



Evidence-Based Grant Report

Introduction

Minnesota statute 127A.20 requires that any state funded grant recipient must, within 180 days of the end/close of the grant period, submit a report “to the commissioner of education and to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over prekindergarten through grade 12 education,” and that, “[t]he report must be filed with the Legislative Reference Library....” The report must contain a description of the data collected and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies identified in the grant application. The report may identify or propose alternative strategies based on the results of the data.

This document provides a template for that report. It can be included as an appendix to any additional closeout reports, but it must be submitted separately to the required legislative committee leaders. Directions for legislative report submissions can be found at the end of this reporting template.

Grant Information

Name of grant: *MDE Student Support Personnel Workforce Pipeline*

Amount of grant: *\$750,000*

Grant recipient: *University of Minnesota - Twin Cities: Counselor Education Program*

Contact name: *Dr. Carolyn Berger and Laura Keogh*

Contact phone number: *561-779-8179; 952-688-8864*

Contact email address: cabberger@umn.edu; keogh025@umn.edu

Goal Alignment

Grantees must, to the extent practicable, align goals of the grant to the state of Minnesota’s world’s best workforce (WBWF) and federally required Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability systems. Use the following checklist to indicate which areas of WBWF/ESSA are supported by the grant activities.

- ☐ Meet school readiness goals
- ☐ Third grade students achieve grade-level literacy

- ☐ Close the academic achievement gap among racial and ethnic groups and/or economic groups
- ☒ **Students attain career and college readiness**
- ☒ **Students graduate from high school**
- ☐ Multilingual learners identified as English learners show progress toward English language proficiency
- ☒ **School climate improves**

If not provided elsewhere, provide a bulleted list of any additional goals.

Collected Data

Which data was collected to evaluate the education program and use of grant funds?

All data associated with this grant was collected between September 2024 and January 2026.

Ten students participated in the Scholarship Program across the 2024-2025 academic year, as first-year graduate students. These students continued to participate in the Scholarship Program across the 2025-2026 academic year, as second- year graduate students in their final year of preparation for employment as licensed school counselors in the state of Minnesota. Each of the ten Scholarship Recipients was provided 100% tuition coverage for their first and second years in the program and were provided stipends to help cover living expenses as they complete their practicum and internship fieldwork in various MN PreK-12 Public Schools.

Data collected in association with this grant includes:

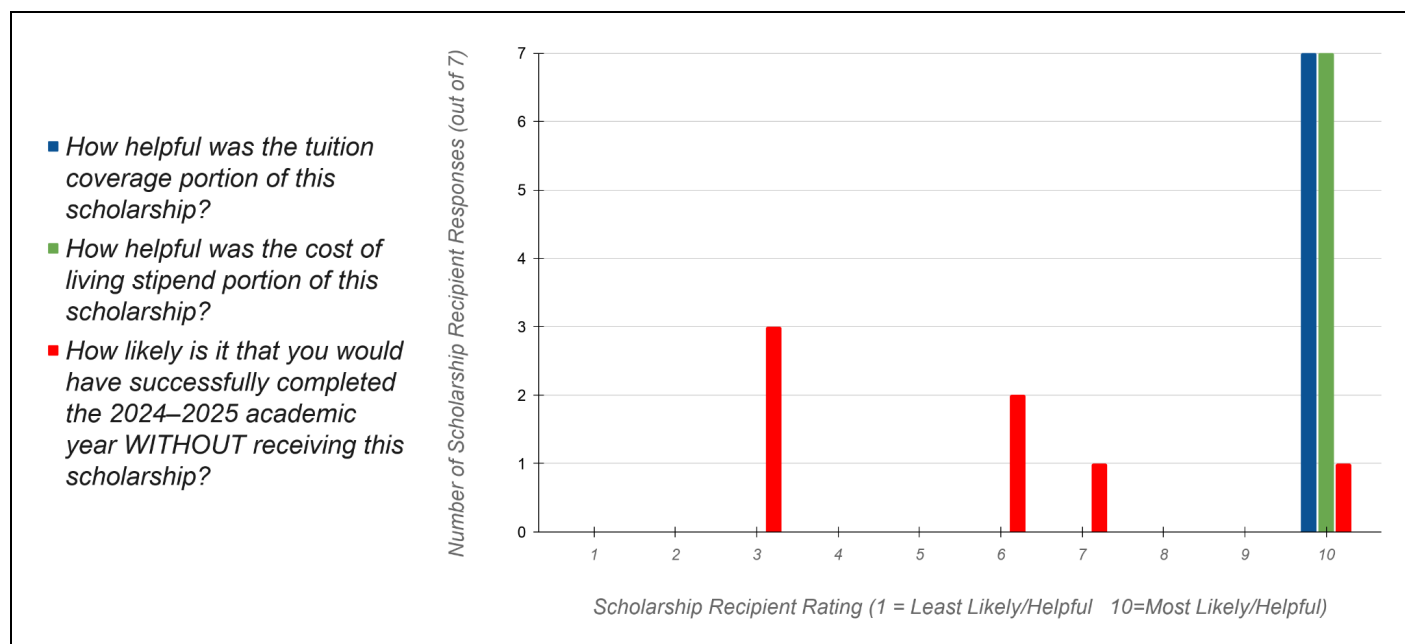
- ***Relevant Identifiers of Scholarship Recipients***
 - *7/10 Scholarship Recipients identified as BIPOC*
 - *6/10 Scholarship Recipients identified as fluent multilingual speakers*
 - *6/10 Scholarship Recipients identified as first generation college students*
 - *1/10 Scholarship Recipients identified as a legal caretaker of dependent(s)*
 - *7/10 Scholarship Recipients note significant financial hardship as a barrier to licensure*
- ***Retention Rates of Scholarship Recipients***
 - *10/10 Scholarship Recipients were successfully retained in the Counselor Education program*
- ***Academic Standing of Scholarship Recipients***
 - *10/10 Scholarship Recipients were on-track to graduate and in good academic standing as of January 2026. This includes maintaining a GPA of 3.0 across all courses and completing 700-hour practicum and internship experiences at various MN PreK-12 Public Schools. Their expected graduation is May 2026.*
- ***Scholarship Recipients' Practicum and Internship Placements in MN PreK-12 Public Schools***

The 10 Scholarship Recipients engaged in field work through practicums and internships, serving PreK-12 students at 26 different schools, across 8 different Minnesota school districts. Details below:

 - *Anoka-Hennepin Schools: Coon Rapids Middle*
 - *Minneapolis Public Schools: Franklin Middle, Northeast Middle, Sanford Middle, Washburn High*
 - *Osseo Area Schools: Garden City Elementary, Maple Grove Senior High, Osseo High, Osseo Middle, Weaver Lake Elementary, Woodland Elementary*
 - *Richfield Public Schools: Richfield Middle*
 - *Rosemount - Apple Valley - Eagan Schools: Apple Valley High*

- Saint Paul Public Schools: Capitol Hill Elementary, Central High, Chelsea Heights Elementary, Hidden River (formerly Ramsey) Middle, E-STEM Middle, Highland Park Middle, Highland Park Senior High, Humboldt Middle, Jie Ming Mandarin Immersion Academy, LEAP High, Wellstone Elementary
- Spring Lake Park Schools: Spring Lake Park High
- South Washington County Schools: Woodbury High
- **Scholarship Recipients' Service through MN Tier 2 Licenses**
 - 1 Scholarship Recipients successfully applied for and received a Tier 2 License through PESLSB in order to be hired as Long-Term Substitute School Counselor at Battle Creek Elementary in Saint Paul, which simultaneously fulfilled the requirements of their internship field work hours.
- **Scholarship Recipients' participation in mentorship program**
 - 1/10 Scholarship Recipients, who identified as BIPOC, requested and was matched with a BIPOC mentor. The mentor was a licensed school counselor currently practicing in the state of MN, whom the Scholarship Recipient was able to connect with and seek professional guidance/support from as needed throughout their training.
- **Scholarship Recipients' Perspectives on Usefulness of Funds and Management of Scholarship Program**

The 10 Scholarship Recipients were surveyed anonymously in May 2025 to elicit their perspectives and feedback with regards to the scholarship program; 7/10 responses were received. The individual responses [are linked here](#). Key feedback are summarized in the chart below:



Evaluation of Effectiveness

Based on the collected data, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used.

Ratings of the effectiveness of our Scholarship Program Strategies are as follows:

- **Providing 100% tuition coverage to all Scholarship Recipients: Highly Effective**

Scholarship Recipients expressed often through both official evaluation means (e.g. the anonymous feedback survey conducted in May 2025, as mentioned and linked in the section above) and unofficial evaluation means (e.g. personal testimonials shared with legislators in February 2025, [full letter linked here](#)) that the tuition support made attainment of licensure and retention in the program possible. Scholarship Recipients expressed significant removal of financial barriers due to the tuition coverage, noting for instance:

“Receiving this grant has been a tremendous support in my academic journey, allowing me to focus on my master's program without the overwhelming burden of working excessive hours. Without this financial assistance, I would have had to dedicate much more time to employment, which could have taken away from my studies” - E

“This grant has provided me with an incredible opportunity—not only to pursue a career I have been passionate about for a long time but to fully dedicate myself to my studies and professional growth without the burden of financial stress” - W

“This scholarship is crucial for my journey to become a licensed school counselor” - J

- **Providing stipends to provide support with cost-of-living to all Scholarship Recipients: Highly Effective**

Similar to what is noted above, Scholarship Recipients often expressed gratitude for stipends, especially in the second year of the program as they completed the required 600-hours of internship experience in PreK-12 Minnesota Schools, noting for instance:

“Without this grant, I may have had to make the impossible choice of sacrificing my career and academic goals and dreams to continue to support myself and my family--now, I feel confident that I will continue to thrive in the Counselor Education program at the University of Minnesota and I will be able to graduate successfully as a first-generation undergraduate and graduate student.” - C

“This scholarship has been a major blessing on my life, and I hope that this funding gets approved next year once again, allowing me to fully dedicate myself as a student devoted to becoming the best counselor they can be.” - Anonymous

“Both the tuition coverage and stipend checks allowed me to engage with the class readings and content even more since I did not need to have a secondary job to go to after class. I am positive that I have gotten more out of this program due to the MDE scholarship” - Anonymous

- **Providing close-contact advising to all Scholarship Recipients throughout the 2-year program: Effective**

Scholarship Recipients also noted through both official and unofficial evaluation means, as mentioned above, that they felt the communication and support from Grant Coordinators was largely helpful and effective, noting for instance:

“I truly felt supported—CE faculty did an excellent job guiding us through the process and making sure we stayed informed and encouraged.” - Anonymous

“The communication from the MDE scholarship team has been fantastic. Every single time I had a question, there was almost instantly a response. The ability to communicate, provide opportunities, and help out in any way possible was always amazing. The

application process all the way through was handled very well in my opinion.” - Anonymous

Still, there were both expected and unexpected delays in implementation of some aspects of the scholarship program. This came largely from issues related to organizational logistics and the nature of dispersal of such significant funding (e.g. changes in personnel at the University level and at MDE, delays in dispersal of funds from the University to students). Students expressed some concern around these delays and noted, for instance:

“I feel like all aspects were covered adequately and clearly. Early on, there was some concerns regarding when the funding would be provided, and how much the funding would be, but most of those were held up by the University of Minnesota itself and not the team in charge.” -Anonymous

“I think one thing that could have been clearer was when the scholarship would actually be distributed (especially at the beginning of the fall). However, I know that this was difficult due to the circumstances of this being a new thing!” - Anonymous

- ***Providing optional mentorship to BIPOC Scholarship Recipients with BIPOC mentors in the field: Effective***

Originally, Grant Coordinators had planned to implement a larger-reaching mentorship program to connect BIPOC Scholarship Recipients and BIPOC school counselors currently practicing in Minnesota. However, due to a number of factors including unexpected costs associated with out-of-state tuition costs for Scholarship Recipients and allocation of time and resources across the grant period, official mentorship matching was implemented on a case-by-case basis. 1/10 Scholarship Recipients participated in this mentorship, and rated the experience as a 10/10 in helpfulness.

Notably, our scholarship program was successful in encouraging CE students from largely underrepresented backgrounds, with unique skill sets and life experiences to pursue school counseling licensure and commit to practicing in Minnesota PreK-12 schools upon graduation. In fact, one Scholarship Recipient switched tracks of study in our program from Clinical/Mental Health Counseling to School Counseling in light of the scholarship award. Another Scholarship Recipient expressed that they had planned to practice in a state outside of Minnesota before receiving the scholarship. Another two Scholarship Recipients expressed consideration of moving to other states to practice before receiving the scholarship. All of this is to say that the scholarship awards made possible by the MDE SSPWP Grant successfully incentivized our Scholarship Recipients who will now go on to better serve Minnesota PreK-12 students, their families, and communities as licensed school counselors.

Alternative Strategies (Optional)

Identify or propose alternatives based on the results of the data.

Report Submission

Commissioner of Education

Submit one electronic copy to the Commissioner of Education via the MDE Authorized Representative (your main contact at MDE for this grant).

Legislative Reference Library (from their website)

To submit a report to the Legislative Reference Library, please send one electronic copy (Word, PDF, URL) to reports@lrl.mn.gov and two print copies to:

Attn: Chris Steller
Legislative Reference Library
645 State Office Bldg.
100 Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Legislative Committees with Jurisdiction

Reports may be sent electronically to the chairs, ranking minority members, and committee assistants of the following committees. Contact information for those individuals is available on the committee webpages.

[Senate Education Finance Committee](#)

[Senate Education Policy Committee](#)

[House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee](#)

[House Education Finance Committee](#)

[House Education Policy Committee](#)