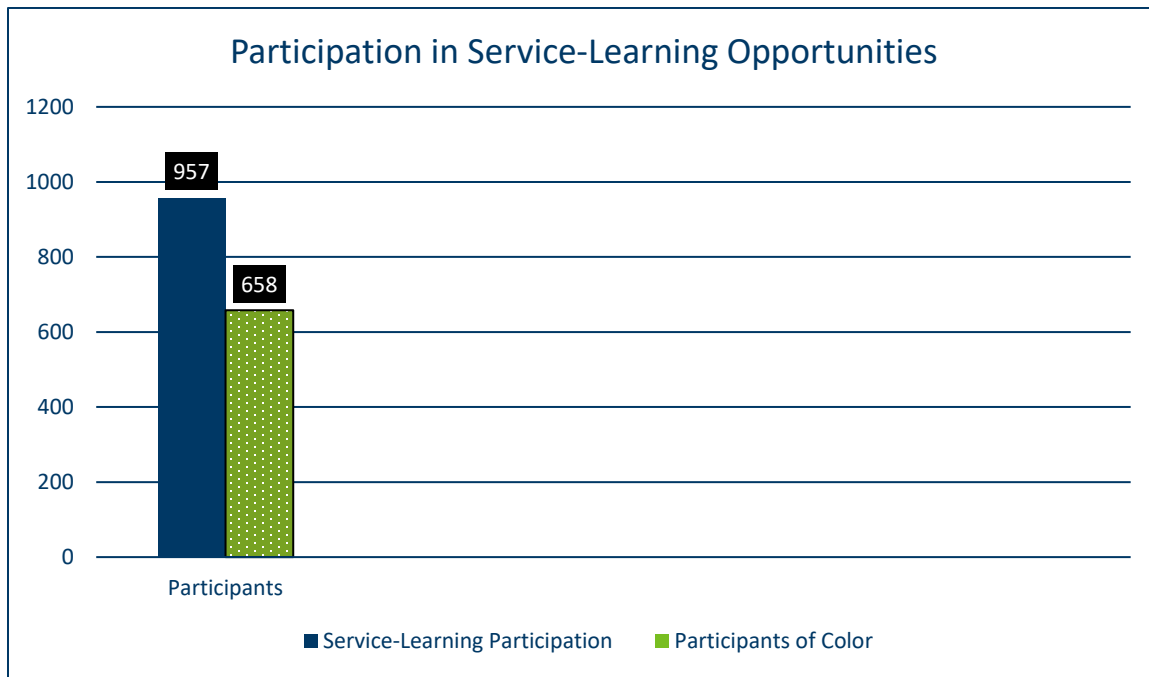
- After school to accommodate student schedules

Both the timing and the activities of the club had an impact on regular attendance. The most engaging activities appear to be college visits, guest speakers (retired teachers, student teachers, specialists, etc.), interactive games such as Jeopardy, and craft-related activities. Attendance also appeared to increase when programs offered incentives such as “lunch and learn” sessions or providing a meal or snacks in after-school sessions. Additionally, some programs found that consistent promotion and communication combined with the incentives helped to boost turnout.

While future teacher clubs compete with other school clubs, programs, and athletic seasons, evidence seems to demonstrate that through low-barrier and flexible design there is growth over time. As programs continue to offer these valuable opportunities to students and consistently promote the available resources, there appears to be notable growth in attendance.

### Service-Learning Opportunities

Service-learning opportunities provide students with real-world teaching experience, leadership skills, and exposure to diverse educational settings, while also supporting education pathway enrollment growth and strengthening ties between schools and community organizations. In FY25, 17 GYO student pathway programs offered service-learning opportunities. These programs were utilized by over 950 students, over 650 or nearly 69%, of whom were students of color or American Indian students.



According to the annual reports submitted by the programs, students who participated in the service-learning opportunities such as:

- Tutoring and classroom support, where students:

- Tutored peers, adult English learners, and new-to-country students.
- Served as classroom aids during summer school providing hands-on teaching experience.
- Volunteered in elementary/middle school classrooms and programs like Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and extended day.
- Community and cultural engagement, where students:
  - Organized culture week with over 100 attendees.
  - Volunteered at a local library, food shelf, nursing home, and events like Math Literacy Night and Launch into Literacy.
  - Participated in other activities such as creating multilingual literacy kits and mental health care kits.
- Internships, where students were paid to complete placements in classrooms with mentoring and weekly check-ins. Interns assisted with lessons, small groups, tutoring, and classroom preparation.
- Special projects where students participated with activities such as Junior Achievement BizTown partnership for financial literacy education and a meal-packing event for Feed My Starving Children,
- Independent studies for students to explore specialized roles.

In general, the reports show that most internships averaged around four hours a week and can consist of anywhere from 20 to 250 hours, depending on the model and activity.

Overall, the annual reports showed that more students participated in service-learning opportunities during FY25 than in previous years, and the programs contributed that growth to several factors including:

- Choice and flexibility – When students were given the opportunity to select activities they enjoyed, it boosted engagement.
- Promotion – Strong outreach through things like community events, social media, school announcements, Schoology, Parent Square, and central office recruitment efforts .
- Incentives – Small stipends for internships and tutoring helped overcome financial barriers for students needing paid work, particularly for commitments over 20 hours.

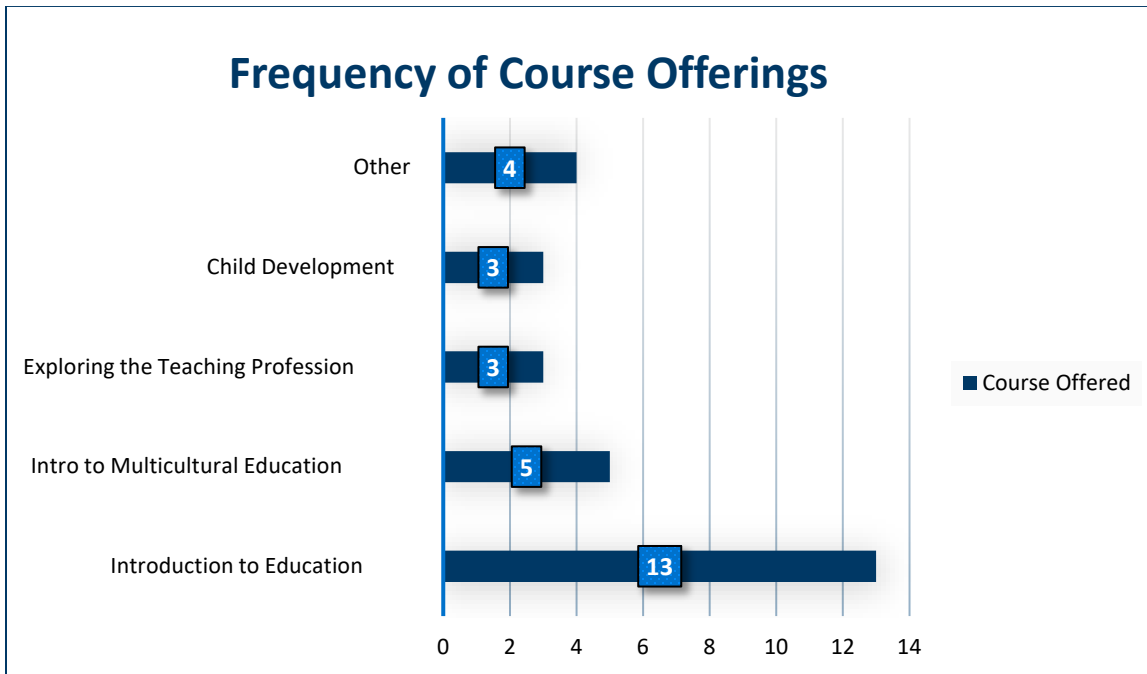
## Concurrent Enrollment Options and Related Wrap-Around Supports

Concurrent enrollment options allow students to take courses within the school day that receive both high school and college credit. These courses are taught onsite in the school with a qualified and trained teacher in partnership with a college or university program. The 16 grant programs that provided concurrent enrollment options during FY25, reported over 700 students participating in courses, with approximately 450, or 62.3%, of those students being students of color or American Indian. Many programs reported that students faced barriers enrolling due to scheduling conflicts, especially when courses were only offered once or were competing with other course offerings. However, many also reported future enrollment growth as awareness increases and students are better able to plan for the courses.

A variety of courses are offered through concurrent enrollment, including:

- Introduction to Education,
- Introduction to Multicultural Education,
- Technology for Educators,

- Introduction to Special Education,
- Introduction of Growth and Development,
- Human Relations and Multicultural Education,
- Introduction to Child Development,
- Exploring Careers in Education,
- Introduction to K-12 Education 1 and 2,
- Exploring the Teaching Profession 1 and 2, and
- Introduction to Early Childhood Education.



In addition to providing concurrent enrollment courses, 11 of the programs also provided wrap-around or direct supports for the students. These programs provided direct support to over 575 students, with nearly 400 (72%) being students of color or American Indian students. The supports provided fell into five categories:

- Academic support:
  - Tutoring and academic guidance provided by education pathway teachers.
  - Mentorship from practicing educators during classroom placements.
  - Assistance through mini-lessons, team teaching, peer editing, research support, etc.
  - Technology access through loaned equipment and training.
- College and career support:
  - Registration and application assistance including guidance through the applications and other paperwork as well as fee coverage.
  - Exposure to college through visits and guest speakers.
  - Career Pathway guidance by providing information on the licensure process, preparation programs, scholarship opportunities, etc.

- Social-emotional and equity support:
  - Holistic supports like one-on-one check-ins, prioritizing academic and emotional needs, and providing quiet places for work, organization, or prioritization assistance.
  - Providing affinity support groups for students of color, multilingual students, and future educators.
  - Providing access to mental health resources and school social workers.
  - Ensuring culturally responsive curriculum by having courses that emphasize educational justice and antiracism and guest speakers who are educators of color and American Indian educators.
- Logistical and financial support:
  - Providing metro transit passes for internships or students taking courses on college campuses.
  - Providing the textbooks and other required materials for the concurrent enrollment course.
- Community and Program Enhancement opportunities:
  - Workshops and events featuring sessions on postsecondary opportunities, scholarships, and teaching careers as well as future teacher signing day to celebrate students pursuing education careers.
  - Partnerships and collaborations with organizations like Black Men Teach for mentoring and tutoring.
  - Creating cohorts within the program for community-building and identity formation.

The various wrap-around supports helped students to navigate college-level rigor, explore teaching careers and overcome barriers. The supports were comprehensive and emphasized equity and access while also building strong community partnerships to enrich student experiences.

## Scholarships

Scholarships allow programs to pay the cost of attendance for graduates who enroll in teacher preparation programs either at Minnesota universities with programs approved by the Professional Education Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) or at a community college that has an articulated transfer pathway with the PELSB approved preparation program. Twelve of the grant programs offered scholarships during Fiscal Year 2025, awarding partial to full scholarships to 112 students. According to data from the annual reports, scholarships ranged from \$300 to \$18,000 per student, with some being one-time scholarships and others being renewable as long as the student remained in the teacher preparation program and the district had grant funds to provide the scholarship.

Six of the 12 districts offer single year scholarships, with two of those allowing students to renew the scholarship for additional years if there is money available and the student demonstrates they are in good standing with their university and progressing toward a teaching degree. One of the grant programs also allows the students to carry funds not spent from the initial scholarship award to the next semester, but the other three providing only one-time scholarships to students. The other six grant programs offer four-year scholarships, although one program had no applicants during fiscal year 2025. All six of the four-year scholarship programs reported having processes in place for students to provide documentation that they are making academic progress toward a teaching degree or that students were required to meet with a staff member regularly to retain funding. A few

programs reported that over time the students receiving scholarships have struggled with college and have been unable to continue with the program for various reasons.

## Other Data Collected from Grant Programs

In addition to asking grant programs to report about participation in various program activities, the Annual Report expected them to provide details about program promotion and feedback from participants. In this section some of the key findings from these sections of the reports are highlighted to help others who might wish to create or improve programs learn more.

### Program Promotion and Student Recruitment

In the annual report each grant program was asked to provide information about how they made students, staff and community members, including families aware of the program's availability and how students could become involved. Responses to these items in the report focused on both general program promotion and student recruitment as well as target promotion and recruitment for students of color and American Indian students.

#### General Recruitment

The grant programs use a layered approach combining digital, print, and in-person strategies, leveraging community partnerships, school staff referrals and student advocacy to promote the education pathway opportunities and recruit students. Efforts emphasize equity, family engagement, and celebrating success stories to inspire participation. The methodologies included:

- Multi-channel communication
  - Digital Outreach: Emails, Schoology posts, Google Classroom announcements, blog posts, social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn), and district websites.
  - Print and Visual Media: Flyers, posters, slides, and recruitment videos shown in advisory classes.
  - News and Publications: Articles in local newspapers, quarterly magazines, and family newsletters.
- Community engagement
  - Presentations at local service clubs, community events, and career fairs.
  - Partnerships with community organizations (e.g., Right Track, Junior Achievement, Black Men Teach).
  - Future Teacher Signing Night and other celebratory events to build visibility and excitement.
- School-based recruitment
  - Teacher and Counselor Referrals: Teachers nominate students; counselors provide guidance and support.
  - Classroom Presentations: Targeted outreach in courses like Agriculture, Music, Family and consumer science (FACS), Child Development, and Ethnic Studies.
  - Student-Led Promotion: Videos, posters, and peer-to-peer advocacy.
- Targeted outreach

- Use of internal data (career interest surveys, MCIS data) to identify potential candidates.
- Direct engagement with affinity groups, alternative learning centers, and students of color and American Indian students.
- Guaranteed acceptance for students of color pursuing education careers.
- Family Communication
  - Newsletters, Navigator calls, and translated materials for multilingual families.
  - Tabling at family nights and district events to provide information and answer questions.
- Incentives and Opportunities
  - Scholarships and college credit options (PSEO, concurrent enrollment).
  - Shadowing experiences, service learning, and field trips to teacher preparation programs.
- Partnerships and Collaboration
  - Collaboration with college tech centers, counseling departments, and TORCH program for targeted outreach.
  - Coordination with district communications teams for consistent messaging.
- Word-of-mouth and student champions
  - Current participants serve as ambassadors, sharing experiences and encouraging peers.
  - Positive mentor relationships and success stories highlighted in communications.

## Targeted Recruitment

Since the Grow Your Own Student Pathway is intended not only to provide opportunities for all students to explore education careers but to also recruit more students of color and American Indian students to consider and pursue education careers, grant programs must provide specific, targeted recruitment for those students to ensure they meet the demographic requirements of the program. To accomplish this, participating programs used additional, multi-faceted recruitment methods, focused on students of color and American Indian students, that included:

- Personal and Relationship-Based Outreach
  - One-on-one invitations from coordinators, teachers, counselors, and cultural liaisons.
  - Building trusting relationships with students and families.
  - Emphasis on making students feel seen, valued, and supported.
- Leveraging Existing Networks and Staff
  - Use of success coaches, cultural liaisons, affinity group advisors, and equity coordinators.
  - Collaboration with AVID, college access programs, and TORCH staff.
  - Engagement of educators of color and American Indian staff as mentors and role models.
- Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Communication
  - Translated materials (English, Spanish, Somali, etc.).
  - Messaging with a diversity in images and language.
  - Outreach during cultural family nights, community events, and affinity group meetings.
- Multi-Channel Promotion

- Flyers, school announcements, Schoology posts, and social media.
- Tables at community events and school functions.
- Presentations in classrooms, student clubs, and ethnic studies courses.
- Targeted Recruitment with Broad Access
  - Focus on students of color and American Indian students while still promoting to all students.
  - Use of nominations from teachers and staff to identify potential candidates.
  - Highlighting dual-credit opportunities, scholarships, and career pathways.
- Visibility and Recognition
  - Public recognition through scholarship award ceremonies.
  - Features on role models and success stories to inspire participation.
- Continuous Improvement and Growth
  - Acknowledgment that targeted recruitment is a growth area.
  - Plans for more intentional outreach to specific communities (American Indian, Black, Latine).

## Program Evaluation

In the annual reports each grant recipient submits they are asked to share about how they review their program and continually ensure the program is meeting the intended purpose along with student, teacher and community needs. In the information from their evaluations that was shared by grantees, seven themes were identified:

- Authentic, Hands-On Learning is Highly Valued
  - Students consistently reported that real-world experiences—such as classroom observations, college visits, and professional conferences—were the most impactful.
  - These experiences helped students visualize their future in education and strengthened their commitment to the pathway.
- Need for Expanded Exposure
  - Students want more college campus visits, additional classroom experiences, and opportunities to interact with professionals.
  - There is interest in service-learning projects, internships, and career development activities.
- Communication and Awareness Gaps
  - Some students were unaware of available opportunities, especially those interested in art and music education.
  - Families need better outreach, including multilingual communication (Spanish, Somali).
  - Counselors noted that students in smaller schools prefer discreet, streamlined options rather than high-visibility clubs.
- Mentorship and Role Clarity
  - Students appreciated mentoring but wanted mentors to be more engaged and clear about expectations.
  - Mentors need orientation and training to understand their roles.

- Equity and Academic Support
  - Structured academic supports (homework help, typing workshops, grade check-ins) are needed for students in the pathway.
  - Intentional recruitment of BIPOC students and collaboration with cultural liaisons is critical.
- Program Growth and Sustainability
  - Programs are expanding organically, adding summer opportunities and considering partnerships for PSEO courses.
  - Strong partnerships with colleges, community organizations, and alumni are key for sustainability.
- Family and Community Engagement
  - Translation of materials, family info sessions, and community tabling are essential for trust and visibility.
  - Involving parents and bilingual staff in events like college visits strengthens engagement.

There were also some key information points related to feedback from students, feedback from teachers, overall survey data, and challenges faced within the programs:

- In terms of student feedback, one of the biggest takeaways from the evaluations mentioned across programs was that the hands-on experiences are the most influential in shaping career interest.
- Teachers frequently mentioned in many programs how the programs positively impact teaching and student engagement and that they want more such opportunities in the future.
- Many of the grants referenced survey data that showed strong satisfaction rates and continued interest in education careers because of the programs.
- Among the most frequent and impactful challenges were situations where there was limited awareness of the program opportunities, confusion on the role of mentors, and logistical issues, particularly for college visits.

Within the evaluations grant recipients were also asked to identify the next steps they planned to take from the information they learned. Across the various responses in the annual report there were seven main areas that frequently were identified with similar improvement opportunities or next steps.

- Expanded Authentic Learning Opportunities, such as:
  - Increasing college visits and classroom observations.
  - Adding internships, service-learning projects, and career development workshops.
- Improved Communication and Recruitment, including:
  - Creating a pathway one-pager resource for students and families.
  - Collaborating with fine arts departments and cultural liaisons for targeted outreach.
  - Using newsletters, social media, and student-led interviews to promote visibility.
- Strengthened Mentorship, for instance:
  - Including mentors in orientation sessions.
  - Providing clear guidelines and tools for mentors and interns.
- Enhanced Academic and Career Support, involving:

- Offering structured homework help, typing workshops, and resume-building activities.
- Exploring post-secondary enrollment option (PSEO) partnerships for early college credit.
- Family and Community Engagement, incorporating:
  - Continued multilingual outreach and family info sessions.
  - Invitations to parents and community members to chaperone college visits.
- Adaptations for Rural and Small Schools, comprising of:
  - Developing discreet, integrated options (e.g., during school hours) rather than after-school clubs.
  - Exploring virtual engagement for students with limited availability.
- Data-Driven Continuous Improvement, for better evaluation and accountability, consisting of:
  - Tracking participation by demographics and school.
  - Using surveys and dynamic data to refine programming and recruitment strategies.

## Feedback from Student Participants

Along with the general evaluation and feedback areas referenced previously, in the annual report each grant program is asked to provide specific information related to feedback from students. Since students are the primary beneficiaries of these programs it is important to ensure their feedback is being heard and addressed to ensure the programs are meeting the intended needs and helping students to successfully explore education careers and determine their own next steps in becoming educators.

## Strengths

Based on the reports from participating programs, the students engaged in activities to explore education careers identified many helpful and engaging aspects of the programs. The most frequently cited program strengths were:

- Authentic, hands-on field experiences (classroom observations, tutoring, service learning, internships)
- Strong community and relationships (peer bonding, small class size, reflections, caring teachers/coordinators)
- Structured, supportive advising (regular check-ins, responsive communication, Navigators, coordinators)
- College and career pathway access (college visits, campus immersion, guest speakers, exposure to career options)
- Academic value and confidence-building (rigorous, relevant coursework—special education, multicultural education; skill development)
- Financial and credential support (scholarships, paid internships/stipends, college credit, no-cost participation)
- Well-run logistics and engaging activities (organized schedules, flexibility, dorm life, meals/snacks, enjoyable clubs/events)

## Challenges

While there were many strengths to the student pathway programs that were implemented during the 2024-25 school year, there were also some challenges that students identified that made the program complicated for them to access. The top five challenges identified in the annual reports from programs were:

- Scheduling and time constraints - Students consistently struggled to fit program activities alongside school, work, family responsibilities, and other extracurriculars. Conflicts with required high school courses and limited flexibility in meeting times were common pain points. This included: difficulty finding meeting times, conflicts preventing enrollment in concurrent courses, juggling internships and college-level coursework, and after-school transportation that lacked flexible departures.
- Heavy workload with limited downtime - The program (especially camp/academy components when they were included) felt physically and mentally demanding. Students cited too little rest, packed schedules, and homework overload. Lack of downtime and personal space; sleep deprivation from early mornings/late nights; “too much talking/class time”; walking long distances between activities; feeling overwhelmed by academic rigor and time management were also referenced in some student responses.
- Program Logistics and Communication Issues - Operational barriers and unclear communication created friction—particularly at the start of the year. Confusing parent portal registration; unclear or incorrect schedules; “not having a meeting time for check-ups”; billing issues (e.g., Minnesota State University); inconsistent reminders in hybrid classes; online textbook loading problems; weather-related cancellations; navigator turnover in some districts; outreach gaps where students didn’t always hear about events.
- Internship/Placement Challenges and Classroom Management - Students wanted more time with elementary students and placements aligned with their interests (e.g., high school vs. elementary). Many found classroom management and role clarity challenging. This included things like: kids not listening/cooperating; adapting to differing teaching styles; uncertainty about stepping in when mentors had substitutes; limited placements close to home; small class sizes leading to less interaction/support; desire for additional service-learning opportunities.
- Social Dynamics, Confidence, and Representation - Some students felt social anxiety or experienced group drama. Others reported needing to build confidence—both for themselves and for younger students they support. A lack of teachers of color affected belonging and the ability to see themselves represented in the profession. Some examples provided were: anxiety about large-group workshops; interpersonal conflicts; helping younger students become more confident; personal shyness at the start; desire for role models who share lived experiences.

In addition to the already identified challenges, some student participants noted some secondary and context specific challenges such as:

- Family and Career Perceptions: Some families were hesitant due to teacher pay concerns, work/childcare needs, or dorm living; one student left to pursue welding after comparing salaries.
- College Visits and Travel: Requests for more (and farther) university visits faced constraints from budgets, staffing, weather, and academic eligibility policies.
- Transportation: Available, but sometimes not flexible enough for early departure to other commitments.

- **Planning and Pathway Clarity:** Some students didn't know next steps or how to sequence classes to fit schedules.
- **Preference to Live at Home:** A desire to stay near family influenced college decisions.

## Recommendations

There were six main areas around which many grantees identified recommendations from student participants for improving the program:

- **Streamline Logistics and Communication, which included:**
  - **Simplify Registration:** Make the parent/student registration process more user-friendly from the start.
  - **Improve Communication:** Provide clearer schedules, more reminders for assignments, and regular check-ins (virtual or in-person).
  - **Billing Clarity:** Ensure third-party billing (e.g., meal plans) is accurate and transparent.
  - **Early Planning:** Share club dates and program details during summer; increase outreach to families and staff through meetings, emails, and informational sessions.
- **Provide More Flexible Scheduling and More Downtime, such as:**
  - **Reduce Fatigue:** Add breaks for snacks, bathroom, and rest; allow more free time for homework and personal needs.
  - **Creative Scheduling:** Offer flexible meeting times to accommodate school, work, and extracurricular commitments.
  - **Adjust Activities:** Move campus tours to the first day; reduce back-to-back guest speaker sessions; consider earlier bedtimes during camps.
- **Expand Experiential Learning Opportunities, including:**
  - **More Classroom Experience:** Increase time working with students in schools and internships.
  - **Variety in Placements:** Offer options across grade levels and different school types (charter, bilingual, diverse settings).
  - **Field Trips and College Visits:** Add more visits to universities and diverse schools; include shadowing teachers of color.
  - **Hands-On Workshops:** Focus on practical skills like classroom management, self-care, and real-world teaching strategies.
- **Enhance Cultural Responsiveness and Representation, for example:**
  - **Culturally Relevant Content:** Make classes more reflective of students' needs and backgrounds.
  - **Diverse Role Models:** Invite guest speakers from varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including Latino teachers and first-generation educators.
  - **Partner with Equity Staff:** Collaborate with cultural liaisons to recruit and support diverse students.
- **Strengthen Social and Community Connections, including:**
  - **Structured Social Activities:** Add game nights, karaoke, and bonding activities to build community.
  - **Clarify Behavior Expectations:** Set norms upfront to reduce drama and improve group dynamics.

- Peer Support: Allow friends to be placed together for confidence during teaching experiences.
- Improve Program Structure and Support, for instance:
  - Course Design: Consider making courses fully in-person or year-long for deeper learning; provide more class time for assignments.
  - Mentoring and Check-ins: Increase one-on-one support and planning tools for time management.
  - Recruitment and Awareness: Continue developing promotional materials and ensure all staff understand the pathway to guide students effectively.

## Conclusion

The GYO grantees that implemented programs in FY25 include some who are just beginning their work on these programs (FY25) and others who have more than a year implementing the grant (FY22-24). The public may notice differences in, for example, program participation when comparing FY25 grantees that are just getting started with FY22-24 grantees who have had time to implement and refine their programs.

From this data we can see a few highlights about the four years of the GYO grant that allows for a five-year grant period. A few insights and takeaways include:

- 1,878 secondary students participated in a GYO program for students
- Over 71% identify as people of color or American Indian
- A majority of students plan to continue exploring careers in teaching or pursue teacher licensure.

The GYO student pathways grant is having an impact on helping students, particularly students of color and American Indian students, explore teaching as a career path and begin pursuing licensure. One of the early successes in the program is that the percentage of students of color American Indian students participating in the GYO student pathway programs is nearly double the percentage of students in the state who identify as students of color and American Indian. Another is that most of the students participating remain interested in pursuing teaching. Further study needs to be conducted, over a longer period, to determine the full impact of providing students opportunities to explore teaching careers during secondary education to determine the impact on increasing the teacher workforce, particularly for teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

## Appendices

### Grant Awardees, Partners and Funding

Austin Public Schools – FY24 = \$749,763.25

Brooklyn Center Community Schools – FY24 = \$585,500

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose – FY24 = \$663,893.31

Burnsville Public Schools – FY23 = \$441,708; FY24 = \$472,780

Columbia Heights Public Schools – FY24 = \$175,894.52

Faribault – FY25 = \$500,000

Freshwater Education District – FY23 = \$745,731.82

Partnering with Cass Lake-Bena, Long Prairie-Grey Eagle, Northland Community Schools, and Walker-Hackensack-Akeley Public Schools

High School for Recording Arts – FY22 = \$371,995.45

Intermediate District 287 – FY23 = \$308,688.00

Madelia Public Schools – FY22 = \$727,500.00

Partnering with St. James Schools

Minneapolis Public Schools – FY22 = \$725,566.79; FY23 = \$690,000.00; FY25 = \$495,157.69

Monticello Public Schools – FY23 = \$568,003

Northfield – FY25 = \$289,531

Osseo Area Schools – FY24 = \$370,632

Owatonna Public Schools – FY24 = \$750,000

Partnering with Mankato, Faribault, and St. Peter Public Schools

Robbinsdale Public Schools – FY24 = \$479,940

Rochester Public Schools – FY24 = \$750,000

Roseville Area Schools – FY24 = \$463,079

Saint Paul Public Schools – FY22 = \$727,500.00

Shakopee Public Schools – FY23 = \$750,000.00

St. Cloud Area Schools – FY22 = \$663,784.96

White Bear Lake – FY25 = \$500,000

## Grant Programs and Included Activities

This chart outlines the activities that each grant program implemented in their program during FY 25. This data was used to provide the information on pages seven and eight regarding program opportunities that were provided to students.

District (Grantee)	Future Teacher Club	Service-Learning Opportunities	Concurrent Enrollment/PSEO Courses	Direct Supports, Including Wrap-Around Services for PSEO	Scholarships
Austin	X	X	X	X	
Brooklyn Center	X	X	X	X	X
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose	X	X			
Burnsville-Eagan-Savage	X	X	X	X	X
Columbia Heights		X			
Faribault	X	X	X		
Freshwater Education			X	X	X
High School for Recording Arts					X
Intermediate 287	X	X			
Madelia					X
Minneapolis		X	X	X	X
Monticello		X	X	X	X
Northfield	X	X			
Osseo			X		
Owatonna	X	X	X		X
Robbinsdale			X		
Rochester		X	X	X	X
Roseville		X	X		
Saint Paul		X	X	X	X
Shakopee	X	X	X	X	X
St Cloud		X	X	X	X
White Bear Lake		X	X	X	