DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

2026 Summary Report: Increasing Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers (TOCAIT) in Minnesota

Report to the Legislature

As required by Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122B.117

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As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197: This report cost approximately $4,899.45 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 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. 136A.1276 was only funded once in fiscal years 2018-19. Since this report focuses on grant program data reported through school year 2024-25, 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 racial 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 initial report was published and is available on the Department of Education website.

Executive Summary

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.

In the 2025-26 school year, there were 71,242 educators in teaching positions in Minnesota public schools. Of those, 5,604 (7.87%) were teachers of color or American Indian teachers as a combined group. There were 238 (0.33%) American Indian educators assigned to teaching roles.

In 2025-26, 40.59% of Minnesota public school students identified as students of color or American Indian students as a combined group. American Indian students represent 3.62% of the student population.

There is a 32.72-point gap in racial and ethnic demographic representation in the teacher workforce. Based on the 2025 report, Minnesota would need to recruit, prepare, and hire approximately 1,980 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).

Introduction

This 2026 report on increasing teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOCAIT) is a supplement to the initial report published in 2025. It primarily provides updates to the data and strategies of the initial report. Subsequent even-numbered year reports will be complete reports.

For a complete Introduction and other context for this supplemental report, consult the initial report published on the Department of Education website.

Teacher Workforce Data

The following statewide teacher workforce data illustrates 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.

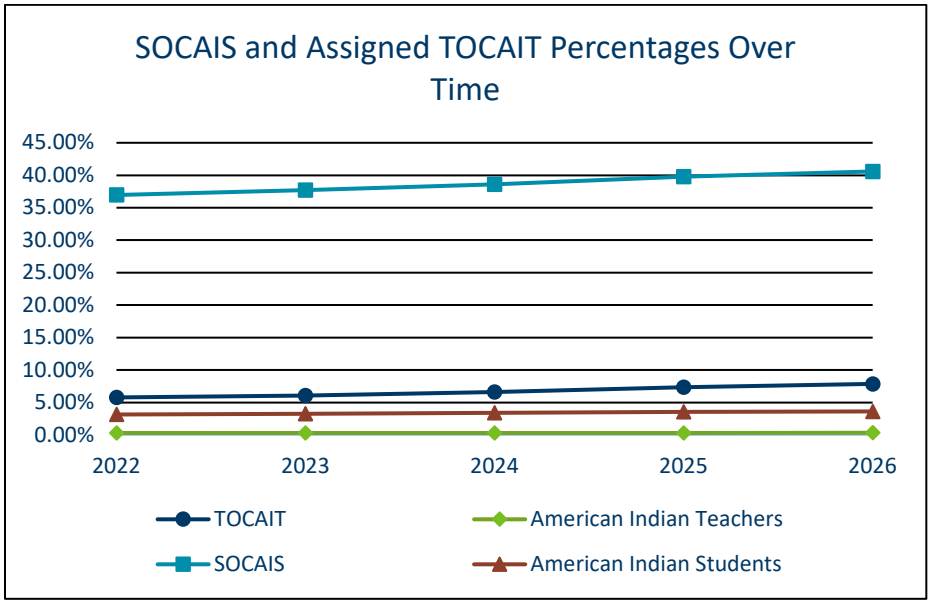
- Racial and Ethnic Demographics of Minnesota Students and Teachers—Focused specifically on the percentage of TOCAIT represented in the workforce and SOCAIS present in Minnesota classrooms.
- Student-Teacher Parity Index—New to this report, the index can spotlight the student communities that are most underserved, rather than the sites with the largest gap in representation in the workforce.
- 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 Students of Color and American Indian Students (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.

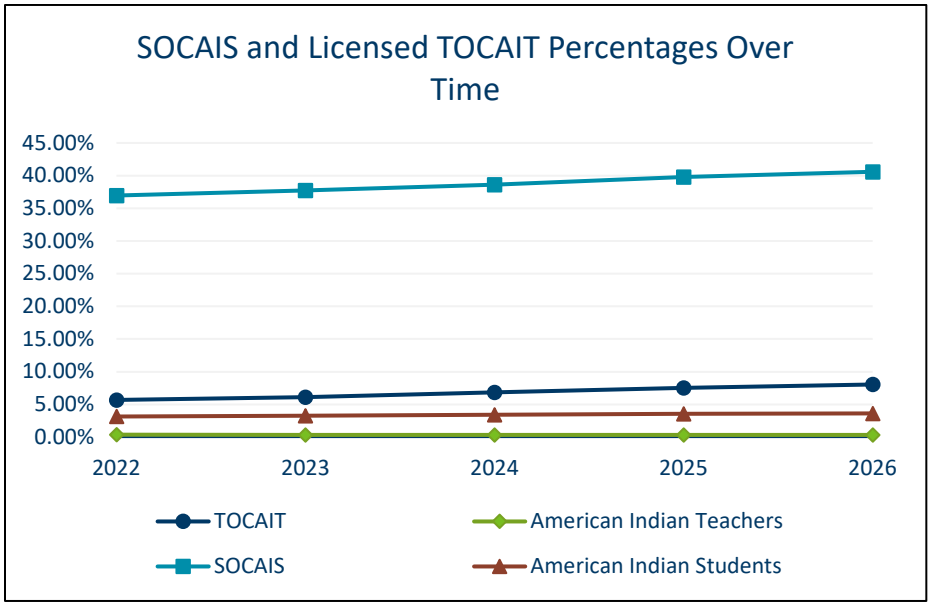


Fiscal Year	Total Teacher Count	TOCAIT Count	TOCAIT	American Indian Teacher Count	American Indian Teachers	SOCAIS	American Indian Students
2022	71441	4129	5.78%	215	0.30%	36.96%	3.15%
2023	71758	4365	6.08%	232	0.32%	37.72%	3.27%
2024	72073	4762	6.61%	228	0.32%	38.60%	3.42%
2025	71214	5240	7.36%	230	0.32%	39.78%	3.55%
2026	71242	5604	7.87%	238	0.33%	40.59%	3.62%

Minnesota's population of SOCAIS increased 3.63% between school year 2021-22 and 2025-26 and the population of TOCAIT increased 2.09% in the same period. The data from fiscal year 2026 is the newest data available.

The following data is like 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. While this data includes those who are assigned

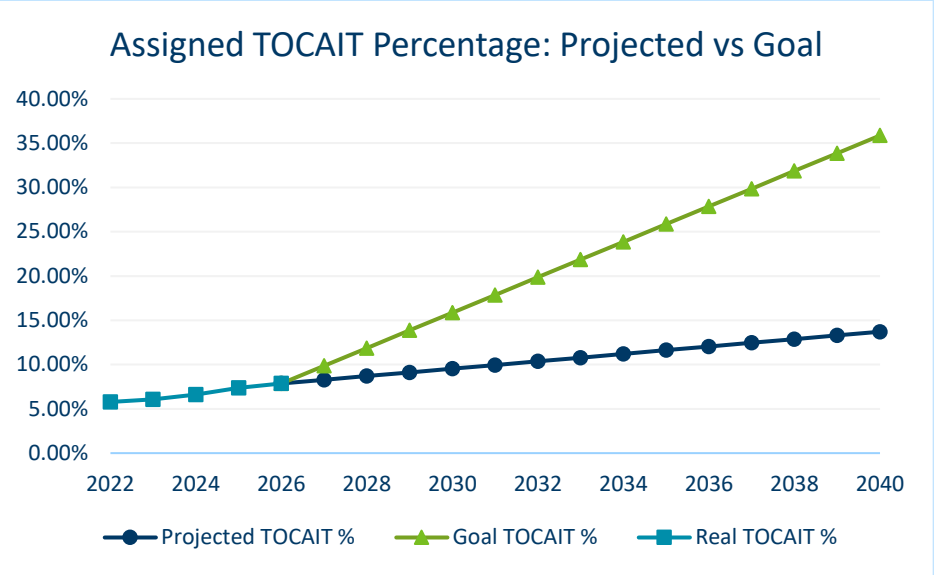
teaching positions, it also includes those who may be in education leadership in districts or schools, or who may be working in other settings connected to education, or who may have left the profession overall but still have an active license.



Fiscal Year	Total Teacher Count	TOCAIT Count	TOCAIT	American Indian Teacher Count	American Indian Teachers	SOCAIS	American Indian Students
2022	109479	6223	5.68%	408	0.37%	36.96%	3.15%
2023	109150	6675	6.12%	381	0.35%	37.72%	3.27%
2024	108100	7409	6.85%	362	0.33%	38.60%	3.42%
2025	109776	8248	7.51%	376	0.34%	39.78%	3.55%
2026	110592	8899	8.05%	385	0.35%	40.59%	3.62%

The SOCAIS data is no different than the first table, but there are slightly higher percentages of TOCAIT and American Indian teachers when looking at all licensed teachers. The population of all licensed TOCAIT increased 2.37% since 2021-22.

Next, we requested a line graph illustrating the difference between our average real TOCAIT year-to-year increase (0.42%) with the goal of increasing the percentage of TOCAIT by 2% a year by 2040.



As illustrated above, if Minnesota continues to average an increased population of TOCAIT of 0.42% per year, then in 2040 we will have 13.71% of the teaching population be TOCAIT. However, if Minnesota were to achieve the goal being a 2% growth rate per year, we would have 35.87% of teachers identifying as TOCAIT.

Observations About the Data

As mentioned in the 2025 report, the demographics of our state and student population will continue to shift as we move into the future. We estimated that the student population in 2040 would be above 46.5% SOCAIS.

For this year's calculations, we will again use teachers assigned to teaching positions (7.87%) instead of all teachers (8.05%), since those who are working in classrooms are those who students experience.

With fourteen years until 2040 and assuming Minnesota hits the 2% growth goal per year, the teacher population would be 35.87% TOCAIT, a representation gap of 10.63%. Using the same construction but taking our current average annual increase of TOCAIT of 0.42%, we would have 13.75% TOCAIT in 2040, a representation gap of 32.75%.

In the 2025-26 school year, there were a total of 76,846 teachers, 7.87% of whom identify as TOCAIT. In order to increase the TOCAIT population by 2%, it would take an additional 1,980 TOCAIT, assuming existing TOCAIT remain in teaching assignments, which is not realistic given teacher turnover as well as TOCAIT pursuing areas of leadership in education including but not limited to serving as school principals, superintendents, or other district-level leadership.

State data shows a 2.09% increase in TOCAIT over the past five years (last year, this figure was 1.82%), so a 2% annual target is ambitious, requiring significant changes in policies and practices to achieve.

Student-Teacher Parity Index

Whereas the above section focuses on the gap in racial representation between students and teachers, the student-teacher parity index (Hansen and Quintero, Brookings 2017[1]) provides a measure that is not only more comparable across contexts but also may better illustrate whether students are more or less likely to be served by TOCAIT during their education experiences.

Instead of comparing the gap in racial/ethnic representation between SOCAIS and TOCAIT (%SOCAIS minus %TOCAIT = representation gap), the parity index is calculated as %SOCAIS divided by %TOCAIT. Values above 1.0 mean students from the group are overrepresented relative to teachers from that group. In other words, the higher the number, the worse the disparity. Brookings offers the following tiers:

- Parity < 1.5
- Small 1.5-2.5
- Moderate 2.5-4.0
- Large > 4

To illustrate why this matters, consider the following fictional data from two districts.

- District A = 25% SOCAIS and 5% TOCAIT
    - Representation gap = 20%
    - Parity = 5.0 (large)
- District B = 75% SOCAIS and 55% TOCAIT
    - Representation gap = 20% (same as district A)
    - Parity = 1.36 (near parity)

In district B, students are far more likely to be taught by TOCAIT than in district A but looking just at the representation gap would suggest they are in identical need for more TOCAIT.

Minnesota's statewide student-teacher parity index over the past five school years is outlined in the table below.

School Year	Percentage of TOCAIT	Percentage of SOCAIS	Parity Index People of Color and American Indian	Percentage of American Indian Teachers	Percentage of American Indian Students	Parity Index American Indian
21-22	5.78%	36.96%	6.39	0.33	3.15%	9.55
22-23	6.08%	37.72%	6.20	0.30	3.27%	10.9
23-24	6.61%	38.60%	5.84	0.32	3.42%	10.69
24-25	7.36%	39.78%	5.41	0.32	3.55%	11.09
25-26	7.87%	40.59%	5.16	0.35	3.62%	10.34

[1] Hansen, Michael, and Diana Quintero. "Four Ways to Measure Diversity among Public School Teachers." Brookings, 17 Nov. 2017, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/four-ways-to-measure-diversity-among-public-school-teachers/.

While the parity index is improving over time for all people of color and American Indian people as a combined group, Minnesota is still a long way from achieving parity. When examining parity for American Indian people alone, it is significantly worse, signifying that the chances of American Indian students having access to American Indian teachers is exceedingly rare.

Importantly, student-teacher parity should also be examined at the local level to assess whether students are likely to experience TOCAIT through their PreKP-12 careers.

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 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 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.

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
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%
2024-25	92	0.90%	2,250	21.98%

It is good news that the percentage of TOCAIT candidates enrolling in teacher preparation programs (21.98%) is 2.75 times larger than the current percentage in the teacher workforce (7.87%). While this is promising, we know that not all those enrolled ultimately become teachers and stay in the profession.

The average increase in the percentage of TOCAIT candidates from school year 2020-21 through 2024-25 is 1.21%. However, notice the large jump in more recent years. That *may* coincide with increased investments in programs like Grow Your Own, Educator Tuition Assistance Program, or other combinations of programs. Seeing annual increases of at least 2% in the percentage of candidates of color and American Indian candidates enrolling in teacher prep would be one indicator of progress towards the goal.

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.

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
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%
2024-25	27	0.81%	548	16.50%

Reviewing the table above, we can see a steady increase in the percentage of TOCAIT candidates; however, American Indian candidate numbers do not have an apparent trend. The percentage of TPP completers over the past five years had an average increase of 1.78% (down from last year's five-year average of 2.07%).

16.5% is slightly more than double the current percentage of TOCAIT (7.87%) in the profession, suggesting promise for improved demographic representation on the horizon. Seeing annual increases of at least 2% in the percentage of candidates of color and American Indian candidates completing teacher prep would be one indicator of progress towards the goal.

Grow



The 2025 report provided some national data related to teacher retention in the first few years of their career. 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.

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 address teacher attrition.

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.

As indicated in the 2025 report, 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 the Thrive stage. This is an area our agencies would like to explore more with partners in the field.

Data from Funded Programs

Legislation requires that this report include data on the named programs along with any other programs or initiatives receiving state appropriations to address shortage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers. Appendix A provides an individual program report for all 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 2024-25 (or fiscal year 2025) 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. There is variety in how each program uses states funds and how much and what types of support is offered to teacher candidates or teachers, among other reasons. Please consult the 2025 report for a thorough discussion of the limitations of gathering and reporting data from across the programs required in this report.

There is no statistically sound way to add these numbers together to draw a conclusion across multipole programs, at least without a significant investment in a research study for each program. With that said, as reported by programs that collected data from the field, 2,925 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 2025, section 120B.117 directs the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), in coordination with the 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.

State law establishes a goal of increasing the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOCAIT) by two percent per year while simultaneously improving retention. Achieving this goal requires sustained and intentional investment in programs specifically designed to support TOCAIT, alongside continued efforts to refine policies and dismantle systemic barriers within educator workforce pathways into the profession.

The recommendations included in this report remain the same as those presented in the 2025 Summary Report. Because no major legislative changes or significant new investments occurred during the past year, the core challenges and opportunities within the educator workforce ecosystem are largely unchanged. Maintaining the same recommendations reinforces continuity, supports multi-year implementation, and reflects ongoing partner consensus around these priority areas.

To streamline this year’s report, the rationale and description for each recommendation have been shortened. Readers seeking more extensive background, data, or context can refer to the 2025 report for fuller discussion and analysis.

These recommendations focus on system-level change across the educator workforce ecosystem rather than on individual programs. Program-specific refinements are best identified by program leaders, grantees, and community partners who are closest to implementation.

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

Together, these recommendations represent mutually reinforcing strategies intended to advance the following overarching goals:

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

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

Minnesota's state-funded educator workforce efforts span MDE, PELSB, and OHE, yet no single coordinating structure exists. This recommendation responds to ongoing calls for stronger community voice, including from Tribal Nations, ethnic councils, districts, higher education, and TOCAIT educators. A sustained partnership structure would support cross-agency alignment, reduce duplication, and maintain focus on the state's 2% annual TOCAIT growth goal.

By formalizing these partnerships, Minnesota would embed community and Tribal perspectives in decision-making, improve coordination of policy and funding, and strengthen accountability for diversifying the educator workforce—ultimately improving recruitment and retention outcomes for TOCAIT.

Recommendation 2: Prioritize Programs and Eliminate Redundancies

Teacher preparation candidates, districts, and higher education partners continue to report confusion caused by overlapping state-funded programs designed to reduce preparation costs. Several initiatives serve similar populations but operate separately, and current investment patterns emphasize recruitment and preparation over retention.

This recommendation calls for reviewing national research and Minnesota's own data to identify high-impact program models — such as residencies, mentoring, and scholarships—and to phase out or consolidate duplicative efforts. Aligning recommendations from this report and the Committee on Educator Workforce would support policy proposals for future legislative cycles.

Prioritizing effective programs and removing redundancies would eliminate barriers created by navigating multiple systems, improve the efficient use of limited resources, and reinforce investments that most advance the recruitment and long-term retention of TOCAIT, strengthening progress toward a more diverse educator workforce.

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

Building a stable and diverse educator workforce requires investment at every stage of a teacher's journey — from early exploration, to preparation and licensure, to induction and long-term career satisfaction. Current funding patterns concentrate heavily on the "Become" stage, while early recruitment and retention supports remain under-resourced.

This recommendation emphasizes aligning investments with demonstrated needs across the full teacher journey. Strengthening mentorship and induction support, expanding affinity groups, and addressing working conditions that drive attrition would improve early-career stability and retention, particularly for TOCAIT.

Sustained investment across all stages would reduce attrition of teachers of color and American Indian teachers, support long-term workforce growth, and create environments where diverse educators can thrive—ultimately improving Minnesota's ability to recruit, prepare, and retain TOCAIT.

Recommendation 4: Address Barriers for Entering and Completing Preparation Pathways

Many prospective teachers encounter financial, institutional, and cultural barriers that limit entry into and completion of preparation pathways. High costs, complex licensure processes, and insufficient navigational and wrap-around supports especially affect TOCAIT candidates.

This recommendation calls for expanding financial assistance, improving advising and mentoring, clarifying pathways into teacher preparation, and removing unnecessary hurdles in licensure and admissions systems. Strengthening supports such as childcare, tutoring, and mental health resources would also improve persistence.

Reducing these barriers would help more candidates of color and American Indian candidates enter preparation, remain enrolled through licensure, and ultimately join the educator workforce — expanding the pool of licensed, diverse teachers in Minnesota.

Recommendation 5: Increase Access to Resources and Programs

Access to state-funded educator workforce programs often depends on an organization's capacity to write and administer competitive grants. This structure advantages larger districts and teacher preparation providers and limits access for smaller, rural, and under-resourced communities.

This recommendation calls for evaluating competitive versus formula-based funding approaches to improve equitable reach. It also suggests considering funding streams that support districts, preparation providers, and individual candidates simultaneously.

Improving access would expand participation of candidates of color and American Indian candidates who currently face barriers to state supports, strengthen pathways in underserved areas, and create more equitable statewide access to preparation and retention programs — advancing diversification of the educator workforce.

Recommendation 6: Invest in Educator Workforce Data Infrastructure

Minnesota's current data systems do not provide sufficient detail on retention, long-term outcomes, or program effectiveness, limiting the state's ability to understand which investments close the representation gap. Further data application, compliance, and application systems would benefit from modernization. Administrative set-asides for program evaluation are too small to support meaningful analysis or infrastructure-building.

This recommendation proposes increasing administrative set-asides to levels consistent with other grant programs or establishing a separate allocation dedicated to educator workforce data infrastructure and evaluation. Enhanced funding would support comprehensive data collection and impact studies across the entire teacher journey.

Building a stronger data infrastructure would clarify which programs most effectively recruit, prepare, and retain TOCAIT; guide targeted investments; and improve transparency and accountability, helping Minnesota meet its annual growth goals for teacher diversity.

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

Diversifying Minnesota's educator workforce requires shared responsibility across districts, school leaders, and teacher preparation providers. Currently, accountability for TOCAIT recruitment and retention varies widely, and efforts often rely heavily on state-level programs rather than coordinated local action.

This recommendation calls for requiring districts and TPPs to establish measurable TOCAIT goals, monitor progress, and embed these goals within existing accountability structures such as Achievement and Integration plans. Strengthening leadership development, providing technical assistance, and offering targeted resources would help institutions meet these goals.

Embedding responsibility across all levels of the education system would promote systemic change, improve school climates that support TOCAIT retention, and ensure local entities actively contribute to a more diverse educator workforce — reinforcing statewide progress toward Minnesota's 2% annual TOCAIT growth target.

Progress on Strategic Initiatives to Strengthen and Diversify Minnesota's Educator Workforce

Over the past year, MDE, PELSB, and OHE have continued to advance work aimed at addressing educator shortages and diversifying the educator workforce. While the statutory recommendations in this report remain unchanged, three major initiatives underway across agencies and partners demonstrate meaningful progress

and lay important groundwork for future policy, funding, and system alignment. These projects will guide how Minnesota targets investments, strengthens supports across the educator journey, and improves statewide coordination — central themes of this report's recommendations.

Minnesota Educator Shortage Strategic Planning Platform

Minnesota is developing a data-driven statewide platform to better understand the educator shortage by examining who is missing from the workforce, where shortages are concentrated, and when in educator preparation and time in the profession breakdowns occur. Agencies have identified six preliminary shortage "components" grounded in workforce data and are refining baseline indicators for each. At the same time, programs and initiatives across the state are being mapped to these components to clarify where efforts are succeeding, where gaps remain, and where resources are duplicated. This work will result in a data-rich strategic framework and metrics system that can help state agencies, districts, preparation providers, and community partners coordinate more effectively and target interventions to the points where they are most needed. The platform directly supports recommendations focused on improving data infrastructure, aligning programs, and strengthening system-level accountability, with strong potential to support long-term diversification of the educator workforce by illuminating structural barriers and informing smarter statewide investment.

Committee on Educator Workforce

The Committee on Educator Workforce—an alignment effort across the Governor's Workforce Development Board, the Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership, and the Interagency Workforce Alignment Group—has met regularly throughout the past year to develop comprehensive policy, program, and budget recommendations. Using the Explore-Become-Grow-Thrive framework, subcommittees have drafted proposals that span early recruitment, preparation pathways, induction, and long-term career sustainability. The Committee has worked to refine recommendations, identify redundancies, and begin shaping a unified statewide framework, with a final set of proposals and a comprehensive report forthcoming. This work is directly responsive to the recommendations in this report calling for stronger interagency coordination, clearer statewide leadership structures, and aligned system-level strategies rather than disconnected, program-by-program improvements. The committee's work also elevates efforts that strengthen recruitment and retention of teachers of color and American Indian teachers, advancing statewide diversification goals.

Educator Workforce Aid Proposal

The Educator Workforce and Development Center has been developing a project for an Educator Workforce Aid Program, which is designed to provide ongoing, formula-based funding to districts and charter schools experiencing the greatest workforce instability. The project links flexible, locally designed strategies with a data-informed method for distributing funds, reducing reliance on competitive grants and expanding access for communities with limited administrative capacity. By supporting recruitment, induction support, mentoring, residencies, leadership development, and retention strategies, the model has potential to directly respond to several recommendations in this report, especially the need to eliminate program redundancies, expand equitable access, and invest in supports across the full educator journey. If implemented, the project could

significantly strengthen efforts to recruit and retain racially diverse educators by directing resources to the schools and communities most affected by educator shortages.

Progress Summary

These three projects represent foundational work that will shape future statewide strategies and address several recommendations outlined in this report. Although no major legislative changes occurred over the past year, substantial groundwork has been completed to modernize data systems, coordinate cross-agency leadership, and design more equitable funding approaches. Highlighting these initiatives provides stakeholders and policymakers with a clearer understanding of how agencies are responding to ongoing challenges and how Minnesota is preparing for more coordinated and efficient educator workforce policies in future legislative sessions.

Over the next year, the work emerging from these projects will shift from design to implementation planning. The Educator Shortage Strategic Planning Platform will deliver refined statewide metrics and help guide targeted policy proposals. The Committee on Educator Workforce will finalize its recommendations and develop structures for cross-agency implementation. The Educator Workforce Aid project may be shaped for legislative consideration, alongside any aligned proposals for residencies, Grow Your Own expansion, or regional workforce hubs. Together, these efforts will strengthen statewide coherence, improve resource allocation, and increase the likelihood that Minnesota's educator workforce strategies will produce measurable progress toward the statutory goal of increasing teachers of color and American Indian teachers by 2% annually.

Conclusion

Minnesota continues to make steady progress toward building a teacher workforce that better reflects the racial and cultural diversity of its students. The most recent statewide data show gradual increases in teachers of color and American Indian teachers, improvements in student–teacher parity, and strong early interest and enrollment among candidates from underrepresented communities. Yet the gap between student and teacher demographics remains substantial, and current rates of workforce growth fall far short of the two percent annual increase needed to reach the state's 2040 goal. This year's findings underscore the same reality highlighted in the 2025 report: achieving meaningful and sustained diversification requires long-term, coordinated action across every stage of the educator journey.

This year's recommendations remain unchanged because the underlying challenges, opportunities, and system needs have not materially shifted. While agencies and partners have continued to support critical programs such as Grow Your Own, tuition assistance, mentorship, residencies, and student-teacher grants, the state still faces structural barriers that limit recruitment, persistence, and retention. The seven recommendations in this report emphasize system-level improvements, including stronger cross-agency coordination, better alignment and targeting of programs, expanded access to supports, and improved data systems. These strategies remain essential for addressing both the shortage of teachers overall and the pronounced shortage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

At the same time, agencies have made meaningful progress on statewide initiatives that can strengthen future policy action. The Minnesota Educator Shortage Strategic Planning Platform, the work of the Committee on Educator Workforce, and the emerging Educator Workforce Aid project each provide tools and structures that help the state more precisely understand workforce needs, streamline efforts, and target resources where they will have the greatest impact. These initiatives directly advance the recommendations outlined in this report and have the potential to improve both educator workforce stability and TOCAIT recruitment and retention if fully implemented.

Ultimately, Minnesota's commitment to diversifying the educator workforce is both a moral and educational imperative and one that requires sustained investment, coordinated leadership, and system-level alignment over many years. By continuing to strengthen data systems, invest across the full teacher journey, support districts and preparation providers, and remove barriers for candidates, Minnesota can accelerate progress toward its statutory diversity goals and ensure that every student benefits from a diverse, qualified, and thriving educator workforce. The foundation built over the past two years positions the state well for deeper action in future legislative sessions, and continued partnership among agencies, communities, and policymakers will be essential for achieving long-term success.

APPENDIX A – Individual Program Reports

Explore

The "Explore" stage in a teacher's journey focuses on building early awareness and interest in education careers among a broad and diverse range of potential future teachers. At this stage, outreach efforts such as marketing campaigns, informational resources, and community engagement aim to help individuals understand teaching as both a viable and meaningful profession. These initiatives are especially important for increasing representation by ensuring that underrepresented groups see clear pathways into the field. The programs in this section highlight Minnesota's strategies to expand interest in teaching well before formal preparation begins.

Concurrent Enrollment Introduction to Teaching Grant

Description:

The Concurrent Enrollment Introduction to Teaching Grant supports Minnesota school districts and charter schools in partnering with eligible postsecondary institutions to develop or expand dual credit "Introduction to Teaching" or "Introduction to Education" courses. The grant aims to strengthen and diversify Minnesota's teacher workforce by encouraging all students — particularly American Indian students and students of color — to explore teaching as a future profession.

Through expanded access to high quality, credit bearing coursework, the program seeks to increase the number of historically underserved students who earn postsecondary credit and pursue teacher preparation pathways. School districts and postsecondary partners work collaboratively to design, implement, and refine program offerings, using data and stakeholder feedback to support continuous improvement and equitable student participation.

Outcomes:

The program aims to broaden and diversify Minnesota's future teacher workforce by introducing high school students to the teaching profession and supporting their academic progress. It seeks to increase student awareness of education careers, expand access to dual credit coursework, and build local education pathways that encourage students—especially American Indian students and students of color — to pursue teacher preparation programs after graduation.

Sample Activities

- Education career pathways within secondary schools, including aligned course sequences and advising supports.
- Steering committees, advisory councils, or leadership teams to guide implementation and align with broader "grow your own" initiatives.
- Outreach, marketing, and family engagement efforts to promote education pathways to students from diverse backgrounds.
- Support for students as they explore postsecondary options, including assistance with college applications, financial aid, and visits to partnering institutions.

- Paid, career exploration opportunities—such as stipends for tutoring or supporting younger students during summer or after school programs.

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 124D.09, subdivision 10 and Minnesota Laws 2023, chapter 55, article 5, section 64, subdivision 9

Funding: $500,000 in FY25

More Information: mde.postsecondary@state.mn.us

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- Since 2018, MDE has conducted four grant competitions and awarded 40 grants, supporting the creation of concurrent enrollment courses in 100 districts and charter schools. This includes seven new grants awarded in FY24 to expand concurrent enrollment in 29 districts and charter schools, with work continuing in FY25.
- Courses: 99 new courses have been developed since 2018, including 34 new courses offered in FY24.
- Students: 262 students enrolled in courses in FY24.
- Grant data is self reported by recipients. Several FY25 grantees did not report accurately through the Minnesota Common Course Catalog (MCCC), limiting the availability of FY25 data.
- Course and student participation data from MCCC is underreported due to inconsistent reporting by some districts.

Grow Your Own Student Pathway

Description:

The Grow Your Own (GYO) Student Pathway Grant provides funding to Minnesota school districts, charter schools, Tribal contract schools, and cooperatives to develop programs that encourage secondary students—particularly students of color and American Indian students—to explore and pursue teaching careers. Grant funds may be used to support career exploration, introductory coursework aligned with licensure pathways, and direct services that help students transition into postsecondary teacher preparation programs. Program activities must align with Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 124D.09, when used for Postsecondary Enrollment Options.

Outcomes:

The program aims to increase early interest in teaching, strengthen the pathway from high school to teacher preparation programs, and expand the future pool of teachers of color and American Indian teachers. It is designed to build students' confidence and readiness for teaching-related coursework while providing financial and wrap around supports that reduce barriers to entering the profession.

Example Activities:

- Participation in future teacher clubs
- Internships supporting instruction for younger students
- Enrollment in introductory education courses

- Campus visits and tours
- Scholarships for postsecondary teacher preparation programs

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.73, subdivision 3

Funding: $25,000,000 in FY25 for both the adult and student pathway

More Information: Grow Your Own

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- More than 1,850 students participated in opportunities to explore teaching careers across 22 grant funded programs in fiscal year 2025.
- Over 60% of participating students identified as students of color or Indigenous students.
- More than 50% of students in Grow Your Own programs reported plans to continue exploring teaching or pursue teacher licensure.

Teacher Recruitment and Marketing Campaign

Description:

The 2023 Legislature directed the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) to issue a request for proposals to develop and implement a statewide marketing and outreach campaign to elevate the teaching profession and recruit future teachers. The campaign specifically seeks to engage teachers of color and American Indian teachers, high school and college students who have not yet chosen a career path, and adults interested in pursuing a career change into teaching.

PELSB awarded funds to continue and expand the Elevate Teaching campaign, which mobilizes individuals—particularly those from communities of color—to serve as champions for the profession. The campaign aims to shift public perceptions of teaching, promote the value of the profession, and encourage Minnesotans to consider teaching as a meaningful and impactful career.

Outcomes:

The campaign aims to strengthen Minnesota's educator workforce by improving public understanding of the teaching profession and encouraging more individuals to pursue teacher licensure. Efforts focus on increasing awareness of teaching as a viable and rewarding career, elevating diverse educator voices, and providing tools and resources to support individuals as they explore and enter the profession.

Example Activities:

- Completing the Youth as Champions (YAC) 1.0 pilot and launching the YAC 2.0 program
- Expanding partnership with TeachMN.org to support career exploration along the teacher journey
- Creating a Champion Toolkit and translating it into the three most common non-English languages in Minnesota
- Collecting and promoting more than 30 teacher interviews and stories on the program website

- Launching the statewide Futuremaker media campaign, including billboards, transit ads, and digital marketing

Statute Reference: Laws of Minnesota 2023, chapter 55, article 5, section 65, subdivision 10

Funding: $0.5 million in FY25

More Information: Elevate Teaching

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- 9.1 million impressions generated across digital, billboard, and transit marketing initiatives.
- More than 4,000 individuals reached through Action Network to Elevate Teaching events.
- Campaign efforts prioritized amplifying the voices of people of color, engaging diverse stakeholders, and gathering feedback to ensure messaging reflects and resonates with communities of color.

Become

The "Become" stage in a teacher's journey focuses on preparing prospective educators through high quality, accessible, and diverse pathways into the profession. This phase emphasizes the importance of multiple licensure options that meet varying needs and backgrounds while maintaining rigorous preparation standards. A key priority is reducing barriers—such as financial, institutional, or procedural obstacles—that can prevent capable individuals from completing teacher preparation and earning a license. The programs in this section demonstrate Minnesota's efforts to strengthen the profession by supporting candidates as they move from interest in teaching to full entry into the profession.

Alternative Teacher Preparation Grant Program

This program has not been funded since FY19.

Educator Tuition Assistance Program

Description:

The Educator Tuition Assistance Program (ETAP) supports teacher candidates of color and Indigenous teacher candidates enrolled in PELSB approved teacher preparation programs at Minnesota higher education institutions. The program provides financial assistance and supportive services to help candidates complete licensure requirements and obtain a Tier 3 teaching license. Previously known as the Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color (CUGMEC) grant, the program was renamed ETAP during the 2025 legislative session. ETAP was administered by PELSB in fiscal year 2025 and transitioned to the Minnesota Department of Education in July 2025.

Outcomes:

The program aims to increase enrollment, persistence, and completion rates for teacher candidates of color and Indigenous candidates in licensure programs, ultimately expanding the pool of teachers eligible for a Tier 3

license. ETAP also seeks to reduce financial and systemic barriers that can impede progression through preparation programs and licensure processes.

Example Activities:

- Outreach conducted in partnership with schools, community organizations, and cultural groups to recruit eligible candidates
- Scholarships for candidates pursuing Tier 3 licensure
- Stipends for expenses such as textbooks, examinations, and licensure fees
- Mentorship, coaching, advising, affinity groups, peer networks, and professional development opportunities designed to support candidate success

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.635

Funding: $5.3 million in FY25

More Information: Educator Tuition Assistance Program

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- A total of 670 teacher candidates of color and American Indian teacher candidates received ETAP scholarships across 13 grantee programs.
- 336 teacher candidates were in the process of completing licensure requirements during the academic year.
- 255 teacher candidates were recommended for licensure in the field for which they prepared.
- The average grant awarded to teacher preparation provider institutions was $440,000.

Grow Your Own Adult Pathway

Description:

The Grow Your Own (GYO) Adult Pathway Grant provides scholarships, stipends, and program supports to school district employees and community members affiliated with a district, charter school, or Tribal contract school who are pursuing an initial teaching license. The program is designed to reduce or eliminate the financial barriers associated with teacher preparation and licensure, enabling participants to become teachers in their own communities. Grant funds may also be used to establish or expand innovative GYO programs across one of five approved licensure pathways, with a focus on promoting local workforce development and increasing the diversity of Minnesota's educator workforce.

Outcomes:

The program aims to strengthen local educator paths into the profession by supporting adults already connected to school communities as they work toward teacher licensure. It seeks to increase the number of teachers, particularly teachers of color and American Indian teachers, entering the profession through accessible, community based pathways. By reducing financial and systemic barriers, the program is intended to improve participant completion rates and contribute to long-term workforce stability.

Example Activities:

- Creating and implementing GYO programs that support district employees or affiliated community members—particularly participants of color and American Indian participants—in pursuing initial teacher licensure
- Providing academic and navigational supports that help candidates progress through their licensure programs
- Offering scholarships and stipends for teacher preparation program participation (noting that at least 80% of funds must benefit participants of color or American Indian participants)
- Conducting program evaluation activities to assess effectiveness and inform future improvements

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.73, subdivision 2

Funding: $25,000,000 in FY25 for both the adult and student pathway

More Information: MDE Grow Your Own

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- A total of 452 adults received scholarships or stipends to pursue a first time professional teaching license; 376 of these participants (83.2%) identified as people of color or American Indian.
- 89.8 % of program participants were either continuing their licensure program or had completed it. For comparison, retention rates were 92.7% in FY24, 93% in FY23, and 100% in FY22.
- 75 participants completed their programs and received a teaching license, and an additional 103 participants were employed either in the district that provided their scholarship or stipend or in another Minnesota school district.

Minnesota Indian Teacher Training Program

Description:

The Minnesota Indian Teacher Training Program (MITTP) provides scholarships and financial supports to American Indian students pursuing careers in pre–K through grade 12 educational settings. Eligible academic programs include teacher preparation, American Indian language and culture education, early childhood education, and K–12 school administration. At least 80% of grant funds must be directed toward scholarships or stipends that reduce or eliminate the financial burden associated with teacher preparation or additional certification.

Outcomes:

The program aims to increase the number of American Indian educators across Minnesota's schools and expand pathways into teaching, language and culture instruction, early childhood education, and educational leadership. MITTP supports candidates' successful progression through higher education programs and contributes to strengthening the presence and expertise of American Indian educators in the state's workforce.

Example Activities:

- Providing scholarships or stipends to eligible American Indian students pursuing teacher licensure or advanced education-related degrees (noting that at least 80% of funds must support this purpose)
- Recruiting students into the program and offering wrap around supports to promote academic success

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.63

Funding: $0.6 million in FY25

More Information: Minnesota Indian Teacher Training Program

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- A total of 42 American Indian participants received MITTP scholarships across six joint grantee programs.
- 90.5% of participants either completed their program or are returning in the following school year to continue. For comparison, retention rates were 84% in FY24, 76% in FY23, and 86% in FY22.

See the Consolidated Grant Report for FY25 Minnesota Indian Teacher Training Program (MITTP) for more details.

Underrepresented Student Teacher Grants

Description:

The Minnesota Underrepresented Student Teacher Grant (USTG) provides financial assistance to teacher candidates from racial or ethnic groups underrepresented in Minnesota's teacher workforce during their required full time student teaching experience. Eligible applicants must be enrolled in a PELSB approved teacher preparation program at a Minnesota postsecondary institution, complete a student teaching placement of at least 12 weeks, and demonstrate financial need through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the state financial aid application. The grant is intended to reduce financial barriers during student teaching, a period in which candidates often face limited income and increased expenses.

Outcomes:

The program aims to increase the number of teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups by improving candidates' ability to complete their full time student teaching requirements. By reducing financial strain and limiting the need to take on additional debt, USTG supports candidates' progression toward earning a Tier 3 teaching license and entering Minnesota's educator workforce.

Example Activities:

- Providing a one time grant of up to $7,500 to support tuition, fees, housing, transportation, and other student teaching related expenses
- Requiring completion of the FAFSA or state financial aid application to ensure access to all available financial supports
- Helping reduce candidates' reliance on student loans during the student teaching term
- Supporting successful completion of Tier 3 licensure requirements

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 136A.1274

Funding: $2.15 million available

More Information: Minnesota Student Teacher Grants

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- A total of $761,948 was disbursed to 117 eligible students across 23 postsecondary institutions.
- The average award amount was $6,512.
- Among awarded students, 39% identified as Black or African American, 24% as Asian, 5% as American Indian or Alaska Native, 8% as two or more races, and 34% as Hispanic or Latino.

Grow

The "Grow" stage in a teacher's journey centers on supporting educators during their critical early years in the classroom. This phase includes comprehensive induction programs, structured mentorship in all schools, and targeted professional development to help new teachers navigate additional licensure fields or evolving instructional needs. These supports are designed to create a smooth transition from preparation into professional practice, strengthening confidence and instructional effectiveness. By investing in early career development, Minnesota aims to increase new teachers' preparedness and reduce attrition, helping to stabilize and strengthen the educator workforce over time.

Teacher Mentorship and Retention of Effective Teachers Grant

Description:

The Teacher Mentorship and Retention Grant (TMRG) supports school districts, charter schools, cooperative units, Tribally Controlled Schools, and teacher coalitions in developing, sustaining, and expanding mentorship programs that strengthen the retention and effectiveness of early career teachers. The program prioritizes support for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups during their first three years in the profession. The grant was administered by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) in fiscal year 2025 and transitioned to the Minnesota Department of Education beginning in fiscal year 2026.

Outcomes:

The program aims to increase the retention of early career teachers, improve instructional effectiveness, and enhance support structures for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. By providing mentorship, affinity-based communities of practice, and culturally responsive professional development, the program seeks to reduce turnover and strengthen the overall educator workforce.

Example Activities:

- Providing stipends for mentors, with a focus on mentors who are teachers of color or American Indian teachers

- Supporting affinity groups that create professional learning communities for underrepresented educators
- Funding culturally responsive professional development aligned with closing opportunity and achievement gaps
- Offering tuition support for graduate coursework leading to a first master's degree or additional licensure for teachers of color and American Indian teachers
- Providing financial incentives for teachers of color and American Indian teachers who commit to remaining in a school or district for at least five years

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.70

Funding: $3.4 million in FY25

More Information: MDE Induction and Mentoring

Data from FY25 Implementation

- Thirty-five grant-funded entities supported 890 teachers of color.
- Grantees identified stipends for mentors, affinity group supports, graduate coursework, mentorship, and financial incentives as the most common retention strategies for teachers of color and American Indian teachers.
- Across the 35 grant-funded entities, structured mentorship with regular coaching or check-ins—often embedded in induction and paired with targeted professional development—was cited most frequently as improving retention, teacher confidence and effectiveness, and sense of belonging for teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

Thrive

The "Thrive" stage in a teacher's journey focuses on sustaining and elevating educators once they are established in the profession. This phase emphasizes creating supportive, equitable, and stable working and learning environments where teachers feel valued and have the resources they need to succeed. It also includes opportunities for teacher leadership, allowing experienced educators to contribute to the growth and development of their colleagues. By strengthening workplace conditions and expanding leadership pathways, Minnesota aims to retain highly effective educators and promote long-term stability in the workforce.

Achievement and Integration Program

Description:

The Achievement and Integration Program (A&I) provides funding to eligible school districts to develop and implement plans that increase racial and economic integration and reduce academic disparities among students from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Each district plan must include goals for improving students' equitable access to effective and diverse educators. Funds may be used to recruit and retain teachers of color and American Indian teachers, provide professional development to improve academic outcomes for all students, and support a range of evidence-based strategies aligned with district integration and achievement goals.

Outcomes:

The program aims to promote integrated learning environments, reduce opportunity and achievement gaps, and strengthen educator diversity across participating districts. By supporting recruitment, retention, and professional development efforts, A&I contributes to creating learning environments where all students have access to effective, culturally responsive educators.

Example Activities:

- Grow Your Own pathways for paraprofessionals and other staff, with a focus on individuals of color and American Indian individuals
- Mentoring and coaching supports for teachers of color and American Indian teachers
- Training for human resources staff, including practices to reduce implicit bias in hiring
- Partnerships with higher education institutions to support teacher preparation initiatives
- Development of student career pathways that introduce education professions
- Affinity groups to support retention of educators who identify as Black, Indigenous, or people of color

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, sections 124D.861 and 124D.862

Funding: $117,960,164.89 in FY25

More Information: Achievement and Integration Program

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- During the 2024-2025 school year, 181 districts participated in the program:
    - 133 districts in Cohort One, implementing the second year of their current plan cycle
    - 45 districts in Cohort Two, implementing the third year of their plan cycle
    - 3 districts in Cohort Three, implementing the first year of their current plan cycle
- After two years of implementing their Achievement and Integration plans, 77.5% of Cohort One districts reported being on track to meet their goals by June 30, 2026, or had already met them.
- After three years of implementation, 62% of Cohort Two districts reported meeting their goals by the end of their plan cycle on June 30, 2025.
- After one year of implementation, 55% of Cohort Three districts reported meeting their goals by the end of their plan cycle on June 30, 2027.
- 100% of districts included a Teacher Equity goal in their three-year Achievement and Integration plan.
- In FY25, 32% of Teacher Equity strategies focused specifically on the recruitment and retention of teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOCAIT).
- Of all TOCAIT-specific strategies:
    - 29% were Explore strategies, such as career exploration courses for students in grades 9–12
    - 19% were Become strategies, including partnerships with community colleges and universities to support staff in obtaining a teaching license, and implementation of Grow Your Own pathways
    - 13% were Grow strategies, including advertising open positions within the community and local colleges, application screening and job fairs, mentorship programs for teachers in years one through three, and implementation of Grow Your Own pathways

- 39% were Thrive strategies, including professional development, mentorship for new hires, and recruitment or retention support

Come Teach in Minnesota

Description:

The Come Teach in Minnesota Program provides funding to school districts and charter schools to offer hiring bonuses to teachers who are American Indian or people of color and who relocate to Minnesota from another state or country. Eligible employers may offer hiring bonuses of up to $5,000 to qualifying teachers. Educators who receive a hiring bonus and successfully complete four years of service in the hiring district or charter school are also eligible for a retention bonus equal to the original hiring bonus. This program was not funded for the 2026–27 biennium and beyond.

Outcomes:

The program is intended to increase the diversity of Minnesota's educator workforce by attracting experienced teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to relocate to and remain in Minnesota public schools. Retention bonuses further support long term workforce stability and continuity for participating districts and charter schools.

Example Activities:

- Providing a hiring bonus to eligible teachers upon employment
- Offering a retention bonus to eligible teachers who successfully complete four years of service in the hiring district or charter school

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.59

Funding: $0.4 million in FY25

More Information: Come Teach in Minnesota

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- Fifty-four teachers of color were offered hiring bonuses:
  - 47 identified as Asian or Pacific Islander
  - 2 identified as Black or African American
  - 5 identified as Hispanic or Latino

Teacher Shortage Loan Program

This program and its funding were repealed in 2025 legislative session.

Appendix B – Additional Program Summaries

The following programs are not specifically designed to increase the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers, though many contribute to that goal through their design, implementation, or stated priorities. These initiatives play an important role in strengthening Minnesota's educator workforce by addressing broader needs such as preparation quality, recruitment, retention, and professional support. While they operate outside the set of programs explicitly required for inclusion in this report, they represent significant state investments that shape the overall teacher workforce ecosystem. Agency staff include these summaries to provide a more complete picture of how state-funded efforts collectively support and sustain Minnesota's educator profession.

Grow Your Own Early Childhood Educators

Description:

The Grow Your Own (GYO) Early Childhood and Family Educator Grant Program provides funding to Minnesota licensed family childcare providers, licensed center based childcare programs, early learning programs operated by school districts or charter schools, Head Start programs, institutions of higher education, and eligible community-based organizations. The program supports the creation, expansion, or enhancement of early childhood educator preparation pathways that lead to credentials or degrees needed to enter or advance within the early childhood education workforce. The overarching goal is to develop a more diverse early childhood educator workforce that reflects Minnesota's student population and ensures equitable access to high-quality early learning experiences. Supported pathways may lead to a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, associate degree, bachelor's degree, early childhood licensure, or other recognized early childhood credentials.

Outcomes:

The program aims to strengthen and diversify Minnesota's early childhood educator workforce by reducing financial and structural barriers to credential and degree attainment. By supporting preparation programs and providing direct assistance to participants, the grant helps individuals enter or advance within early childhood education roles and contributes to improved access to high-quality early learning opportunities for all children.

Example Activities:

- Providing scholarships for participants enrolled in training or higher education programs leading to early childhood credentials or degrees
- Offering stipends to offset costs associated with completing required coursework, training, or credentialing activities
- Developing student teaching or field placement opportunities that offer mentorship and support throughout participants' preparation programs

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 142D.33

Funding: $2.325 million in FY25

More Information: Supporting the Early Care and Education Workforce

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- During the first round of the Grow Your Own Early Childhood and Family Educator Grant Program, 13 organizations were awarded grants, including public schools, childcare programs, Head Start programs, and institutions of higher education.
- Grow Your Own participant data will be available at the end of FY25, as funded programs began implementation in June and July 2024.

Special Education Teacher Pathway Program

Description:

The Special Education Teacher Pathway Grant Program provides funding to Minnesota school districts, charter schools, Tribally Controlled Schools, cooperative units, and joint eligible applicants to develop and train licensed Tier 3 or Tier 4 special education teachers. Grant recipients must use funds to support participants employed by the grant recipient or joint applicants, with priority given to individuals currently holding Tier 1 or Tier 2 special education licenses. Funds may also be used to support other employees who seek to become licensed special education teachers.

Outcomes:

The program aims to expand and strengthen Minnesota's special education teacher workforce by supporting employees as they pursue advanced licensures. By reducing financial barriers and providing targeted preparation support, the program helps increase the number of fully licensed special education teachers and improves retention within participating districts and schools.

Example Activities:

- Providing scholarships and stipends to reduce the financial burden of completing a teacher preparation program
- Offering supports such as mentoring, licensure test preparation, and technology assistance to help participants meet Tier 3 or Tier 4 licensure requirements
- Recruiting participants and providing wrap around supports to promote successful program completion

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.77

Funding: $10 million in FY25

More Information: Special Education Teacher Pathway Program

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- A total of 737 participants across more than 220 districts, charter schools, and cooperatives statewide received financial support to pursue a special education license, with the SPED Pathway Program maintaining an 88% retention rate.
- Sixty-three participants completed their program, helping to address special education teacher shortages across the state.

- In program reflections, participants emphasized the importance of the grant's support, including financial assistance, mentorship, and individualized guidance, in contributing to high overall satisfaction and helping them navigate the path to becoming licensed special education teachers.

Statewide Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program

Description:

The Statewide Teacher Mentoring Program aims to develop and retain a diverse educator workforce by implementing induction models that provide culturally responsive learning environments and supportive working conditions in which both teachers and students can thrive. The program funds regional mentoring and induction approaches that support new special education teachers and new teachers in other shortage areas, with a particular focus on teachers, mentors, and leaders who are people of color or American Indian.

Outcomes:

The program seeks to strengthen new teacher retention, improve instructional effectiveness, and build supportive professional communities across regions. By promoting culturally responsive mentorship and induction practices, the program advances efforts to diversify the educator workforce and enhance early career teacher success.

Example Activities:

- Providing professional development and training for mentors and new teachers
- Supporting the development of an induction vision, mission, and program goals
- Assisting with new teacher orientation and onboarding processes
- Facilitating regional networking, affinity groups, and communities of practice

Statute Reference: Minnesota Statutes 2025, section 122A.70

Funding: $9.94 million originally appropriated in FY24 to carries through fiscal year 2027

More Information: Induction and Mentoring

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- Ten regional grant-funded entities supported 58 teachers of color.
- Two regional grantees supported cohorts of Hmong and African American teachers, focusing on participation in dedicated affinity spaces.
- New teachers of color received dedicated time with a mentor and participated in structured induction activities.
- See the Statewide Teacher Mentoring Program Report: Year One.

Student Support Personnel Workforce Pathway Grant

Description:

The Student Support Personnel Workforce Pathway provides grants to higher education institutions to develop and strengthen pathways preparing students to become licensed school psychologists, school nurses, school counselors, and school social workers. The program supports students in completing accredited programs and seeks to increase the number of licensed student support personnel in Minnesota schools. A central priority of the program is increasing the number of professionals who identify as people of color and/or Indigenous. At least 80% of funds awarded to each institution must be used to cover program attendance costs and/or provide paid practicums, internships, or preceptorships required for degree completion. Many grantees also offer mentoring, professional development, networking opportunities, and assistance in overcoming licensure barriers after graduation.

Outcomes:

The program aims to address workforce shortages in key student support professions and increase representation among school psychologists, nurses, counselors, and social workers. By reducing financial barriers and providing structured preparation support, the program helps students complete required degrees and field experiences, promotes licensure attainment, and strengthens the availability of culturally responsive student support personnel in Minnesota schools.

Example Activities:

- Providing scholarships and paid practicums, internships, or preceptorships for students pursuing careers in school psychology, school nursing, school counseling, or school social work, with strategies to prioritize students who identify as people of color or Indigenous
- Recruiting students into degree programs and promoting awareness of student support professions
- Offering wrap around supports such as mentoring, affinity groups, licensure exam preparation, job search assistance, and social emotional supports
- Facilitating professional development, covering the cost of professional memberships, and supporting attendance at conferences or networking events

Statute Reference: Laws of Minnesota 2025, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 10, article 3, section 15, subdivision 4

Funding: $5 million in FY25

More Information: Student Support Personnel

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- Sixteen accredited programs applied for and were awarded FY24–25 funds in spring and summer 2024. Thirteen of these programs received extensions and continued supporting students during the 2025–2026 school year.
- Approximately 385 students were served with FY24–25 funds, including about 172 students (45%) who identified as students of color or Indigenous. More than 120 students graduated, and 99% of the remaining students were retained after their first year in the program.
- Students completed internships in more than 87 school districts, cooperatives, and charter schools across Minnesota during the 2024–25 school year.
- Nineteen accredited programs applied for FY26–27 funds, and 15 programs were awarded grants in fall 2025.

- More than 400 students are projected to be served with FY26–27 funds, with approximately half expected to identify as people of color or Indigenous.

Teacher Residency and Apprenticeship Grants

Description:

The Teacher Residency Grant Program supports the development and implementation of teacher residency models, including registered teacher apprenticeship programs. Residency programs are partnerships between teacher preparation providers and school districts designed to attract, prepare, and retain a diverse and effective educator workforce, with a particular focus on teachers of color. Planning grants provide funding for institutions and district partners to design new residency models, while implementation grants support established, named residency programs. Both grant types aim to expand the availability and geographic reach of residency pathways and to diversify the educator workforce. The residency model—which places candidates alongside an experienced mentor teacher for a full year while providing a living wage—has demonstrated strong outcomes for teacher retention and effectiveness.

Outcomes:

The program seeks to increase the number of high-quality teacher residency programs across Minnesota, broaden access to paid, practice-based licensure pathways, and strengthen teacher retention, particularly for candidates from underrepresented backgrounds. By supporting both planning and implementation, the program facilitates long term expansion of sustainable residency models.

Example Activities:

- Planning Grants
    - Participation in the National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR) Residency Foundations course and Design Academy
    - Stipends or honoraria for planning team members
    - Candidate recruitment activities and materials
    - Travel, supplies, and materials needed for planning and design activities
- Implementation Grants:
    - Stipends, tuition assistance, and other supports for residency candidates
    - Compensation for mentor teachers

Statute Reference: Laws of Minnesota 2025, chapter 10, article 3, section 15, subdivision 15

Funding: $3 million in FY25

More Information: Teacher Residency Program, Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program

Data from FY25 Implementation:

- Planning grantees used both FY24 and FY25 to develop their programs, and no participant data was collected during this period.

- Based on Interim Progress Reports submitted by implementation grantees for January 1–June 30, 2025, grant funds supported 66 residency program participants, with more than 60% identifying as people of color or American Indian.
- Implementation grantees also reported recruiting 69 new candidates to begin their residency programs in the 2025–2026 school year, with more than 70% identifying as people of color or American Indian.

TeachMN

Description:

TeachMN is a statewide teacher recruitment and support initiative led by the Minnesota Department of Education's Educator Workforce and Development Center, in partnership with TEACH, a nonprofit organization, and the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). The program's primary purpose is to expand, strengthen, and diversify Minnesota's teacher workforce by making it easier for prospective educators to explore the profession and enter preparation programs. TeachMN provides a free, statewide platform (TeachMN.org) that connects high school students, college students, career changers, and current school employees to guidance, financial support, and clear pathways into teaching. The initiative also seeks to reshape public perceptions of the teaching profession, raise awareness of its impact, and build a sustainable and diverse pool of future educators.

Outcomes:

TeachMN aims to increase the number of qualified applicants entering Minnesota teacher preparation programs and to diversify the educator workforce by reducing informational, financial, and procedural barriers. Through statewide outreach and individualized advising, the initiative supports aspiring educators from initial interest through application and enrollment, ultimately contributing to workforce stability and improved representation within the profession.

Example Activities:

- Providing one on one coaching and group advising from experienced Minnesota educators
- Offering scholarships, financial aid navigation, and application fee reimbursements
- Providing interactive tools that help users explore teacher preparation programs
- Implementing a statewide multimedia outreach campaign promoting teaching as a profession
- Supplying recruitment resources and Grow Your Own pathway supports for districts and communities

Statute Reference: N/A

Funding: N/A

More Information: Teacher Marketing and Outreach Campaign

Data from April 2025-January 2026 Implementation:

- The website had 15,109 unique users.
- A total of 4,109 users created accounts.
- Of registered users who responded, 31.4% identified as a person of color or American Indian.

- Eighty-six one-on-one coaching sessions and 25 group coaching sessions were registered.
- Seventy-one fee reimbursement requests were submitted.
- Two hundred seventy-seven scholarship applications were received.