

# MINNESOTA TEACHERS OF COLOR

## Modernizing Our Teacher Workforce



#MNTOCAI2020

Lead Author of Summary: Jennifer Sanchez  
Master of Public Policy, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, 2015



This brief will address how Minnesota policy and program efforts to increase the teacher of color and American Indian teachers (TOC/AMI) workforce could support success for all students across multiple educational outcomes, as well as gain a diversity of educators and leaders who better represent our population.

It outlines the findings and recommendations made in response to the issue of under representation of TOC/AMI in Minnesota. The analysis of this issue forms around a “pipeline” of policies and programs spanning three sections: candidate recruitment, effective induction, and long-term retention of teachers of color. This brief identifies limits and opportunities both within each section as well as across the entire pipeline. This brief is based on a full MnEEP report done by

graduate students at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota with guidance by MnEEP leadership—the full report includes:<sup>1</sup>

- A national scan of policies and programs aimed at increasing the TOC/AMI population and recommendations for Minnesota given the contextual analysis
- An analysis of U.S. policy efforts to address teaching and equity, and implications for Minnesota’s TOC/AMI population
- A scan of research on current Minnesota efforts to build the teacher of color and American Indian teacher population

### THIS BRIEF WILL COVER

- I. **Background:** Why Diversifying the Teacher Workforce Matters
- II. **Methodology:** An Overview of Teacher Workforce Pipeline Definitions and Analysis Approach
- III. **Analysis of National and Minnesota Efforts and Needs Across the Teacher Workforce Pipeline**
  - a. Attracting Teachers of Color (Recruitment)
  - b. Integrating into the workforce (Induction)
  - c. Sustaining workforce and practices long-term (Retention)
- IV. **The Case for American Indian Teachers** in the Pipeline
- V. **Recommendations and Conclusion:** Proposed actions Minnesota can take to advocate for and increase the number of teachers of color in Minnesota

The Humphrey graduate students also connected with the Minnesota Educators 4 Excellence organization as they released a report titled, “Closing Gaps Diversifying Minnesota’s Teacher Workforce” completed during this time span (April 2015).<sup>2</sup> It was our intention to build upon this report’s analysis with more research on national policies and program examples and 2015 Minnesota local legislation updates—to deepen and update recommendations regarding increasing teacher of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota.





# I. BACKGROUND: Why Diversifying the Teacher Workforce Matters

A non-diverse teaching corps is a consistent barrier to producing strong racially equitable education outcomes in public schools.

In 1993, The Supreme Court of Minnesota held that the Minnesota Constitution creates a fundamental right to a “general and uniform system of education” and requires the state to provide sufficient funding to ensure that each student receives an adequate education.<sup>3</sup> According to a Center for American Progress report, one vital component needed to increase the success rates for students of color is a representative teaching population that is both effective and diverse.<sup>4</sup> A literature review by Villegas and Irvine (2010) reports that the research examined “suggests that students of color accrue academic benefits when taught by a same-race teacher or when exposed to a teaching force (at the school or district level) that is racially/ ethnically representative of the student population.”<sup>5</sup> The importance of teachers of color and American Indian teachers for excellent education of students of color, researchers note, extends to White

students as well. According to professor and educator Gloria Ladson-Billings, “I want to suggest that there is something that may be even more important than black students having black teachers and that is white students having black teachers! It is important for white students to encounter black people who are knowledgeable...What opportunities do white students have to see and experience black competence?”<sup>6</sup>

Villegas and Irvine’s argument leads to the need to identify culturally relevant pedagogy encompassing the basic tenets of critical race theory. Critical race theory sets out to analyze the way in which laws are interpreted and how these interpretations reproduce and normalize racism within the United States. Theorist Gloria Ladson-Billings asserts culturally relevant pedagogy is central to the success of people of color (1995).<sup>7</sup> Native American educator Cornel Pewewardy

exemplifies this need with his assertion that “one of the reasons Indian children experience difficulty in schools is that educators traditionally have attempted to insert culture into education, instead of inserting education into culture.”<sup>8</sup> Critical race theorists believe that in programs that prepare future educational leaders, there is an obligation to understand and raise questions about race and racism in society, to analyze what role identity plays in a students’ learning as well as an ethical responsibility to interrogate systems, and organizational frameworks, that simply are not working for a large portion of its students.

Currently, the data regarding teacher diversity is sobering. According to a report by the Center for American Progress, while U.S. schools are now made-up of 50% students of color and American Indian students, only 18% of those diverse communities are represented in the teacher workforce<sup>9</sup> “As a result, almost every state has a large teacher-student diversity gap. For instance, students of color represent 73 percent of California’s student enrollment but only 29 percent of the state’s teachers are of color.”<sup>10</sup> In Minnesota, while students of color and American Indian students now represent 28% of the school-age population, only 4% of the teacher workforce represents this population.<sup>11</sup> More data regarding retaining teachers points to a more difficult issue when teachers of color do enter the field. The teacher workforce is trending to a population of newer teachers who do not stay in the profession, creating instability among schools and students, increasing costs for districts, and resulting in a deficit of experienced professionals to cultivate newer teachers. Nationally, more than 30% of new teachers leave during their first three years of teaching and over 50% leave within the next five years.<sup>12</sup> And when comparing turnover rates in 2004-2005 and 2008-2009 school years, teachers of color turnover was 18% and 24% higher, respectively, than white teacher turnover.<sup>13</sup> In addition,

Figure 1  
**U.S. Schools Demographics**

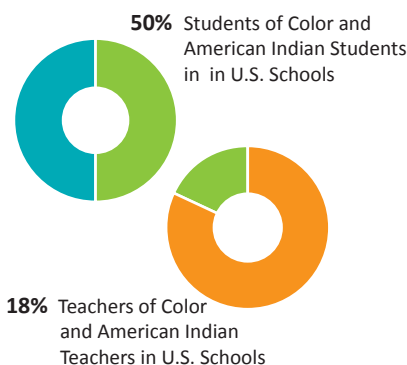
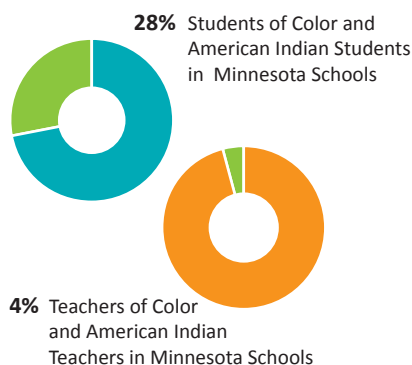


Figure 2  
**Minnesota Schools Demographics**





men of color were more likely to leave the teacher workforce than women of color, further reducing the population.<sup>14</sup> Among the factors influencing teachers' decisions to leave the profession are a lack of professional and financial supports.<sup>15</sup> Declines in budgets, training, and time contribute to increased stress and dissatisfaction, resulting in teachers choosing to leave.

### Increasing the TOC/AMI Corps in Minnesota: Proposing Holistic Policy and Practice Strategies

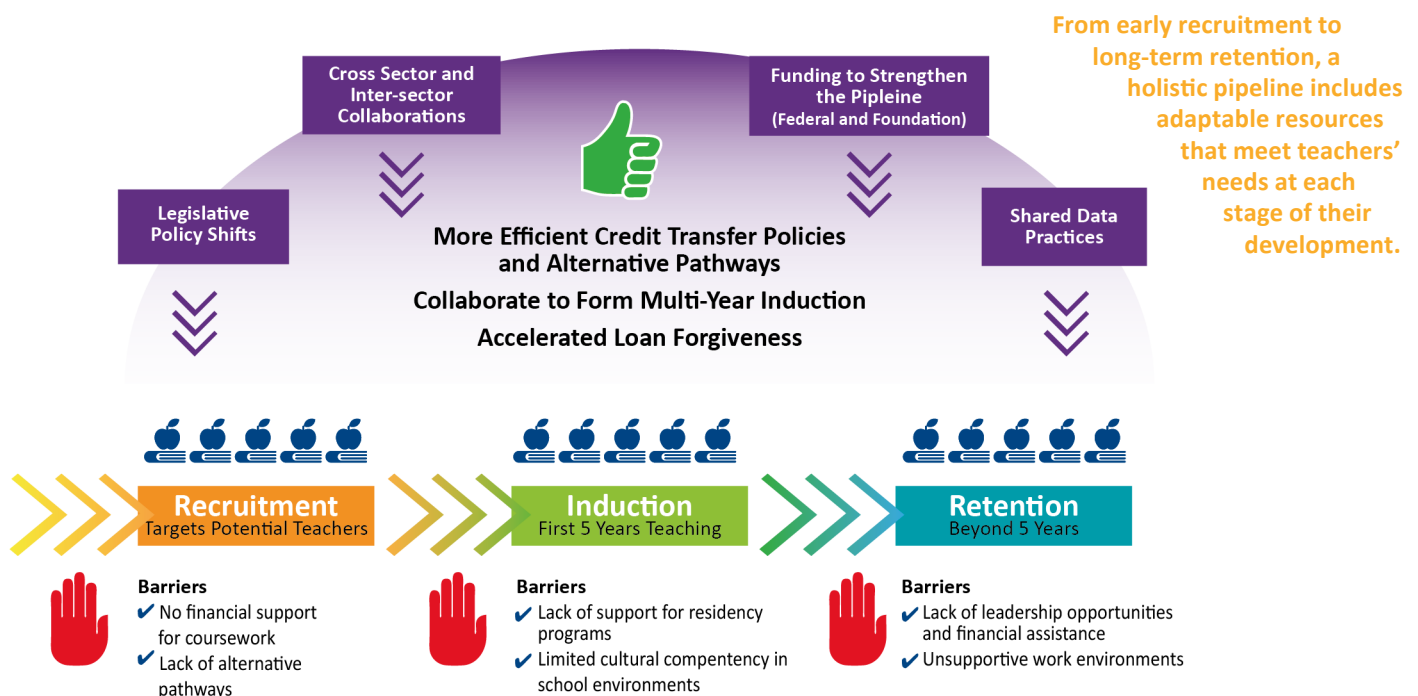
MnEEP has called for a statewide goal to increase the population of educators of color and American Indian teachers (TOC/AI) in Minnesota in an effort to reflect student demographics. With respect to teachers in Minnesota, 28% of our students identify as students of color compared to only 4% of teachers. This varies some by areas of the state, but the numbers do not improve much. Research indicates that an effort to progressively and sustainably increase

representative TOC/AI will result in higher academic achievement for all Minnesota students. This increase in achievement benefits Minnesota as it increases the state's workforce to compete globally and provides for new talents and perspectives in civic leadership. This diversity is necessary for an array of reasons including the aging workforce, the increase in jobs requiring an advanced education, and forecasts indicating students of color and American Indian students are the state's fastest growing segment of the workforce, but currently have the lowest graduation rates.<sup>16</sup>

To lead effective, sustainable change toward increasing Minnesota's TOC/AI, a number of stakeholders must commit to playing an active partnership role **to set a statewide numerical goal and commit to a strong policy agenda for Minnesota.** The findings from this report show that to meet an increased level of teachers of color and American Indian teachers, efforts will require: **legislative policy shifts, cross-sector collabora-**

**tions, comprehensive recruitment and retention programs for teachers of color, shared data practices,** and overall adaptive responses to the evolving educational environment in Minnesota. (see Figure 3) These efforts also include: legislative regulatory expansions in teacher preparation program requirements; exposure of students to planning for the profession at a young age; and appropriating funding to strengthen the pipeline overall and to provide incentives for teachers of color to stay in the profession. Leaders in this movement will need to engage legislative policymakers, education program personnel, district administration, advocacy organizations, union representation, and community leaders. This engagement is necessary for TOC/AI to receive long-term, holistic support. From early recruitment to long-term retention of teachers of color and American Indian educators, a holistic pipeline includes adaptable resources that meet teachers' needs at each stage of their development.

Figure 3  
**MnEEP Vision to Diversity in Teaching**





## II. Methodology of this Brief: An Overview of Teacher Workforce Pipeline Definitions and Analysis Approach

For purposes of this report, the holistic teacher workforce pipeline was analyzed and segmented by three sections—Recruitment, Induction, and Retention.

Within the Recruitment, Induction, and Retention sections of the pipeline, a comprehensive analysis was done according to three subcategories: *setting the context for the section, tracking current or proposed legislation, and reviewing existing relevant programs*. Table A showcases the three pipeline sections, definition, and key components.\*

Next, commonly used evaluation criteria were applied to the research supporting the subcategories of context, legislation, and programs that undergird the three pipeline sections which constitute the final report. The criteria, defined by the research team, were used to filter through all of the research to bring to the surface the relevant context, programs, and legislation that were most important and successful. Criteria determined most relevant are defined below:

- **Equity:** relevant and meaningful access to opportunities, resources, and supports; when necessary, statistical demographic data is used to guarantee accuracy, efficacy, and accountability;
- **Feasibility:** sufficient funding and political will for successful implementation; programs would be evaluated based upon the legitimacy of the political support in addition to the backing of specific legislation and the likelihood of critical financial inputs;
- **Sustainability:** the capacity to manage in the long term a constant flow along the pipeline in terms of revenue streams and organizational operations; ideally, legislation or programs would span all three pipeline sections to ensure enduring support for teachers.

Table A

### Definition and Analysis Approach

Section	Definition	Key Components Found*
Recruitment	Anything that targets potential teachers before they are actually licensed & placed in a classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Financial supports for teacher education: stipends, scholarships and loan forgiveness</li> <li>● Outreach to students in grades 6-12 to promote teaching as a career</li> <li>● Non-traditional pathways to licensure</li> <li>● Residencies for professionals already working in an educational setting</li> <li>● Prospects for job placement upon receiving licensure</li> <li>● Programs that target or serve particular cultural groups</li> </ul>
Induction	Any mentoring program, cohort model, or teacher training that occurs within the first three years a teacher is in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cross-district and cross-institution cohort and residency (student teaching) programs</li> <li>● Culturally responsive environments</li> <li>● Multi-year mentorship and training</li> </ul>
Retention	A long-term commitment to the teaching profession beyond five years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Compensation and Financial Incentives for Teachers: base salaries, stipends, and bonuses</li> <li>● Loan forgiveness and reimbursement</li> <li>● Meaningful &amp; systematized cohort support</li> <li>● Leadership &amp; mentorship opportunities</li> </ul>

\* This summary will cover some of these components, see full report for details.



### III. Analysis of National and Minnesota Efforts and Needs Across the Teacher Workforce Pipeline

The teacher workforce pipeline in Minnesota has several leaks and a few sizable holes.

The challenges faced by candidates of color and American Indians (TOC/AI) entering, and continuing in the teaching profession start early and loom large. Providing support along the entire pipeline is crucial as we work towards increasing TOC/AI to reflect student demographics. Essential components in creating a solid pipeline include: engaging students early, providing college support, financial assistance, mentors and cohorts, leadership opportunities, shifting the culture within schools, and making teaching financially viable. **As will be evidenced in this report, the teacher workforce pipeline in Minnesota has several leaks and a few sizable holes.**

#### RECRUITMENT

##### What are the Challenges that Cause Fewer Students of Color to Enter the Teaching Profession?

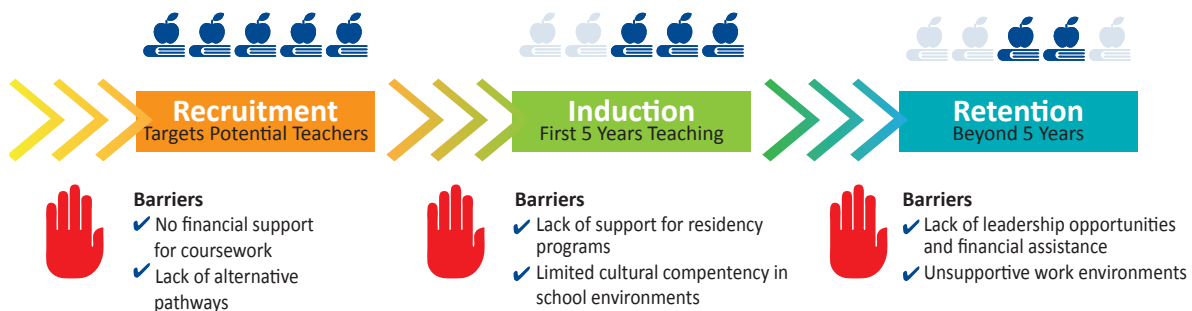
For students of color and American Indian students, the conventional pathway to becoming a teacher – moving successfully through K-12 and graduating from a teacher preparatory post-secondary program - is limited by the racial disparities produced by these systems. The high school graduation rate for these student group in 2014 was American Indian Students 50.6%, Asian Students 81.7%, Black Students 60.4%, Hispanic Students 63.2% and the college participation

was 42% for American Indian, 68% for Asian, 57% for Black and 50% for Latino students.<sup>17</sup> Such low success rates begs the question of whether we are maximizing opportunities to tap these communities for substantive numbers of teacher candidates using conventional licensure pathways. The 4% statewide TOC/AMI population would suggest not.

Nationally, there are programs and partnerships that are working to make entrance into the teacher pipeline a viable option for candidates of color. Successful programs include a number of key components: candidate recruitment beginning in secondary school, support in the college application process, college mentors and cohorts, loan forgiveness or scholarships, career counseling and job placement support, and alternative licensure for professionals both outside and inside the field of education.

Figure 4

### Teacher of Color and American Indian Teacher Pipeline







### U.S. Community College Education Students: An Opportunity for Recruitment

The role of community colleges reveals an especially large bottleneck in the teacher workforce pipeline. In 2011, 44% of students enrolled in community colleges were students of color, and 38% were the first in their family to attend college--both significantly higher proportions than at four-year colleges and universities. There are over 500 community colleges throughout the country that offer two-year Associates degrees in education, but there are no clearly articulated or easily pursued pathways from these programs into four-year colleges or universities.<sup>18</sup> At present, many four-year preparation programs do not accept credit transfers from community colleges or if they do accept transfers it is complicated and can include a financial cost, making it difficult if not impossible for students to continue on the education track. There is a compelling opportunity here to recruit and support these students for teaching careers.

### National Teacher Recruitment Programs

Successful programs such as *Today's Students Tomorrow's Teachers* (TSTT), provide the kinds of ongoing and intensive supports students need to persist in their pursuit of becoming a teacher. Over 75% of TSTT participants are students of color and over 75% are the first in their family to attend college. Minnesota can position itself for participation in this program.<sup>19</sup>

For students of color and American Indian students who enter college and get into the professional field without additional programmatic support, the remaining barriers can still be overwhelming. This is demonstrated by the fact that half of these students never complete their studies and by the number of paraprofessionals that never make it to the front of the class. Programs such as Call me Mister, and USC Latino and Language Minority Teacher Projects (L2mtp), that support students upon arrival at college or in moving from an educational professional into teaching, are an essential part of the pipeline.<sup>20</sup> As is evidenced in all of the programs highlighted, collaboration is

critical in developing strong, successful programs with potential to last. Potential teacher candidates of color indicate dissatisfaction with starting salaries, negative experiences with the education system, and an absence of mentors. The financial barriers to becoming a licensed teacher are significant, there is little access to peers from similar racial and ethnic backgrounds, and it is common for teacher candidates to feel isolated and alone.

Collaboration is an integral component of the teacher workforce pipeline. Effectively increasing the entry points for teacher candidates of color within and along the different sections of the pipeline necessitates a multi-pronged approach. Given this report's methodology, we believe programs that coordinate and engage a range of institutions, populations, and efforts will do better.

### Legislation Addressing Teacher Recruitment

At this time there is no federal legislation focusing on alternative licensure, or teacher preparation programs. There is some recent action in regards to data collection and requirements for teacher preparation programs. In late 2014 President Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan proposed requirements for the teacher preparation program accountability system under title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965.<sup>21</sup> The conversation has begun, but these changes are hotly contested and will have a long road to actually becoming law.

In the 2015 Minnesota legislative session, HF 1347 and S.F. 1273 were introduced by Rep. Fenton and Sen. Petersen to create a grant process within MOHE that would support alternative teacher preparation programs with a history of selecting participants that increase the racial and ethnic diversity of Minnesota's teaching workforce and follow preparation models that improve student achievement. The legislation was not enacted. Also, Rep.





Loon introduced H.F. 2 which contained a series of provisions aimed at easing out-of-state licensure, liberalizing the use of non-licensed “community experts”, and tying lay-off procedures to ratings in teacher evaluations. The out-of-state provisions were eventually enacted into law, but no specific provisions for enhancing racial diversity were enacted.<sup>22</sup>

Also in 2015 MN HF 1973/SF 1795 was introduced by Rep. Mariani and Sen. Torres-Ray that would provide grants to paraprofessionals from “underrepresented populations” currently employed in a school district that establishes goals for diversifying its workforce.<sup>23</sup> The grants would be used to help offset their costs for becoming a licensed teacher or early childhood educator including higher education costs. A tax credit would also be available for these individuals. The bill was not enacted into law.

### Minnesota Based Programs

Minnesota programs have some key components of success:

- Targeting populations of color
- Providing non-traditional entrance points to becoming a licensed teacher
- Support that bridges the gap between recruitment and induction.

The State of Minnesota funds a Collaborative Urban Educators program at four private universities designed to recruit persons of color and other persons with unique cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and urban backgrounds into the teaching profession and offering candidates licensure coursework leading to a teaching license. The St Paul Concordia University program targets Southeast Asian candidates and Augsburg College focuses on East African applicants. The University of St Thomas and Hamline University generally support “urban education” without targeting a specific racial/cultural group.<sup>24</sup>

Also, a legislatively funded Urban Teacher Program collaborative exists between Metropolitan State University and two community colleges—Minneapolis Community and Technical College and Inver Hills Community College. It seeks to 1) increase the number of teachers of color in Minneapolis, St. Paul and inner-ring suburbs so that the teaching workforce reflects the ethnically diverse population of students and their communities; and 2) To empower urban teachers with the content knowledge, pedagogical skills, urban field experiences, and professional dispositions needed to improve the educational achievement of historically and currently underserved urban learners and to advocate for their right to receive a high quality education.<sup>25</sup>

Many of the Minnesota programs lack sufficient reporting data to show demonstrable success based on the criteria of this report and the need for data collection and analysis is very high. Through the Teacher Effectiveness Initiative, the Bush Foundation in particular is heavily investing in teacher workforce development but in order to know what innovations should be replicated, additional tracking and analysis need to occur.<sup>26</sup>

While data barriers persist, opportunities for replication of national programs exist within the current Minnesota programmatic environment. Several of the national programs mentioned previously have key components that current Minnesota-based programs could emulate to increase their impact, like the *Concordia University Southeast Asian Teacher* program recruiting middle school students similar to *Today’s Students Tomorrow’s Teachers*.<sup>27</sup> Alternatively, the national programs that have been identified as successful in this report and with further community support have the possibility of chapters being established in Minnesota with adjustments made for Minnesota’s unique populations like Hmong and Somali.

## INDUCTION

### Why Are We Losing Teachers of Color Faster Than We Can Replace Them?

According to a recent report from E4E Minnesota (2015), the most frequently cited reasons new teachers leave the profession include a lack of support, the wrong types of support, or not feeling effective.<sup>28</sup> New TOC/AI face additional obstacles ranging from feelings of isolation resulting from cultural incompetencies in the education environment to challenges in hard-to-staff schools.

Teachers of color also report their white colleagues believe they have lower expectations for students of color and are often asked to handle behavioral situations with students and their parents because of their race.<sup>29</sup> Having a culturally responsive environment within districts can benefit not only the TOC/AI but also the entire school community. Cultural responsiveness should be defined according to Minnesota state law chapter 272, article 1.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, the high cost of college and the need for high student loans create a financial burden for new teachers. Research shows that comprehensive induction programs help increase teacher retention, improve teaching quality, and achieve better student outcomes.<sup>31</sup> A comprehensive program involves criteria including working with a mentor; receiving support from administration; participation in new teacher seminars; utilizing common planning time, reduced course loads and assistance from a classroom aide. These program components proved to have a measurable impact; as the likelihood that beginner teachers who benefitted from holistic induction would leave at the end of their first year was less than half that of those who did not have access to a similar induction program.<sup>32</sup> Strong partnerships between stakeholders across the pipeline—higher education institutions, school districts, and nonprofit



organizations—are essential to induction program success. These collaborations should include a focus on TOC/AI as a critical sub-population, and consider cultural competency training as a necessary part of teacher preparation programs.

### National Programs Addressing Teacher Induction

An existing U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DOE) program, the *Teacher Quality Partnership Grant Program* (TQPGP) aims to increase student achievement by improving the quality of new and prospective teachers through enhanced teacher preparation programs.<sup>33</sup> A part of this initiative involves recruiting promising candidates, including persons of color and individuals from other occupations, into the teaching workforce. Across the country, some of the major and comparatively newer models of teacher preparation, such as *Teacher Residency Programs* (TRPs), are funded by this program.<sup>34</sup>

In 2014, TQPGP granted 24 programs five-year funding awards totaling \$35 million. Two requirements of the grant are that admissions goals and priorities be aligned with the hiring objectives of the partnering high-need district(s), and that candidate selection is likely to broaden and diversify the pool of teachers in the districts served.<sup>35</sup> Early DOE data collected (2014) shows two-year, post-program teachers feel better prepared for 6 of 8 teaching activities, which may improve efficacy. Early retention rates, however, are not different from non-TRP programs.<sup>36</sup>

Promising programs across the country that are focused on improving support for new teachers are gaining attention. Many such programs have received funding from the U.S. DOE's TQPGP. These programs emphasize a multi-year approach to induction and often include a variety of supports such as mentors, cohorts, and ongoing professional guidance.<sup>37</sup>

Having a **culturally responsive environment** within districts can **benefit not only the teachers of color and American Indian teachers but also the entire school community.**

### Legislation Addressing Teacher Induction

As of the 2010-11 school year, 27 states required some kind of induction or mentoring program for new teachers, but only 11 had multi-year requirements.<sup>38</sup> There are only three states—Connecticut, Delaware and Iowa—that require schools and districts to: 1) provide multi-year induction support to beginning teachers; 2) require teachers to complete an induction program to obtain a professional teaching license; and 3) provide dedicated state induction funding. Research suggests that benefits to teachers and students can only be obtained through multi-year induction programs.<sup>39</sup>

In the 2015 Minnesota legislative session, SF 959/H.F. 384, introduced by Sen. Clausen and Rep. Urdahl, was passed appropriating \$200,000 for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) teacher preparation pilot programs consistent with Minnesota Statutes section 122A.09 offering a year-long student teaching experience that includes a mentorship and coaching component instead of the typical experience which lasts a single semester. The funds were distributed evenly to St. Cloud State and Metropolitan State with a report required to the legislature by March 1, 2017.<sup>40</sup>

### Minnesota Programs Addressing Teacher Induction

The U.S. DOE's TQPGP offers substantial long-term funding to teacher residency programs and emphasizes the need for diversity. To date, no grants have been awarded to Minnesota, despite the

need illustrated by teacher workforce challenges and the achievement gap among Minnesota students of color. Other potential funding partners include The Dewitt Reader's Digest Fund and the Bush Foundation.

E4E Minnesota recommends district-wide learning cohorts for the first three years of teaching as well as high-quality mentorship programs for new teachers.<sup>41</sup> This recommendation aligns with findings in this report, but additional district components are necessary for the creation of induction programs that meet the needs of teachers of color in their early years of teaching both professionally (cultural competency support) and financially.

## RETENTION

### Why are Teachers of Color Leaving the Profession at Higher Rates?

New teacher attrition has increased more than 40% during the last 16 years.<sup>42</sup> Teacher job satisfaction has dropped 15 percent since 2009, from 59% who were very satisfied to 44% who are very satisfied, the lowest level in over 20 years.<sup>43</sup> Demographic shifts in absence of requisite training supports destabilizes school culture and impacts student achievement.<sup>44</sup> Demographic shifts in absence of requisite training and adequate supports can destabilize school culture and impact student achievement.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, hiring new teachers costs the nation approximately \$7.3 billion annually and consequently compromises available funding for school curriculum, student programming, and staff development.<sup>46</sup>





While a greater number of teachers of color work in urban communities with higher levels of poverty that limit the amount of funding available for schools, and thus for teachers' salaries, organizational conditions such as lack of influence, involvement, and support can outweigh even financial factors for teachers of color.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, all teachers benefit from a working and learning environment that cultivates tolerance, engagement, and trust among personnel. An inclusive and culturally responsive teaching and learning environment can only be cultivated through the intentional integration of diversity training and staff development in the areas of school climate and organizational culture.<sup>48</sup>

The result of the aforementioned contextual information concerning teacher retention in general and teachers of color in particular point to the following key findings:

- Only 78% of African-American and of 79% of Hispanic-American teachers stayed teaching in the same school compared to 85% of White teachers.<sup>49</sup>
- Only 37% of African American teachers and 42% of Hispanic American teachers are satisfied with their salaries in contrast to 52% of White teachers.<sup>50</sup>
- Only 70% of African American Teachers are satisfied with the way their school is managed compared to 78% of White Teachers nationally.<sup>51</sup>

### National Programs Addressing Teacher Retention

Nationally, there are several promising programs that seek to increase the retention of teachers of color either directly or indirectly through improving recruitment and induction efforts. These programs may involve investing in cultural competency training and leadership opportunities, or funding scholarships and stipends, or permitting credit transfers and alternative pathways. These programs may be implemented by states, school districts, or higher education institutions.

At a state level and with a specific focus on teachers of color, the 2014 Oregon Teacher Minority Act Report includes a scorecard developed by its Educator Equity Advisory Group (EEAG).<sup>52</sup> The scorecard assists the EEAG in identifying "the deeper and more pervasive factors that influence the recruitment, preparation, and retention of culturally and linguistically diverse educators" by monitoring the following goals:

- Increase Workforce Diversity
- Elicit Leadership for Diversity Commitment
- Improve Workplace Climate/Behavior Diversity
- Expand Diversity Partnerships
- Establish Structural Diversity
- Increase Student Achievement
- Diversify the Field of Education

### Local Programs that Address TOC/AMI Retention

All schools that have adopted the West Metro Education Program's District Diversity Training Policy agree to have every employee (administrators, teachers, counselors, and aids) with direct student contact attend diversity training.<sup>53</sup> The training provides the methods to support equity through instruction, discussion, and relationships with students. In the schools, each staff member commits to using lessons from the training and relies on co-workers to ensure that what is learned becomes practice. Administrators use it to frame evaluations, and colleagues use it to guide conversations about challenges in the classroom.<sup>54</sup>

### Legislation Addressing Teacher Retention

At the federal level, there are opportunities for loan forgiveness for teachers, though these involve complicated



eligibility criteria and come too late in a teacher's career to impact retention as previously shown by statistics regarding teacher attrition in the first five years.<sup>55</sup>

To underscore the necessity of additional legislative support at the state level, Oregon enacted Senate Bill 755, which amended the original Minority Teacher Act passed in 1991. The legislation addresses the growing disparity between teachers of color and students of color in the state with a revised goal for 2015. SB 755 also emphasizes the importance of cross-collaboration by requiring representatives of the Oregon Education Investment Board, the Oregon University System, the Oregon Department of Education, and the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission to submit jointly a report on the Minority Teacher Act of 1991 to the Interim Legislative Committees.<sup>56</sup> This report is in response to past sporadic efforts to address the growing disparity between white teachers and teachers of color, and includes summaries of data, plans, recommendations, and practices for recruiting, inducting, and retaining teachers of color.<sup>57</sup>

The Minnesota Department of Education's *Fiscal Year 2013 Teacher Supply and Demand Report* to the Legislature calls for loan-forgiveness programs to help attract and retain more teachers of color, particularly in high-need areas of the state.<sup>58</sup> The 2015 Minnesota legislature passed a loan forgiveness program HF 1170/SF 713 for teachers in "teacher shortage areas" defined by licensure fields rather than by the lack of racial diversity of the teaching staff.<sup>59</sup>



## IV. The Case for American Indian Teachers in the Pipeline

The unique status of the American Indian population also presents new opportunities for funding and presents traction for change at the federal level.

American Indian teachers constitute a pipeline within a pipeline. Solutions that may be proposed for the Minnesota would need further consideration given the sovereign rights of tribes and particular legislation surrounding American Indian education. Currently, some teacher induction initiatives are in place and there are identified general retention concerns, but comparatively little focus is given to recruitment of teachers specifically as a potential solution to achievement gaps, outside of early childhood education. However, American Indians lag behind other groups in terms of teacher workforce and student education gaps.



### The Status of American Indian Students

A U.S. Department of Education report released in November 2012, ranked Minnesota 50th out of 50 states for the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of American Indian students.<sup>60</sup> According to the National Indian Education Association, “Minnesota, which has a significant Native student population, has the lowest four year adjusted graduation rate, with only 42 percent of students graduating with a diploma in four years.”<sup>61</sup> This is the only graduation rate in decline for racial groups in Minnesota. Current US Department of Education data shows that 86% of Native American students complete two-year AA Tribal College programs while only 10% complete regular four-year college or university programs.<sup>62</sup>

### Opportunities for Improving the Pipeline

Improvements for the American Indian teacher pipeline diverge from general recommendations. This is in part due to the separated regulations and barriers forming the pipeline’s environment. The unique status of the American Indian population also presents new

**American Indian teachers in Minnesota constitute a pipeline with a pipeline.**

opportunities for funding and presents traction for change at the federal level. Still, increasing teachers may be challenging in light of the programmatic challenges identified at Tribal Colleges. Targeted recommendations in policy and programmatic changes include:

- Create a partnership between AA certification programs and four-year colleges and universities through the MnTC
- Improve credit transfers from Community Colleges
- Leverage PSEO programs to recruit students interested in teaching
- Modify licensure testing requirements and/or make portfolio options that are compatible with tribal values
- Explore alternative pathways to licensure specific to tribal nations
- Revitalize education as a career with K-12 school outreach
- Increasing funding toward awareness and access, reliable data resources, and partnerships with K-12 tribal school districts on education (ex. White Earth and Pine Point Partnership)

In 1991 Minnesota law 122A.63 established a teacher preparation grants program to assist American Indian people to become teachers and to provide additional education for American Indian teachers. It funds postsecondary institutions, school districts, student scholarships, and student loans. Funds can be used for mentorship services and student loans can be forgiven.<sup>63</sup>

The MN 2015 legislative session made new initiatives in addressing the educational opportunities of American Indian students by investing \$18 million in new per pupil funding in school-level programs for both regular public and tribal schools. However, no specific teacher initiatives were targeted for American Indian education.<sup>64</sup>



## V. Recommendations: A Comprehensive Response

Increasing the representation of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in the state of Minnesota requires a dual focus that considers the entire pipeline while simultaneously targeting specific section(s) within it. The sections of Recruitment, Induction, and Retention that comprise the TOC/AMI pipeline are inextricably linked and necessitate a collaborative effort on the part of leaders, partners, and stakeholders. Collaboration, in addition to funding and mentoring, constitute central themes for addressing the barriers and gaps that currently impede pipeline access and success for teachers of color. Effectively resolving these issues must involve careful analysis and ongoing assessment to ensure legislative and advocacy efforts to improve the pipeline and increase teachers of color are driven by data from educational institutions and deemed equitable, feasible, and sustainable.

### **Creating a Statewide Goal for Enhancing Minnesota's E-12 Teaching Professional Population**

1. Minnesota school districts, higher education institutions and education advocacy groups should establish a measurable statewide teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOC/AMI) professional population growth improvement target.

### **Creating a New Holistic Policy Frame Impacting Across the Teacher Workforce Pipeline**

2. The Minnesota legislature and Governor should develop a teacher enhancement task force, using the existing

Governor's Education Diversity Task Force and Diversity Inclusion Council, to create a statewide action plan combining recruitment, induction and retention to increase teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOC/AMI). This collaboration should include a data collection team.

3. Minnesota higher education institutions and school districts should provide summary statistics on teacher candidate recruitment, retention, graduation rates, and job placement that are disaggregated by race and ethnicity. Nonprofits should also be encouraged, or required as appropriate, to provide similar data.

### **Supporting New Investments to Enhance the New Teacher Workforce Pipeline**

4. Minnesota should increase funding to expand or replicate current and promising programs as recommended by the statewide TOC/AMI teacher task force. This legislation should allow for differentiating modifications to serve Minnesota's unique populations of color.

### **Supporting Retention of New Teachers – Loan Forgiveness**

5. The Minnesota legislature should authorize a loan forgiveness program for teachers of color and American Indian teachers that forgives a prorated percentage of the loan based upon years of teaching service, starting in year one of a new teacher's tenure and continuing throughout a teacher's career until the loan is completely forgiven.

### **Supporting Recruitment for New Teachers - Strengthening Alternative Pathways**

6. The Minnesota Board of Teaching, the Minnesota Legislature and institutions of higher education should create a more efficient system to transfer credits from community and tribal colleges to four-year teacher preparation programs.

7. Minnesota should establish new regulations and practices to reduce barriers to licensure for paraprofessionals, bilingual aides, educational assistants, teachers coming from other states and professionals outside of the education sector.

### **Supporting Induction for New Teachers – Strengthening Long Term Support**

8. Induction programs should use evidence-based practices that include quality mentors, learning cohorts, and culturally responsive training. Long-term sustainable funding sources—state funding and Federal grant programs (Teacher Quality Partnership Grant Program)—should be foundational to support cross-sector collaboration.

### **Conduct an Issue Campaign Around the Value of Teacher Mentorship and Induction**

9. Minnesota school districts, higher education institutions and education advocacy groups should collaborate to develop a public awareness campaign based on a review and assessment of the logistics, funding, and regulations necessary to require multi-year induction programs for all new teachers.

MnEEP's strength as a networked organization provide it a unique opportunity to influence change within existing Minnesota law and with higher education and school districts to improve leaks and fill gaps in the TOC/AMI pipeline.



## CONCLUSION

Increasing the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in the state of Minnesota to reflect proportionately the increasing number of students of color is a robust challenge that requires a comprehensive response. Addressing a single section of the teacher workforce pipeline at the expense of the entire pipeline is an ineffective solution for a fundamentally composite problem.

In other words, even the most robust recruitment program is worth little if those new teachers don't receive a quality induction upon placement in a classroom. Furthermore, if established teachers do not continue to receive meaningful support throughout the course of their careers, then retaining them, as they grow into master teachers capable of being mentors becomes exceedingly difficult. Figure 3 demonstrates the holistic vision the Teachers of Color Network can take to close the existing gaps in the pipeline and reinforce sustainable policies and programs for consistent representation of student demographics in Minnesota's teaching population.

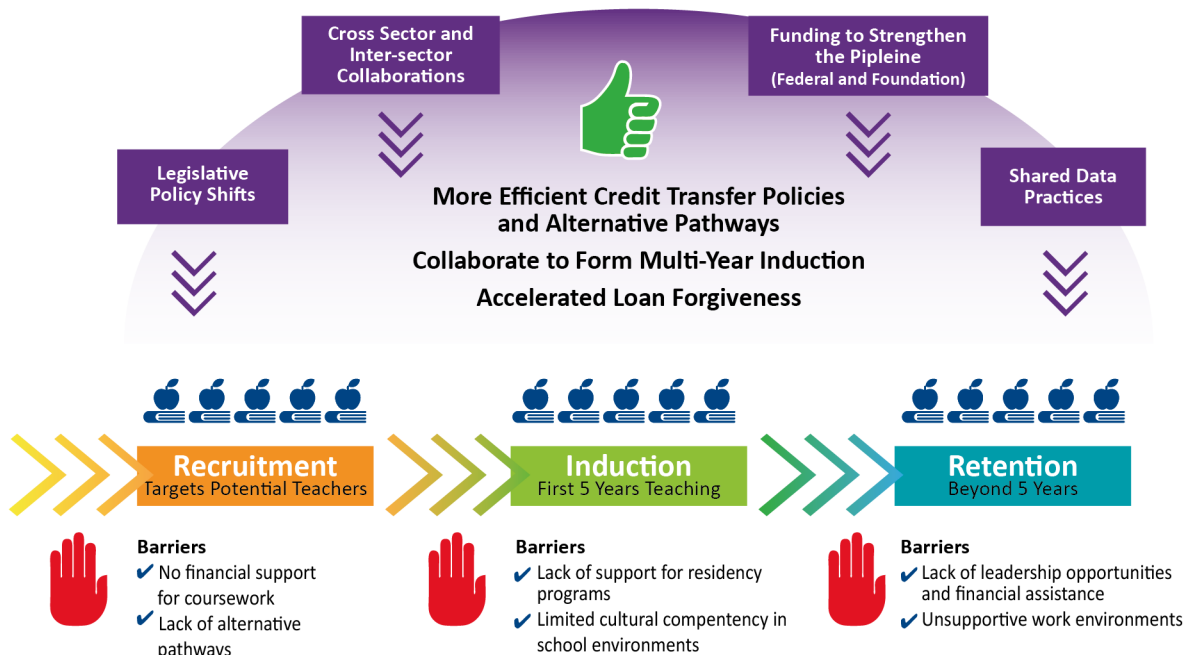
This recommended collective action must encompass legislative support, data driven solutions, intersectional collaboration, and financial support on multiple levels. The issue is presented to those advancing the Minnesota workforce in a pipeline that requires simultaneous actions on multiple fronts. The unity of these actions demonstrates the co-dependent natures between each. For example, without continued shared data tracking and analysis, funding and transformative legislation will diminish in time.

Focusing efforts on promising programs and feasible policies that span the entire teacher workforce pipeline increases the likelihood of a sustainable solution. For instance, funding will prove more impactful if sequenced across the pipeline in the form of scholarships, stipends, and loan forgiveness. In an integrated model such as this, aspiring teachers can receive financial assistance to acquire a license, pursue an advanced degree, and benefit from early and ongoing debt relief. Moreover, if funding is generated from various sources and targeted

toward teachers of color, particularly those working in low-income schools and especially those who are American Indian, then the outcome will not only prove to be more successful, but more equitable as well.

Considering the current discrepancy between Minnesota's teachers and students of color/American Indian students, there is much challenging work ahead if the state is to make and maintain progress on this issue. However, there is also present a great opportunity for an organization like the Minnesota Education Equity Partnership to leverage its existing relationships and establish a network of partnerships to address the issue. One thing is certain; increasing the representative number of teachers of color and American Indian teachers throughout the state is a large and complicated problem that must compel a collaborative effort on the part of many stakeholders for any solution to be successful. The state of Minnesota—its teachers, its students, and its schools—deserve nothing less than such an effort.

## MnEEP Vision to Diversity in Teaching







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