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## **Grow Your Own (GYO)–FY24**

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

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## For more information:

Tyler Livingston  
Educator Workforce and Development Center  
Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)  
400 NE Stinson Blvd.  
Minneapolis, MN 55413  
651-582-8427  
[tyler.livingston@state.mn.us](mailto:tyler.livingston@state.mn.us)  
[education.mn.gov](http://education.mn.gov)

As requested by Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 3.197: This report cost approximately \$2,913.66 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 2024, [122A.73, subdivision 6](#), GYO grant recipients must annually report to the Commissioner on their activities within the grant, including number of participants, the percentage of participants who are of color or Indigenous, and an assessment of program effectiveness, including participant feedback, areas for improvement, the percentage of participants continuing to pursue teacher licensure, and where applicable, the number of participants hired in the school or district as teachers after completing preparation programs. The Commissioner must publish a report for the public that summarizes the activities and outcomes of grant recipients and what was done to promote sharing of effective practices among grant recipients and potential grant applicants.

## Executive Summary

Minnesota's GYO grant is focused on increasing the number of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota by expanding pathways to the profession for secondary students and adults, by reducing financial barriers of entry, and by providing programming to support future teachers. This report focuses on Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) activities for all grantees implementing from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. This includes:

- 11 programs that started received funding in the winter of FY22 (FY22 cohort)
- 11 programs that began July 1, 2022 (FY23 cohort)
- 38 programs that began July 1, 2023 (FY24 cohort)

Each grantee has provided a description of their program and annual activities found in the [Appendix](#) of this report.

The GYO adult pathway grant includes 36 districts, charters or cooperatives (grantees) serving 276 teacher candidates, 222 (80.4%) of whom identify as a person of color or American Indian. Of these adults, 55 have completed the program and are now licensed teachers, 208 are continuing to work toward their licensure and 20 have chosen not to continue their programs. Consequently, 92.7% of adults receiving financial support in FY24 have either completed their programs or are continuing, a remarkable retention rate.

The GYO student pathway grant includes 19 districts, charters or cooperatives (grantees) serving 749 students, 65.4% of whom identify as students of color or American Indian students. A majority of students reported plans to continue exploring careers in education.

## Introduction

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

Minnesota began offering districts and charter schools the opportunity to receive state grant funds for GYO programs in the School Year (SY) 2016–17. Minnesota’s GYO grant program offers districts and charter schools two pathways—one for adults and one for secondary students.

### ***GYO Pathway for Adults***

GYO funds are available to eligible applicants for a grant to create a GYO program to assist people of color and American Indian people to obtain their first professional teaching license. The grant recipient must use at least 80 percent of grant funds to provide tuition scholarships or stipends to enable district employees or community members affiliated with a district, who are of color or Indigenous and who seek a teaching license, to participate in the teacher preparation program.

Adult pathway grantees must partner with:

- A Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board-approved (PELSB-approved or board-approved) teacher preparation program;
- A Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation-accredited (CAEP-accredited) teacher preparation program from a private, not for profit, institution of higher education; or
- An institution that has an articulated transfer pathway with a board-approved teacher preparation program.

### ***GYO Pathway for Secondary Students***

GYO grant funds are also available to eligible applicants to develop innovative GYO programs that encourage secondary school students, especially students of color and Indigenous students, to pursue teaching.

To be eligible for this pathway for secondary students grant, a district must ensure that the percentage of students of color or Indigenous students participating in the program is the same as or greater than that of the district.

The funds must be used to:

- Support future teacher clubs or service-learning opportunities that provide secondary students with experiential learning that supports the success of younger students or peers and increases students’ interest in pursuing a teaching career.
- Develop and offer postsecondary enrollment options for “Introduction to Teaching” or “Introduction to Education” courses consistent with Minnesota Statutes 2024, [section 124D.09](#), subdivision 10, that meet degree requirements for teacher licensure.
- Provide direct support, including wrap-around services, for students who are of color or Indigenous to enroll and be successful in postsecondary enrollment options courses under Minnesota Statutes 2024, [section 124D.09](#) that would meet degree requirements for teacher licensure.
- Offer scholarships to graduating high school students who are of color or Indigenous to enroll in board-approved undergraduate teacher preparation programs at a college or university in Minnesota.

### ***Application and Award***

MDE must give priority to eligible applicants with the highest total percentage of students of color or American Indian students. To do so, MDE uses a priority points process, awarding applicants who are in the quintile with the most students of color with five priority points, the next quintile with three priority points, the middle quintile with one priority point, and the remaining quintiles with zero priority points.

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

## **Program Practices**

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

- 2019–current – Created and maintained a [dedicated MDE webpage](#) to share high-level information about the program. A newsletter about GYO and other efforts to address teacher workforce shortages has also been in use for several years.
- February 2021 – Partnered with [New America](#) on a two-part webinar series—one focused on adult pathway programs, and the other focused on programs for students—about GYO programs. The events featured panelists from Minnesota and around the country.
- August 2021 – Provided public informational webinar about the FY22 grant opportunity.
- December 2021 – Provided public informational webinar about the FY23 grant opportunity.
- December 2021 – Provided an opportunity for FY22 grant applicants to provide feedback about the administrative decisions (e.g., capping the grant at \$750,000) MDE made for the grant competition. The intent was to learn about the opportunities, barriers and subsequent implications of MDE’s administrative decisions so that changes could be made ahead of FY23 competition.
- February 2022 – Provided a networking opportunity for FY22 grantees to learn about the mechanics of the grant, connect with fellow grantees, build relationships, solve problems of practice, and otherwise learn about the program together.
- July 2022 – Provided an opportunity for FY22 and FY23 grant applicants to provide feedback about the administrative decisions (e.g., capping the grant at \$750,000) MDE made for the grant competition. The intent was to learn about the opportunities, barriers and subsequent implications of MDE’s administrative decisions so that changes could be made ahead of FY24 competition.

- November 2022 – Provided public informational webinar about the FY24 grant opportunity, including sharing two new resources from New America:
  - [GYO Educators: A Toolkit for Program Design and Development](#) (web resource)
  - [GYO Educators: Opportunities and Challenges for Strengthening Teacher Preparation](#) (webinar)
- November 2022 – Provided a networking opportunity for FY22 and FY23 grantees to learn about the mechanics of the grant, connect with fellow grantees, build relationships, solve problems of practice, and otherwise learn about the program together.
- October 2022 and March 2023 – Provided a networking opportunity for all current student pathway grantees (FY22 and FY23) to connect with each other and share practices, challenges and successes around the various program elements while also problem solving and addressing questions.
- October 2023 – Provided a networking opportunity for FY22, FY23, and FY24 grantees to learn about the mechanics of the grant, connect with fellow grantees, build relationships, solve problems of practice, and otherwise learn about the program together.
- January 2024–Ongoing – Provided Community of Practice sessions for active grantees.

## Report Methods and Limitations

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

As readers review this document, it is important to note that **the results only reflect activities from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024 (FY24)** and only includes activities from the 11 FY22 grantees, 11 FY23 grantees, and 38 FY24 grantees.

FY22 grantees began their grant in the winter of 2021–22 due to the timing of the competition. Otherwise, FY23 and FY24 grantees each began on July 1 of their first FY.

FY25 grantees were awarded funding that began on July 1, 2024, and are not included in this report.

There were certain data elements throughout the report that were reported inconsistently across grantees. MDE staff dedicated time to contact grantees to correct data when it was clear to us that there was a reporting error(s). What is reported here is data as reported to MDE through an annual program report survey, including subsequent corrections to the reports facilitated by MDE staff.

## Analysis

### Adult Pathway Data

A total of 28 adult pathway grants were awarded in FY24, adding to six programs from FY22 and five programs from FY23, representing a total of 39 grantees around the state. Three grantees received multiple awards between FY22–FY24 (Anoka-Hennepin, Minneapolis, and Saint Paul Public Schools), so this report will reference 36 programs being implemented.

Four grantees partnered with other eligible applicants to implement a GYO program, thus the total of 47 participating districts, charters, and cooperatives across the state. 25 participating schools are located in the Twin Cities metro area (the seven-county metro area), and 17 are from greater Minnesota.

Only the fiscal host representing the 36 programs will be listed in the following tables. For a full list of participating schools, view the [Appendices](#).

### Pathway(s) to Teacher Licensure Supported by the Grant Program

Across the 36 active programs, adults sought initial teacher licensure at 18 teacher preparation programs across the state pursuing one of the five licensure pathways—a bachelor’s degree with license, a master’s degree with license, an alternative preparation provider, licensure via portfolio, or a teacher registered apprenticeship program.

The chart below identifies each grantee, the teacher preparation partner(s) the grantee is working with for the grant and the pathways to licensure available through the grantees program.

- Most GYO grantees (27) are solely utilizing funds for more traditional pathways to the profession (pursuing a BA or MA alongside a licensure program).
- Some GYO grantees are using alternative preparation providers, which are PELSB-approved teacher preparation programs that are not situated in a higher education institution. However, there may be some reporting errors in the following table, as some grantees checked the box for alternative preparation providers but did not list their provider partner, so this may have been a misunderstanding of the question.
- Note that there were no registered teacher apprenticeship programs active in Minnesota during the FY24 report, but it is an approved pathway to the profession effective during FY24. That column is intentionally blank for this year’s report, but it may have programs next year.

| Grantee                           | Teacher Preparation Provider   | Bachelor's Degree with Education License | Master's Degree with Education License | Alternative Preparation Provider | Licensure via Portfolio | Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Anoka-Hennepin                    | Augsburg<br>Bethel<br>Concordia-St. Paul<br>Hamline<br>St. Cloud State<br>St. Thomas                                     | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Bloomington                       | Augsburg<br>Bemidji State<br>University<br>Metropolitan State  | X  | X                                      | X                                |                         |   |
| Brooklyn Center                   | Augsburg<br>Hamline<br>Metro State<br>Southwest MN<br>State<br>Winona State  | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Burnsville-Eagan-Savage (ISD 191) | Augsburg<br>Dakota County<br>Technical College<br>Metro State  | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Columbia Heights                  | Bethel University<br>St. Thomas  | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Eden Prairie                      | Metro State<br>Southwest MN<br>State<br>UofM-Twin Cities<br>Walden University  | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Endazhi-Nitaawiging               | Red Lake Tribal<br>College   | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Exell Academy                     | Concordia-St. Paul<br>Metro State  | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Faribault                         | North Central<br>University<br>Metro State<br>Mankato State<br>Southwest MN<br>State<br>UofM-Twin Cities<br>Winona State | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |

| Grantee                        | Teacher Preparation Provider  | Bachelor's Degree with Education License | Master's Degree with Education License | Alternative Preparation Provider | Licensure via Portfolio | Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Freshwater Education District  | Bemidji State<br>St. Cloud State                                      | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Hiawatha Academies             | Hamline<br>Metro State<br>Teach Minnesota (TNTP)                      | X  | X                                      | X                                |                         |   |
| High School for Recording Arts | Augsburg<br>Metro State<br>St. Paul College                           | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Hmong College Prep             | Hamline   |  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Intermediate District 287      | MSU-Mankato<br>North Hennepin<br>Community College<br>St. Cloud State | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Lac qui Parle Valley           | No current partners or participants                                   |  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Madelia                        | Mankato State<br>Southwest MN State                                   | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Minneapolis                    | St. Thomas  |  | X<br>(Residency Program)               |                                  |                         |   |
| Monticello                     | Augsburg<br>College of St. Benedict<br>Hamline<br>Southwest MN State  | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| New Century Schools            | Metro State   |  |  |                                  |                         |   |

| Grantee                                    | Teacher Preparation Provider  | Bachelor's Degree with Education License | Master's Degree with Education License | Alternative Preparation Provider | Licensure via Portfolio | Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program |
|--|---|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| North St. Paul-Oakdale-Maplewood (ISD 622) | Bethel<br>Metro State<br>Bemidji State  | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Northfield                                 | Riverland Community College<br>Southwest MN State   | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Osseo                                      | St. Catherine University<br>St. Cloud State   | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Owatonna                                   | MSU-Mankato<br>Normandale<br>Winona State   | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Partnership Academy                        | Augsburg<br>St. Catherine   | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Prodeo Academy                             | Augsburg<br>Hamline<br>St. Thomas<br>Metro State<br>TeachMN<br>Western Governors University | X  | X                                      | X                                |                         |   |
| Rochester                                  | MSU-Mankato<br>Winona State   | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan (ISD 196)     | Bethel<br>Concordia-St. Paul<br>Metro State<br>Southwest State<br>St. Thomas                | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| Roseville                                  | St. Thomas  | X  | X                                      |                                  | X                       |   |
| Saint Paul Public Schools                  | Metro State<br>UofM-Twin Cities<br>St. Thomas   | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |

| Grantee  | Teacher Preparation Provider  | Bachelor's Degree with Education License | Master's Degree with Education License | Alternative Preparation Provider | Licensure via Portfolio | Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program |
|--|---|--|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Shakopee                                       | Bemidji State<br>MSU-Mankato<br>Normandale  | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| St. Cloud Area                                 | St. Cloud State<br>TeachMN  | X  | X                                      | X                                |                         |   |
| St. Paul City School                           | Concordia-St. Paul<br>Metro State   | X  | X                                      |                                  |                         |   |
| West St. Paul-<br>Mendota<br>Heights-<br>Eagan | Metro State   | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Winona Area Public Schools                     | Winona State  | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Worthington Public Schools                     | Southwest MN State  | X  |  |                                  |                         |   |
| Zumbro Education District                      | Bemidji State<br>Southwest MN State<br>St. Thomas<br>UofM-Twin Cities<br>Winona State | X  | X                                      | X                                |                         |   |

### Program Participation

PELSB scholarships and stipends to pursue a degree in teaching. Of these 276 teacher candidates, 222 (80.4%) identify as people of color or Indigenous. See the table below for participation numbers and percentages by grantee.

GYO-funded teacher candidate population of 80.4% people of color and Indigenous people exceeds the demographic representation in our current classrooms and in teacher preparation. According to the [PELSB 2023 Supply and Demand report](#), 5.9% of licensed teachers, 17.14% of candidates enrolled in teacher preparation programs, and 11.14% of licensure program completers in Minnesota identify as people of color or American Indian.

It is important to note that the law requires 80% of grant funding to be spent on scholarships, stipends or both for people of color and Indigenous people to obtain their first professional teaching license. The data below is

based on headcount of funding recipients, not dollar amount spent supporting candidates. MDE will monitor and support grantees to meet the spending expectation. Anecdotally, grantees have reported that their candidates of color have access to larger scholarships or stipends and, through increased financial support, grantees are meeting the 80% requirement.

| District (Grantee)                         | Total Number of White Participants | Total Number of Participants of Color or American Indian | Percentage of Participants who Identify as People of Color or Indigenous |
|--|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Anoka-Hennepin                             | 19                                 | 22   | 54%  |
| Bloomington                                | 1                                  | 8  | 89%  |
| Brooklyn Center                            | 1                                  | 6  | 86%  |
| Burnsville-Eagan-Savage (ISD 191)          | 0                                  | 10   | 100%   |
| Columbia Heights                           | 0                                  | 0  | N/A  |
| Eden Prairie                               | 1                                  | 11   | 92%  |
| Endazhi-Nitaawiging                        | 0                                  | 2  | 100%   |
| Exell Academy                              | 0                                  | 4  | 100%   |
| Faribault                                  | 0                                  | 18   | 100%   |
| Freshwater Education District              | 0                                  | 6  | 100%   |
| Hiawatha Academies                         | 0                                  | 3  | 100%   |
| High School for Recording Arts             | 0                                  | 3  | 100%   |
| Hmong College Prep                         | 0                                  | 2  | 100%   |
| Intermediate District 287                  | 0                                  | 8  | 100%   |
| Lac qui Parle Valley                       | 0                                  | 0  | N/A  |
| Madelia                                    | 2                                  | 4  | 67%  |
| Minneapolis                                | 5                                  | 11   | 69%  |
| Monticello                                 | 2                                  | 2  | 50%  |
| New Century                                | 0                                  | 0  | N/A  |
| North St. Paul-Oakdale-Maplewood (ISD 622) | 0                                  | 1  | 100%   |
| Northfield (ISD 659)                       | 0                                  | 5  | 100%   |
| Osseo                                      | 0                                  | 2  | 100%   |
| Owatonna                                   | 0                                  | 5  | 100%   |
| Partnership Academy                        | 0                                  | 8  | 100%   |
| Prodeo Academy                             | 4                                  | 5  | 56%  |
| Rochester                                  | 0                                  | 7  | 100%   |
| Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan (ISD 196)     | 0                                  | 10   | 100%   |
| Roseville                                  | 3                                  | 1  | 25%  |
| Saint Paul                                 | 4                                  | 4  | 50%  |
| Shakopee                                   | 0                                  | 9  | 100%   |
| St. Cloud                                  | 3                                  | 7  | 70%  |

| District (Grantee)                  | Total Number of White Participants | Total Number of Participants of Color or American Indian | Percentage of Participants who Identify as People of Color or Indigenous |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| St. Paul City School                | 0                                  | 6  | 100%   |
| West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan | 0                                  | 2  | 100%   |
| Winona Area                         | 1                                  | 2  | 67%  |
| Worthington                         | 6                                  | 18   | 75%  |
| Zumbro Education District           | 0                                  | 9  | 100%   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                        | <b>55</b>                          | <b>219</b>   | <b>80%</b>   |

### Progress of Teacher Candidates

In FY24, there were 276 adults participating across the 36 adult pathway programs. Of these adults, 55 have completed the program and are now licensed teachers, 208 are continuing to work toward their licensure and 20 have chosen not to continue their programs.

The percent of GYO participants graduating or staying with the program is 92.7%, a significant retention rate. Minnesota’s Office of Higher Education tracks [graduation rate trends](#) for Minnesota institutions, and no single institution shows a graduation rate above 90%, and most institutions are well below this figure.

This seems to show positive news for the program in terms of supporting teacher candidates to continue teacher preparation, given the small dropout rate of only 7.3%. In future reports and studies, MDE is interested in learning more about the factors contributing to this low rate.

There are two tables that provide data from each grantee. The first table is focused on participants of color including Indigenous participants. The second table includes white participants.

For both tables, the following information is displayed.

- Number of participants receiving scholarships, stipends, or both to get their first professional teaching license during the grant reporting period (July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024)
- Number of participants continuing the program into the next SY.
- Number of participants who have withdrawn or dropped from the program.
- There are three areas where participants may be double or even triple counted in the following tables.
  - Number of participants “completing” the program. This data element was intended to capture those who have finished both the academic and student teaching portions of the program, even if they had not received their license by the reporting date.
  - Number of participants receiving their license during the reporting period.
  - Number of participants who were hired. Note: This was intended to capture the number of participants who were hired as a newly licensed Tier 3 teacher; however, some grantees hired the participants prior to completing the licensure program (as Tier 2 teachers), so this data element is not as accurate as MDE had intended.

| District (Grantee)                | Participants of Color | Participants of Color Continuing | Participants of Color Withdrawn /Dropped | Participants of Color Completing Program | Participants of Color Licensed | Participants of Color Hired | Percent Participants of Color Continuing or Completing Programs |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Anoka-Hennepin                    | 22                    | 17                               | 1  | 4  | 2                              | 1                           | 100%*   |
| Bloomington                       | 8                     | 8                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| Brooklyn Center                   | 6                     | 6                                | 1  | 0  | 0                              | 3                           | 100%  |
| Burnsville-Eagan-Savage (ISD 191) | 10                    | 9                                | 0  | 1  | 1                              | 1                           | 100%  |
| Columbia Heights                  | 0                     | 0                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | N/A   |
| Eden Prairie                      | 11                    | 8                                | 3  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 73%   |
| Endazhi-Nitaawiging               | 2                     | 2                                | 2  | 2  | 0                              | 0                           | Reporting Error   |
| Exell Academy                     | 4                     | 4                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| Faribault                         | 18                    | 17                               | 1  | 1  | 1                              | 0                           | 94%   |
| Freshwater Education District     | 6                     | 5                                | 1  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 83%   |
| Hiawatha Academies                | 3                     | 3                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| High School for Recording Arts    | 3                     | 3                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| Hmong College Prep Academy        | 2                     | 2                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 1                           | 100%  |
| Intermediate District 287         | 8                     | 7                                | 0  | 1  | 1                              | 1                           | 100%  |
| Lac qui Parle Valley              | 0                     | 0                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | N/A   |
| Madelia                           | 4                     | 2                                | 0  | 2  | 2                              | 2                           | 100%  |
| Minneapolis                       | 11                    | 0                                | 0  | 10                                       | 10                             | 10                          | 90.1%   |
| Monticello                        | 2                     | 2                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| New Century Schools               | 0                     | 0                                | 0  | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | N/A   |

| District (Grantee)                         | Participants of Color | Participants of Color Continuing | Participants of Color Withdrawn / Dropped | Participants of Color Completing Program | Participants of Color Licensed | Participants of Color Hired | Percent Participants of Color Continuing or Completing Programs |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| North St. Paul-Oakdale-Maplewood (ISD 622) | 1                     | 1                                | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 1                           | 100%  |
| Northfield (ISD 659)                       | 5                     | 3                                | 2   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 60%   |
| Osseo                                      | 2                     | 1                                | 1   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 50%   |
| Owatonna                                   | 5                     | 5                                | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| Partnership Academy                        | 8                     | 8                                | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| Prodeo Academy                             | 5                     | 5                                | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| Rochester                                  | 7                     | 6                                | 0   | 1  | 1                              | 1                           | 100%  |
| Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan (ISD 196)     | 10                    | 10                               | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| Roseville                                  | 1                     | 0                                | 1   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 0%  |
| Saint Paul                                 | 4                     | 0                                | 0   | 4  | 4                              | 3                           | 100%  |
| Shakopee                                   | 9                     | 9                                | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |
| St. Cloud                                  | 7                     | 7                                | 0   | 7  | 0                              | 2                           | 100%  |
| St. Paul City School                       | 7                     | 6                                | 1   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 85.7%   |
| West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan        | 2                     | 2                                | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 2                           | 100%  |
| Winona Area                                | 2                     | 0                                | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 0%  |
| Worthington                                | 18                    | 16                               | 1   | 1  | 1                              | 1                           | 94.4%   |
| Zumbro Education District                  | 9                     | 9                                | 0   | 0  | 0                              | 0                           | 100%  |

GYO grants must spend at least 80% of the award on scholarships and stipends for teacher candidates of color including Indigenous candidates. Some grantees elect to support white candidates as well with the remainder of the funds. The following table includes only those grantees who supported a white candidate during FY24.

| District (Grantee)                | White Participants | White Participants Continuing | White Participants Withdrawn/ Dropped | White Participants Completing Program | White Participants Licensed | White Participants Hired | Percent Participants Continuing or Completing Programs |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Anoka-Hennepin                    | 19                 | 9 (6 moved to SPED)           | 1                                     | 9                                     | 6                           | 6                        | 94.7%  |
| Bloomington                       | 1                  | 1                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 100%   |
| Brooklyn Center                   | 2                  | 1                             | 1                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 50%  |
| Burnsville-Eagan-Savage (ISD 191) | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Columbia Heights                  | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Eden Prairie                      | 1                  | 1                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 100%   |
| Endazhi-Nitaawiging               | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Exell Academy for Higher Learning | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Faribault                         | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Freshwater Education District     | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Hiawatha Academies                | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| High School for Recording Arts    | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Hmong College Prep Academy        | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Intermediate District 287         | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Lac qui Parle Valley              | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Madelia                           | 2                  | 1                             | 1                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 50%  |

| District (Grantee)                           | White Participants | White Participants Continuing | White Participants Withdrawn/ Dropped | White Participants Completing Program | White Participants Licensed | White Participants Hired | Percent Participants Continuing or Completing Programs |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Minneapolis                                  | 5                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 5                                     | 5                           | 5                        | 100%   |
| Monticello                                   | 2                  | 2                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 100%   |
| New Century Schools                          | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| North St. Paul- Oakdale- Maplewood (ISD 622) | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Northfield (ISD 659)                         | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Osseo  | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Owatonna                                     | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Partnership Academy                          | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Prodeo Academy                               | 4                  | 4                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 100%   |
| Robbinsdale                                  | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Rochester                                    | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Rosemount- Apple Valley-Eagan (ISD 196)      | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Roseville                                    | 3                  | 3                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 100%   |
| Saint Paul                                   | 4                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 4                                     | 4                           | 1                        | 100%   |
| Shakopee                                     | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| St. Cloud                                    | 3                  | 3                             | 0                                     | 3                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 100%   |
| St. Paul City School                         | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| West St. Paul- Mendota Heights- Eagan        | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Winona                                       | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |
| Worthington                                  | 7                  | 6                             | 1                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | 85.7%  |
| Zumbro Education District                    | 0                  | 0                             | 0                                     | 0                                     | 0                           | 0                        | N/A  |

## Program Reflection Summary

In addition to the participation data outlined previously, districts were also asked in their annual reports to include data around what participants saw as strengths and weaknesses in their programs and how they wanted to adjust their programs going forward. Some of the key ideas that came out in these more qualitative data responses are:

- Program strengths reported by participants:
  - Participants reported the financial support provided as instrumental in their pursuit of licensure. “The greatest strength of the GYO program is the flexibility of school/work and not having to stress financially.”
  - Participants reported the navigational support as essential in navigating college, registration, classes and providing a space to ask questions. “The greatest strength is just having the support, having a Navigator checking in on how you’re doing mentally and emotionally and how I’m doing in classes. We would come up with a plan to make sure I’m successful.”
  - Participants reported the flexibility of the programs, online classes, multiple institutions to choose from made their licensure journey possible. “The cohort model ended up being a great support group, and I appreciated being able to work throughout the program which provided a lot of practical application of the skills being learned.”
  - Participants reported the opportunity to stay in the community, built community and belonging and come back to the community as license educators as a strength of the program. “Sense of community is great; we’re all working adults trying to figure it out. I appreciate the meetings in learning more topics and issue.”
- Program challenges reported by participants:
  - Work-life balance is a challenge. Participants are trying to balance work, family and going to school. “Finding the balance of work and college while also enjoying time with loved ones.”
  - Participants reported being back in college after a time away as challenging because the needs to adjust and learn new systems. “The hardest part for me has been going back to school and learning with a young and newer generation. Everything is very different from the last time that I went to school.”
  - Management of due dates and deadlines for program as well as post-secondary institutions.
  - Creating time within the program to build community for participants because of the demands of the job and school.
  - Billing and payments were challenging including not knowing if books were included, room and board and third-party billing not always working correctly.
  - Turnover in the program’s leadership can leave a dent in communication and participants ability to know where to turn to for questions.
- Program adjustments recommended by participants:
  - Being intentional about creating spaces within the workday for networking, connecting with other participants and building community.
  - Having regular check-ins with navigator about progress and questions that might come up.
  - More awareness about GYO programming and future directions and supports.

- More direct support with edTPA.

### **Overall Adult Pathway Findings**

Overall, the GYO adult pathway grant includes 36 districts, charters or cooperatives (grantees) serving 276 teacher candidates, 222 (80.4%) of whom identify as a person of color or American Indian. Of these adults, 55 have completed the program and are now licensed teachers, 208 are continuing to work toward their licensure and 20 have chosen not to continue their programs. Consequently, 92.7% of adults receiving financial support in FY24 have either completed their programs or are continuing, a remarkable retention rate.

## Student Pathway Data

A total of ten student pathway grants were awarded in FY24, adding to five programs from FY22 and six programs from FY23, representing a total of 21 grantees around the state. Two grantees received multiple awards between FY22–24 (Burnsville and Minneapolis), so this report will reference 19 programs being implemented.

Four grantees partnered with other eligible applicants to implement a GYO program, thus the total of 27 participating districts, charters, and cooperatives across the state. Twelve participating schools are in the Twin Cities metro area (the seven-county metro area), and seven are from greater Minnesota.

Only the fiscal host representing the 19 programs will be listed in the following tables. For a full list of participating schools, view the [Appendices](#).

## Pathways to Support Student Learners Supported by the Grant

Districts who received student pathway GYO Grants in FY24 were able to use funding in the following ways:

- supporting future teacher clubs and/service-learning opportunities that provide secondary students with experiential learning that supports the success of younger students and increases interest in a teaching career.
- providing direct support, including wrap-around services, for students of color/American Indian students taking Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)/concurrent enrollment courses during high school would meet degree requirements for teacher licensure; or
- offering scholarships for students of color/American Indian to enroll in board-approved undergraduate teacher preparation programs at a college or university in Minnesota.

Of the 19 grants, eight provided future teacher clubs, 13 provided service-learning opportunities, 13 provided direct support (including wrap-around services) for PSEO/concurrent enrollment students, and 12 provided scholarships to graduates that were pursuing education degrees at PELSB approved teacher prep institutions. Four of the programs only offered one program options, while seven offered at least two options and eight offered three or four options.

The following table outlines the various funded activities utilized by each grantee to encourage more students to explore and become educators.

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

### Program Participation

In total, the student pathway program provided support and opportunities to explore teaching to 752 students across the various districts, with an average of 65.2% percent of those participating students being from communities of color or American Indian communities. Statewide the percentage of students who identify as being of color or American Indian is approximately 38.6% percent. Should the students participating in the GYO student pathway grant matriculate to a teacher preparation program, the demographics of participating students is promising for the program’s purpose to “develop a teaching workforce that more closely reflects the state’s increasingly diverse student population.”

Statute for the student pathway grants requires that the aggregate participation of students of color/Indigenous students be equal to or greater than that of the district for the future teacher clubs and service learning opportunities (participation in wrap-around supports and scholarships is limited to students of color/Indigenous students only, although since many wrap-around supports include transportation and other similar services, white students are sometimes included as well as students of color/Indigenous students as there is no difference in cost for those services). Of the 19 grantees, 13 have an aggregate participation percentage for students of color/Indigenous students that is five percent or more higher than their district population. Of these

13, 11 grant programs have an aggregate participation from students of color/Indigenous in their program that is 10 percent or more greater than their district population percentage, with four of those programs having an aggregate participation of students of color/Indigenous students that is 40 percent or more greater than the percent of those students in their overall population. MDE will be following up with the four programs that have participants, but do not yet demonstrate that the population participating in the grant have meet requirements regarding the percentage of participants that are students of color/Indigenous for the future teacher clubs and service-learning opportunities.

The reported student participation numbers for each grant program are outlined in the table below.

| <b>District (Grantee)</b>      | <b>Total Number of Students Participating in the Grant</b> | <b>Percentage of the Total Participants in the Grant Program who Identify as Students of Color or Indigenous</b> | <b>District Percentage of Students of Color/Indigenous that must be matched or exceeded in participation</b> |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Austin                         | 63   | 52.4%  | 58.6%  |
| Brooklyn Center                | 9  | 88.9%  | 83.8%  |
| Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose       | 11   | 27.3%  | 13.5%  |
| Burnsville-Eagan-Savage        | 19   | 57.9%  | 70.7%  |
| Columbia Heights               | 5  | 80%  | 85.4%  |
| Freshwater Education           | 0  | N/A  | 64.24%*  |
| High School for Recording Arts | 4  | 100%   | 96.2%  |
| Intermediate 287               | 6  | 100%   | 64.7%  |
| Madelia                        | 5  | 100%   | 57.5%*   |
| Minneapolis                    | 200  | 75%  | 61.7%  |
| Monticello                     | 119  | 16.8%  | 21.1%  |
| Osseo                          | 6  | 100%   | 61.7%  |
| Owatonna                       | 15   | 80%  | 36.1%*   |
| Robbinsdale                    | 0  | N/A  | 66.3%  |
| Rochester                      | 3  | 100%   | 47.3%  |
| Roseville                      | 14   | 42.9%  | 61.5%  |
| Saint Paul                     | 181  | 89.5%  | 77.4%  |
| Shakopee                       | 62   | 56.5%  | 51.1%  |
| St Cloud                       | 27   | 81.5%  | 62.8%  |

\*The district percentage for these grants is an average across all the partners in the program determined by combining the total populations in each partner district and the total number of students of color/Indigenous students at each partner and calculating the percentage from that data.

## Program Retention

Based on the data provided by the districts receiving the grants, it appears that most have a strong retention rate with, in most cases, most of the students taking part in at least one aspect of their program remaining interesting in a career in teaching. While it is unclear at this time what the overall impact this will have on guiding more students of color and American Indian students into completing a teacher preparation program, the data hopefully shows a positive impact on showing student participants how a teaching career may be a meaningful pathway for them to pursue in their futures.

The following table outlines the percentage of students in each grant program that remain interested in education as a career after participation in the grant program activities, as reported by the grantees. Not all percentages may be out of the full participation as in some cases only some participants responded to district requests for data. Note: Not all grants are listed in the table as some did not have participation during the reporting period.

| District (Grantee)             | Number of Student Participants | Percentage of Participating Students that Remain Interested in a Career in Teaching |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Austin                         | 63                             | 100%  |
| Brooklyn Center                | 9                              | 83.3%   |
| Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose       | 11                             | 100%  |
| Burnsville-Eagan-Savage        | 19                             | 47%   |
| Columbia Heights               | 5                              | 100%  |
| High School for Recording Arts | 4                              | 25%   |
| Intermediate 287               | 6                              | 66.70%  |
| Madelia                        | 5                              | 100%  |
| Minneapolis                    | 200                            | 90%   |
| Monticello                     | 119                            | 16.8%   |
| Osseo                          | 6                              | N/A*  |
| Owatonna                       | 15                             | 100%  |
| Rochester                      | 3                              | N/A*  |
| Roseville                      | 14                             | N/A*  |
| Saint Paul                     | 181                            | 71%**   |
| Shakopee                       | 62                             | 68%   |
| St Cloud                       | 27                             | 77.3%   |

\*The percentage that remain interested in teaching is not available since the district was unable to collect the data prior to reporting.

\*\*In the district's report they said that 71% of students who completed the survey remain interested. They also stated that 60% of students in exit interview and other feedback form, remained interested.

## Scholarship Amount and Duration

One of the largest factors that prevents students of color and American Indian students from pursuing education as a career is the cost of obtaining a college degree. With that in mind, six of the eleven student pathways GYO programs offer scholarships to secondary students that are interested in pursuing careers in education.

The amount of the scholarship and the duration for which it is awarded are determined by each district, with the intent for scholarships to help students of color/American Indian students offset the costs of pursuing their education degrees. Scholarships may encompass all aspects of the students cost of attendance for their chosen teacher preparation program. Some grantees only allow students to receive scholarships to certain partner colleges or universities, others allow any higher education partner that has an approved teacher prep program. For those students who receive multi-year scholarships, the district is working with students to ensure they continue to pursue a degree for an education career to keep receiving the scholarship.

The following table outlines the scholarship type, amount, duration and other applicable factors, for the grant programs that distributed scholarships during the reporting period. Note: While Freshwater Education District and Robbinsdale School District are listed previously as offering scholarships are part of their grant program, they are not listed in this table as they did not distribute scholarships during the reporting period.

| District                       | Amount                                  | Duration                         | Number of Scholarships Awarded |
|--------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Brooklyn Center                | \$5,000                                 | 1 year                           | 1                              |
| Burnsville-Eagan-Savage        | \$6,000                                 | 1 year (renewable up to 4 years) | 9                              |
| High School for Recording Arts | Cost of attendance after financial aid* | 4 years                          | 4                              |
| Madelia                        | \$10,500**                              | 4 years (or until graduation)    | 5                              |
| Minneapolis                    | \$1,000                                 | Varies                           | 10                             |
| Monticello                     | \$5,000                                 | 1 year                           | 3                              |
| Owatonna                       | \$3,600                                 | 1 year                           | 7                              |
| Rochester                      | Cost of attendance after financial aid* | 1 year (renewable up to 4 years) | 3                              |
| Saint Paul                     | \$5,000                                 | 1 year                           | 1                              |
| Shakopee                       | \$64,000***                             | 4 years                          | 4                              |

\*No dollar amount provided.

\*\*Scholarship amount reported is per term.

\*\*\*Scholarship amount was reported as the total per scholarship for the full duration.

## Program Reflection Summary

In addition to the participation data outlined previously, districts were also asked in their annual reports to include data around what participants saw as strengths and weaknesses in their programs and how they wanted

to adjust their programs going forward. Some of the key ideas that came out in these more qualitative data responses are:

- Program strengths reported by participants:
  - Students consistently highlighted the importance of supportive relationships with program leaders, mentors, and staff.
  - Field experiences, internships, volunteer opportunities, and classroom rotations were widely appreciated by students as they offered real-world experience in education.
  - Many students valued the exposure to college life and educational career pathways, with activities like signing days, research projects, and guest speakers fostering career interest.
- Program challenges reported by participants:
  - Many students found it difficult to balance program requirements with other responsibilities and personal time.
  - Limited support from partners, including insufficient check-ins from affiliated colleges and difficulties coordinating with part-time navigators.
  - Students reported struggles with public speaking and classroom management, which highlighted a need for more support in developing speaking, communication, and classroom management skills.
- Program adjustments recommended by participants:
  - Students requested more field trips, particularly to college campuses and educational institutions, as well as more hands-on teaching and tutoring experiences.
  - For many participants there was a need for regular group and individual check-ins to strengthen relationships and provide support.
  - Students suggested adjustments to the program's schedule, including more time for homework, breaks during intensive programming, and additional time allocated for classroom placements.

## Overall Student Pathway Findings

The data show that 749 students are being exposed to teaching careers because of the funded activities being implemented through the GYO Program. In most cases 50 percent or more of the students responding to the surveys plan to continue exploring or pursuing a teaching career. Over 65 percent of the participants are students that identify as people of color or American Indian. While it is too soon to tell how many will continue to pursue education careers, this investment in exposure to teaching as a profession may help students see a future for themselves in a classroom.

## Conclusion

The GYO grantees that implemented programs in FY24 include some who are just beginning their work on these programs (FY24) and others who have more than a year implementing the grant (FY22 and 23). The public may notice differences in, for example, program participation when comparing FY24 grantees that are just getting started with FY22 and FY23 grantees who have had time to implement and refine their programs.

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

### **Adult Pathway**

276 adults received scholarships/stipends to pursue a first-time professional teaching license during FY24.

- 222 of those adults (80.4%) identify as people of color or American Indian.
- 92.7% of the program participants are either continuing their licensure program or have completed their licensure program.
- 55 individuals completed their programs and received a license. At the time of reporting, 48 were employed either in the district who provided them the scholarship/stipend or in another Minnesota School District.

The GYO-adult pathway grant is having a tangible impact on the goal to increase teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota. One early success of the program is the significant retention rate of participants through their teacher preparation to initial licensure experience. Further study is needed to learn whether GYO-funded teachers also experience high retention rates as teachers in the field, since a huge factor in any teacher shortage conversation is teachers leaving schools or leaving the profession entirely.

### **Student Pathway**

749 secondary students participated in a GYO program for students:

- 65.4% identify as people of color or American Indian
- A majority of students plan to continue exploring careers in teaching or pursue teacher licensure.

The GYO student pathways grant is having an impact on helping students, particularly students of color and Indigenous students, explore teaching as a career path and begin pursuing licensure. One of the early successes in the program is that the percentage of students of color/Indigenous students participating in the GYO student pathway programs is nearly double the percentage of students in the state who identify as students of color/Indigenous. Another is that in 11 of the 17 programs over 50 percent of participating students remain interested in pursuing teaching. Further study needs to be conducted, over a longer period of time, to determine the full impact of providing students opportunities to explore teaching careers during secondary education to determine the impact on increasing the teacher workforce, particularly for teachers of color/Indigenous teachers.

## Appendices

The following program summaries were authored by the grantees and are shared below with only light editing for clarity. Use the hyperlinks to advance to the individual grantee report.

### Adult Pathway Grantees and Award Amounts

[Anoka-Hennepin School District](#) – FY23 = \$749,893.00; FY24 = \$750,000.00

[Bloomington Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$749,770

[Brooklyn Center Community Schools](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[Burnsville Public School District](#) – FY24 = \$598,794

[Columbia Heights Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$288,000

[Eden Prairie School District](#) – FY22 = \$403,085.44

[Endazhi-Nitaawiging](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[Excell Academy for Higher Learning](#) – FY24 = \$375,250

[Faribault Public School District](#) – FY23 = \$500,000.00

[Freshwater Education District](#) – FY22 = \$727,500.00

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

[Hiawatha Academy](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[Hmong College Prep](#) – FY24 = \$385,244

[High School for Recording Arts](#) – FY24 = \$457,077

[Intermediate District 287](#) – FY23 = \$271,601.18

[Lac qui Parle Valley Schools](#) – FY24 = \$283,200

[Madelia Public Schools](#) – FY23 = \$750,000.00

Partnering with St. James Schools

[Minneapolis Public Schools](#) – FY22 = \$727,500.00; FY24 = \$750,000

[Monticello Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$500,000

[New Century School](#) – FY24 = \$117,150

[Northfield Public Schools](#) – FY22 = \$288,575.00

[North Saint Paul-Oakdale-Maplewood Schools](#) – FY24 = \$411,487

[Osseo Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[Owatonna Schools](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

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

[Partnership Academy](#) – FY24 = \$560,587

[Prodeo Academy](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[Rochester Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[Roseville Area Schools](#) – FY24 = \$627,220

[Saint Paul Public Schools](#) – FY22 = \$727,500.00; FY24 = \$750,000

[Shakopee Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[St. Cloud Area School District](#) – FY22 = \$327,092.3

[St. Paul City School](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan](#) -- FY24 = \$750,000

Partnering with Inver Grove Heights and South St. Paul Public Schools

[Winona Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$366,800.58

[Worthington Public Schools](#) – FY23 = \$624,375.00

[Zumbro Education District](#) – FY24 = \$469,906.55

#### **Student Pathway Grantees and Award Amounts**

[Austin Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$749,763.25

[Brooklyn Center Community Schools](#) – FY24 = \$585,500

[Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose](#) – FY24 = \$663,893.31

[Burnsville Public Schools](#) – FY23 = \$441,708; FY24 = \$472,780

[Columbia Heights Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$175,894.52

[Freshwater Education District](#) – FY23 = \$745,731.82

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

[High School for Recording Arts](#) – FY22 = \$371,995.45

[Intermediate District 287](#) – FY23 = \$308,688.00

[Madelia Public Schools](#) – FY22 = \$727,500.00

Partnering with St. James Schools

[Minneapolis Public Schools](#) – FY22 = \$725,566.79; FY23 = \$690,000.00

[Monticello Public Schools](#) – FY23 = \$568,003.00

[Osseo Area Schools](#) – FY24 = \$370,632

[Owatonna Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

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

[Robbinsdale Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$479,940

[Rochester Public Schools](#) – FY24 = \$750,000

[Roseville Area Schools](#) – FY24 = \$463,079

[Saint Paul Public Schools](#) – FY22 = \$727,500.00

[Shakopee Public Schools](#) – FY23 = \$750,000.00

[St. Cloud Area Schools](#) – FY22 = \$663,784.96

## **Adult Pathway Grantees**

### **Anoka-Hennepin Public Schools**

#### **Program Description**

The GYO grant through the Anoka-Hennepin School District (A-H) is used to fund staff members of color at 80%, white staff at 15% and 5% for administrative costs. Over time, A-H has been able to create partnerships with the following colleges and universities: University of Minnesota Twin Cities, University of St. Thomas (UST), Augsburg, Hamline, Bethel University, St. Cloud State University (SCSU), Bemidji State University, and Concordia University. The funds have mostly been used to fund hard-to-fill positions defined by our district of Special Education, English as Second Language, and Secondary Science.

Some of the recruitment efforts completed this year were hosting a higher education event for Anoka-Hennepin staff and community members to connect with the college/university partners mentioned above. We build solid relationships and processes with the college/universities to recruit members to participate in the grant. We also shared information about the grant with our staff of color group, in our staff and community newsletters, attended principal and supervisor meetings to recruit participants. Each of these efforts was imperative to supporting grant recipients and supporting them in.

The people of color members that are attending colleges or universities that require an educational leave of absence receive a stipend from the GYO grant to decrease the barriers of loss of pay and benefits when student teaching. Other programs accommodate staff members to stay in their district position while meeting the requirements of student teaching. A-H recognizes the need to increase staff members of color by recruiting current staff and community members affiliated with the district. The GYO grant is used to help underrepresented groups to earn their bachelor's or master's degree offering both cohort/residency model or standard model. With the current partnership schools, A-H intentionally selected programs that offered classes in person, online, or hybrid model.

Through the course of the student's education, the A-H district has created relationships with the colleges to ensure students get the best education possible as they transition into a teaching role. The support is also given to the new teachers by allowing them the resources from administration and mentorship programs for retention purposes. We are continually working to better support our staff/grant recipients with check-ins each semester, college/university quarterly check-ins, and feedback forms.

#### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The grant was evaluated with ongoing surveys and phone conversations/email communication from those in the program and students graduating. We received feedback from eleven grant recipients, the survey was sent to all staff/community members who received grant funds this FY (paras, Tier 1 and 2 teachers, community members).

On the survey we collected feedback about their programming and ways Anoka-Hennepin could do better in supporting the staff/community members. As a result of the evaluation, we have learned students want more

flexibility in their pathway to a PELSB approved program and additional support with understanding what colleges/universities have to offer. With the teacher shortage, several indicated it would be helpful to have full tuition support for all.

## **Bloomington Public Schools (BPS)**

### **Program Description**

SY 2023–24 was the first year of GYO implementation in BPS. Recognizing the importance of this program, the district created a GYO team led by the Executive Director of Human Resources (HR). The team also includes the district's Assistant Superintendent, Director of Educational Equity, Executive Director of Learning and Teaching, Executive Director of Student Services, and Teachers Union President.

In 2023–24, the recruitment efforts did not produce our intended results. At that time, we did not have a formal GYO team as a district. Although we'd hoped to have eight participants in the GYO program by the end of 2023–24, year one of implementation, we only had one. For year two (2024–25), staff were recruited to the program via word of mouth, district-wide advertisements and marketing and individual, personal outreach by members of the district's GYO team. This made a huge impact, and we had overwhelming interest in the program for 2024–25. Therefore, we'll have nine participants starting the program in 2024–25. We're also excited to have more time to fully implement the grant program in year two.

BPS's Director of Educational Equity and Executive Director of Student Services have developed and are implementing several strategies to retain our current participant and future participants as they engage in BPS's GYO program. Participants will have regular check-ins with the Director of Educational Equity and/or Executive Director of Learning and Teaching, who helps them navigate systems in post-secondary education and within the public K-12 district. The Director of Educational Equity has also provided opportunities for participants to meet as a group and discuss challenges, course work, and collaborate as needed.

At this point, the participant who started in 2023–24 is eager to continue as a participant in 2024–25, so we are on track to have good retention. To date, one of our biggest shifts in implementing GYO has been to move from a single person overseeing the implementation to having a team work together to ensure the program is a success. Greater collaboration has also been established with the business/finance office to make paperwork and payment processing easier for all involved. We look forward to continuing to gather feedback and input from participants in the GYO program so that we can improve in ways that are culturally responsive and supportive.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The team sent a survey to the round one participant and received valuable feedback. Word of mouth has been valuable for the team in learning what questions and/or concerns possible participants have had and to help spread information about the process. Word of mouth has also helped build trust between potential participants and the GYO program, which is why we believe we have had much more interest in this upcoming second year of the grant.

We're looking forward to continuing to build this trust and ensure participants have answers to any questions they might have. The anecdotal and survey data and feedback has also helped the team build support for participants/potential participants and to support participants and possible participants how to navigate the application process and post-secondary system. Our Director of Educational Equity has been pivotal in helping staff with this navigation.

## **Brooklyn Center Community Schools**

### **Program Description**

We at Brooklyn Center use a variety of concepts when it comes to recruiting for the GYO adult program. Our approach includes emails, flyers, info. meetings, team/building meeting presentations, featured link on the school's website, being featured in the district's newsletter, referrals, and HR promotions to new hires. Culturally, we have found the best recruitment techniques to be team/building presentations and direct referrals from HR and other school employees. I feel this route is successful because it is direct and relational. People are able to grasp information and get questions answered in real time.

Retaining participants at this time has not been much of a struggle. I feel this is because we are proactive. We understand culturally it's difficult for some individuals to ask for help so instead of waiting for them to seek help we offer it frequently and often. Our program navigator reaches out through email and in-person to gather status updates from participants frequently. It is done on an individual basis, and we have found it to be successful. Participants enjoy the one-on-one attention and are able to bounce ideas and questions off of the navigator in a nonthreatening or public environment.

At this stage our primary wrap-service is counseling/coaching. We have many participants that are first-generation college students or returning college students after a substantial break. Many participants are unfamiliar with the education credential process. Therefore, for the first-generation students we offer support around how to gather transcripts, how to apply to college and register for classes. For some other students we cover how to find the correct program, how to know if it's accredited, and how to map out a plan towards licensure. Culturally, we have found it best to walk students through these processes step by step while working alongside them. We found this to be more vital than just sending instructions.

In the future, to make this process more efficient. I plan to hold group sessions to cover particular school topics. This will allow participants to gather information quicker instead of the navigator hold multiple one-on-one sessions.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Brooklyn Center collected data using an anonymous survey. The survey was sent out to all GYO adult program participants. The survey was broken into five sections: Mentor, Program navigator, University programming, Training and Written response. In each section, participants were able to rate the level of support they received and how accessible the resources were to them. Participants also answered questions about how problems were resolved and rated their feelings of their university programming experience. Lastly, in the written session participants were able to elaborate on program strengths, challenges and anything else they wanted to share.

## **Burnsville Public School District**

### **Program Description**

Recruitment for the GYO Adult program centered around existing staff of color. Working with HR, we obtained the names of all employees of color working in the district and sent information about the program with an invitation for additional information. We held multiple virtual sessions and two in person sessions. Staff who expressed a desire to apply to the program had a virtual meeting to review the components of the program to be sure it was the right fit with their future goals.

We had 10 participants this year. Two more participants will join in 2024–25. Our goal is to support up to 20 staff of color obtain their teaching license. At the beginning of the fall semester, we took a field trip to Metro State so participating staff could meet the Metro team and tour the campus. Being able to put a name, face and support role together lowered the anxiety of many adults who were nervous about going back to school.

We also hired a navigator who supported the participating staff in their journeys. Being a person of color who had faced some of the same questions and barriers, she was able to help them make connections, answer questions, and advocate for them. She also helped them secure an advisor who could provide the wrap-around services needed for individual success.

At the end of the year, we had a celebration. We reviewed program components, previewed the summer and fall schedules/requirements for the program, and celebrated as a cohort. The superintendent, a woman of color, spoke to the group and encouraged them to persevere. We also celebrated our first graduate who has already been hired as an English language teacher at one of our elementary schools.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Our program was developed by a design team composed of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, HR director, diversity and equity director, community education director, communications director, finance director, two cultural liaisons, and two postsecondary partners. Critical program components were agreed upon, a timeline and outreach strategy developed, and an equity-based application process launched.

Once we established our first cohort, we conducted mid-semester check ins via surveys and virtual sessions. Data was individual to each participant based on their unique needs, where they were in the program, and their desired outcomes. Because the majority of our GYO participants are multilingual staff who went to school in other countries and don't know the processes and expectations of applying for and taking college courses in the U.S., the role of the Navigator is all the more critical in our participants' success.

## **Columbia Heights Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

Columbia Heights Public Schools (CHPS) is still in the implementation phase for GYO. The district has identified four staff members who may qualify for GYO funding. This was done through survey as well as identifying staff with Tier 1 and Tier 2 licenses who plan to come back for the SY 2024–25.

We work hard to hire and retain staff of color. We provide additional one-to-one support both at the building level and district level to new staff who could also benefit from GYO funds. Helping to support staff with GYO funds is an additional way to help retain staff.

Wrap-around services include one-to-one support, culturally relevant professional development (PD) offerings and opportunities for professional growth and leadership at the building and district level. New staff are connected with on at least a weekly basis. Services are meeting candidates' needs and we see these outcomes in teacher observations as well as welcoming back to the district for the following year.

GYO funds will help to meet the candidates needs by providing them financial support with school so they can focus on their work in the classroom. The Director of Special Education and Director of HR had a meeting with Tyler Livingston on July 10, 2024, and discussed next steps to better utilize GYO funds moving forward.

CHPS is working with the candidate's identified colleges and universities to set up 3rd party billing for tuition. We will continue to reach out to staff members moving in the SY 2024–25 about becoming GYO candidates. CHPS will be implementing a non-affiliated staff of color affinity group in the fall of 2024. The district will work with this group to identify non-affiliated staff seeking to obtain a teaching license as well as financial support through the GYO funding.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

No funds were awarded to participants during the SY 2023–24. Through discussions with Tyler Livingston at MDE, it was identified that focusing on working with one institution would be easier for the district in order to distribute funds. We noted we are a small district and have a small number of potential candidates. The number of potential GYO candidates is small, so we feel that moving forward we need to meet the GYO candidates needs by supporting them within the institution that they currently attend.

## **Eden Prairie School District**

### **Program Description**

Our recruitment efforts have included a variety of ways to share information and onboard interested staff. In March 2023, we had four staff members enrolled in our GYO Program and eleven interested individuals. Our most recent efforts have increased our program participants by 50%, and we continue to see growing interest with colleagues of color. As a district, we've employed various recruitment efforts focused on culturally relevant practices and strategies. While white colleagues have shown strong interest in the GYO program, we've reserved the remaining participant spots for People of Color and Indigenous participants. This decision aligns with our goal of eliminating disparities that negatively impact students.

We continue to use research from local organizations and coalitions such as The Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota who emphasizes that all students benefit from a racially diverse teaching workforce, especially students of color and American Indian students, who experience improved attendance, retention, test scores, advanced course enrollment, graduation, and college-going rates.

In addition to local organizations, we worked to understand the culture and needs of our targeted groups and have leveraged diverse networks of people. This includes ongoing recruitment and support shared during our monthly Eden Prairie Affinity space, onboarding process includes one-to-one meetings, events for participants and interested parties hosted by Eden Prairie Leaders of Color, engagement of site principals to personally invite Staff of Color to enroll and ask Participants of Color to share about this opportunity with other colleagues.

In our efforts to retain program participants we have made a number of changes to our GYO program, including:

- Expanded List of Colleges and Universities from one college to all PELSB approved colleges and universities.
- Directly Pay Institutions from 75% to 100% tuition and textbook costs
- Stipend Increase from \$585.00 to \$1,000.00
- Continuation of 100% of cost of Minnesota Teacher Licensure examinations and background checks

These changes were all identified areas of change needed by program participants and interested individuals. Being responsive to our candidates of Color shows a commitment to our district's core values of "Each person has intrinsic value" and "Community Benefits when each person Contributes." Ensuring as a district that we adhere to our core values is an important part of our collective work and district goals. Within just four months, these efforts have led to a 50% increase in participation. We anticipated this outcome, as it reflects our commitment to being culturally responsive to the needs of our Candidates of Color and Indigenous Communities and was in direct response to feedback from our Candidates. Both interest and participation has continued to increase.

As part of Eden Prairie's 2023–28 Strategic Plan, Eden Prairie Schools has prioritized wellbeing for students and staff. Free wrap-around services focused on emotional and wellbeing support is available through the Eden Prairie Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Eden Prairie Schools partners with M Health Fairview to offer an EAP at no cost. This program is a free confidential short-term counseling and referral service to support any number of personal or work-related challenges. Counseling is provided in person, virtually, or over the phone with a licensed counselor. This is available to all employees and their family members 13 years and older regardless of medical benefit eligibility. The EAP is confidential, and it does not disclose any client information unless the client grants permission, or it is required by law. Our GYO Program is designed to provide financial support to help ease the burden of financial difficulties, which can negatively affect overall well-being. By offering this support, we aim to reduce financial stress that may contribute to or exacerbate issues such as depression, mental and physical health challenges, including headaches, migraines, high blood pressure, digestive problems, poor sleep, low energy, and impaired cognitive function.

Additionally, we hope to alleviate the feelings of shame or anxiety that often come with debt. This support comes in the form of full (100%) financial support that encompasses beyond tuition payments and removes financial barriers to purchase textbooks, multiple attempts to pass teacher licensure tests, full payment of background checks, and provides a semester stipend and paid leave.

Candidates have provided feedback that the following areas are meeting their needs:

- 100% of Textbook Costs Covered. GYO Grant funding provides 100% of the costs associated with books required for the program. Participants' access to necessary resources is crucial for the success of our participants.
- Provide Paid Leave Compensation. GYO Grant funding provides paid leave during student teaching. Participants will be paid their hourly rate for the average number of hours they are employed while they participate in their 12-week or longer student teaching practicum.
- Stipend Increase from \$585.00 to \$1,000.00 per semester. GYO Grant funding provides a stipend amount of \$1000. This is a necessary increase to ensure that our participants have adequate financial support during their participation in the program.
- Directly Pay Institutions 100% Tuition. GYO Grant funding provides direct pay to any PELSB approved institution for 100% tuition and relevant costs. This streamlined approach aims to simplify the process for participants and reduce financial burden on the participant and a significant impact on our staff members' ability to participate in this opportunity.
- Cover 100% the Cost of Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations fees and Background Checks. GYO Grant funding provides 100% cost for background check and Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations up to three times dependent on passing rate. This is a necessary increase in percentage of costs covered organically at 75% and ensures that our participants have adequate financial support during their participation in the program.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Number of participants: 70 Roles of participants: District and Site Leadership, program participants and interested individuals, colleagues from neighboring districts, Leadership from partnering colleges and universities, and Eden Prairie Affinity and Ally group members.

Eden Prairie's GYO Program continues to be evaluated through a variety of data points. Our primary measure of success is participation numbers and program retention. At the start of our program two participants dropped out—one opted not to pursue a teaching license and the other left Eden Prairie Schools. Another participant, though eager to continue, became ineligible after obtaining a Tier 3 teaching license but still needed time to complete their Physical Education degree. Encouragingly, our current participant list has grown to 8, showing promising progress. This includes three candidates who have entered or are near the start of the student teaching experience. In addition to this we have an additional candidate that started the application process with a PELSB approved university and plans to start in the spring.

Feedback from participants and interested individuals is consistently collected and serves as a key tool for evaluation and improvement. Each interested participant has a one-on-one intake and feedback meetings to discuss their goals and aspirations, during which questions are answered, and feedback is gathered. Additional feedback is also collected through email and other in-person discussions outside of these meetings.

In addition to participants, district and site leadership are actively involved in decision-making and program adjustments. Leaders of Color, in particular, have provided valuable support, suggested program improvements, and shared feedback they've received. At the district level, we also compare our program to other successful models and seek input from our partners at Metro State University to strengthen recruitment efforts.

Our evaluation of our GYO Program has resulted in significant changes since the start of our grant funding. Based on the data we have collected we have significantly increased the financial support to all program participants and streamlined our progress to reduce time completing paperwork and forms.

## **Endazhi-Nitaawiging**

### **Program Description**

It has been a bit difficult with teacher prospect recruitment. Our plan is beginning to implement outreach strategies focused on local community events, partnering with organizations, and using social media platforms to reach a broader audience. Culturally relevant approaches include tailoring our messaging to reflect the values and interests of various communities, emphasizing respect for cultural identities and seven Anishinabe grandfather teaching.

Currently, we have not seen significant recruitment results due to minimal activities so far. We plan to increase our engagement with community leaders to encourage community members to enroll in higher education. We will reassess our outreach methods based on feedback from community members and partner organizations.

We aim to ensure that our workplace reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. Expected Outcomes: As of now, the effectiveness of these efforts is difficult to measure due to the lack of recruits. Future monitoring will be essential to evaluate and adjust our strategies. Future Changes: We will seek feedback from candidates and employees to understand their experiences and identify areas for improvement in retention practices. Wrap-Around Services Current Services: We are exploring support services like career counseling, mental health resources, and financial literacy workshops, all designed with cultural relevance in mind. These services will be tailored to address the specific challenges faced by candidates of color, including Indigenous candidates. Meeting Needs: We are in the process of assessing the specific needs of our target populations through surveys and focus groups to ensure our services are effective and appropriate. We have been in contact with the Red Lake College as possible recruits but have not secured potential recruits. Improvements: We will adjust our offerings to ensure they are supportive and accessible. Overall Conclusion Our initial phase has involved laying the groundwork for effective recruitment and retention. As we move forward, we are committed to being responsive and adaptive, informed by the needs and feedback of the communities we aim to serve. We have spent this first year building a foundation to continue our recruitment in our local community and will continue to extend beyond.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Data Collection Overview Type of Data Collected: We've collected qualitative data through in-person conversations and informational meetings. How It Was Collected: We've collected qualitative data through in-person conversations and informational meetings. Results of the Data Collected: the preliminary findings indicated a lack of awareness about our organization and its mission. Potential participants expressed interest in the programming but there were no confirmed candidates. Number of Participants: data was collected from a total of five participants across the year. Roles of Participants: the participants included: seven potential candidates (individuals interested in our opportunities) two community members. Conclusion: this initial data

collection has provided valuable insights. Moving forward, we will continue to refine our approach based on this feedback to better engage and serve our target populations.

## **Excell Academy for Higher Learning**

### **Program Description**

The main goal of the GYO Program at Excell Academy for Higher Learning is to actively recruit and prepare teaching candidates from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities who are interested in obtaining a bachelor's degree in education and teacher licensure. The GYO program targets paraprofessionals, limited-certified teachers, and parents as potential participants. We conducted an input survey to gather additional data from invested partners to aid in the strategic planning of Excell's GYO program. The program employs various communication channels to recruit potential candidates, including diverse staff referrals, newsletters, flyers, emails, text messages, the school website, and other platforms. While this approach has proven effective in recruitment, it has posed challenges in retaining students who need support in gaining acceptance to four-year institutions. Despite these challenges, we are dedicated to ensuring these students receive the support they need.

The GYO Program is designed to provide comprehensive support to BIPOC teaching candidates. This support includes scholarships, living wage stipends, textbook funds, help with transportation and groceries, information technology support, mentoring and tutoring, and access to PD opportunities at Excell. We believe this integrated approach will help our candidates overcome barriers and succeed in their educational journey. Candidates in the GYO program bring valuable skills and knowledge to educational settings. Excell's GYO program provides academic and financial assistance to help candidates thrive in higher education and become licensed educators. The program offers mentoring, tutoring, and financial support for tuition, fees, books, and travel expenses. Excell Academy's GYO program is committed to providing candidates with social support through mentoring and peer networking. It helps candidates balance work, family, and academic demands and includes connecting students, mentoring, and monthly cohort meetings for academic guidance and peer support.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The GYO initiative aims to facilitate collaboration among partners to gather and analyze data to assess recruitment strategies and program features. In evaluating recruitment strategies, the initiative will establish recruitment targets, conduct needs assessments to identify areas facing teacher shortages, and closely monitor the progress toward these targets. Subsequently, the GYO program will systematically collect assessment data from candidates, partners, mentors, and instructional coaches. Candidate feedback concerning the relevance and timeliness of courses they have undertaken, as well as the types of financial support they deem most essential, will be utilized by program staff to enhance program features to meet prospective candidates' needs. Ensuring fidelity is vital to the effectiveness of the program. Thus, the GYO initiative aims to collaborate with partners in collecting and analyzing data to evaluate the program's implementation. This evaluation process will involve examining candidates' course grades, attrition and retention rates, and their engagement with academic, financial, and social supports. Additionally, the program aims to evaluate the implementation of the GYO initiative features by gathering participant feedback. This data will be collected through systematic surveys,

focus groups, and document reviews. Furthermore, interviews with GYO candidates and semester and annual surveys of candidates and graduates, project directors, and partners from community-based organizations, schools, and higher education institutions will be employed to explore successful implementation strategies.

The Excell GYO initiative fosters collaboration among partners to collect and analyze data to evaluate impact and success. It is envisaged that the GYO initiative will assess long-term impacts, such as changes in student achievement and cost savings to school districts, as well as short-term outcomes, including recruitment numbers, retention and attrition rates for GYO candidates, and job placement rates. Several key lessons have been gleaned, foremost among them being the necessity of pursuing unanticipated alternative academic pathways as a prerequisite for certain participants' admission into a four-year institution. Consequently, it was paramount to discern specific community colleges with "articulated pathways" to PELSB-approved four-year institutions that offer programs pertinent to teacher education and licensure degrees.

## **Faribault Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

The Faribault Teaching Fellows initiative supports individuals of color in successfully completing PELSB-approved teaching programs. Fellows receive tuition assistance and/or an annual stipend. They are also each paired with a current Faribault Public Schools teacher, who serves as an ongoing mentor throughout the program. Moreover, each Fellow meets at least approximately every other week with a program navigator, who provides academic advising; financial aid assistance; connections with tutors; and linkages with social service and community resources. The Faribault Education Center offers space for Fellows to study (including on evenings and weekends) and receive tutoring, printing access, internet connections, and the ability to collaborate with peers.

All (100%) Fellows are individuals of color. Fellows must also meet one or more of the following criteria to qualify for the program:

- Be a current Faribault Public Schools employee.
- Have graduated from Faribault Public Schools.
- Be a parent of a current Faribault Public Schools student or graduate.
- Live within the Faribault Public Schools district boundaries.

The program is marketed through extensive outreach efforts. This includes a standing page on the Faribault Public Schools website, dissemination by partner organizations, outreach by the Adult Education program, and marketing by the HR Department. The communications strategies are recommended by the Faribault Teaching Fellows Council (described below), which is comprised of a majority of individuals of color. The Faribault Teaching Fellows Council oversees this initiative. Comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community partners, the Council developed the application form and process for the program. They led the marketing and outreach work. They also led the application review process, including interviewing all of the applicants and ultimately selecting the Fellows.

In its first two years, the program has seen exciting results that are not only meeting—but consistently exceeding—the original aims of the project.

These include:

- 18 individuals (all people of color) have been accepted as Faribault Teaching Fellows. The project hoped to serve 20 Fellows during the five years, so to already be at 18 after only two years is incredibly exciting.
- One Fellow has already completed her program and was hired as a high school teacher.
- Only one Fellow thus far has dropped out of the program. A Faribault Public Schools employee, they decided after starting classes that they did not desire to actually be a teacher. They were recently hired as the lead office head for the district's Early Childhood Center (just the second bilingual individual and person of color hired to hold this role in any of the district's buildings!).

The program has made important modifications based on feedback from the Fellows and guided by the decisions of the Faribault Teaching Fellows Council. Two especially important ones were finalized this grant year. First, the fellowship was increased from \$5,000/year to \$7,500/year. This reflects the increased costs of pursuing higher education, particularly in times of high inflation. In addition, the program shifted from offering a maximum amount per year for tuition assistance (\$3,000) and a maximum per year for stipend (\$2,000) to making it \$7,500/Fellow and having the stipend amount equal whatever is left in the \$7,500 after the tuition balance is paid. Early experience in this program found that many of the Fellows had tuition bills that were less than \$3,000 as a result of their eligibility for Pell Grants and other financial aid. Rather than penalizing them for this, the new model allows them to redirect the remaining resources to help cover all of the other costs they run into in pursuing their education – from childcare to housing to food. The Council also recognizes this reality will be further exacerbated with the launch of the North Star Promise this fall. These changes are both important continuous improvement shifts that reflect the project's commitment to keeping the Fellows at the center of decisions.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The grant calls for supporting 20 total Fellows over the course of five years. However, the demand for the program has been so great—and the quality of the applicants so high—that 18 Fellows were accepted in these first two years alone! All (100%) are individuals of color pursuing teaching licenses through PESLB-approved programs (or now transfer pathways). The navigator met with each Fellow individually to set goals, as well as develop action items and a plan for regular check-ins and meetings. Over the past year, the navigator has had 459 combined advising sessions or check-ins with the Fellows—or an average of over 25 per Fellow this year (which averages to be about every other week). Some Fellows choose to meet with the navigator on a weekly basis—and sometimes even twice per week—depending on their level of stress, workload and personal responsibilities for that week.

Each Fellow has also been paired with a licensed teacher as a mentor. Each advising session includes a dedicated time for the Fellow to lift up any support that they need, as well as any suggestions they have for the Faribault Teaching Fellows program. In addition, an annual anonymous evaluation was developed to provide Fellows with the chance to offer additional recommendations for continuous improvement of the program. These results were collected in summer 2024 and will be reviewed by the Faribault Teaching Fellows Council at their first meeting in fall 2024.

Finally, the program tracks each of the data items reported in the remainder of this report, including the number of Fellows still in school, the academic progress made by each, the number who have earned a degree, the number who have earned a license, and the hiring status of each completed candidate. Of final note, in the year-end evaluations this summer, 100% of Faribault Teaching Fellows indicated they are confident they will ultimately earn their teaching license! This level of commitment and confidence is extremely exciting and promising for the continued success of the effort.

## **Freshwater Education District**

### **Program Description**

The Freshwater Education District GYO program works with four districts named in our grant: Long Prairie-Grey Eagle, Walker-Hackensack-Akeley, Northland Community Schools, and Cass Lake-Bena, in addition to Freshwater Education District and Mid-State Education District. This year, recruitment efforts were based on word of mouth; advisory board members, current grant recipients, and even teachers in our districts sharing the opportunity with those they saw as a good fit or expressed interest in the opportunity. Several of our advisory board members were new this year, after turnover in the positions they hold in their districts, and I believe that this helped get new candidates, as they were more likely to share the opportunity.

As of today's date, (June 24, 2024), six new candidates have expressed interest in the opportunity. One has started classes, one is registered to start in August 2024, and four are still working through the application process. Once our candidates apply for the grant, have been accepted to one of the three colleges named in the grant, and begin their coursework, they are able to start receiving dollars, either through scholarships submitted to the university to pay tuition and fees, or stipends to off-set the cost of living while they are in school. The latter (stipend dollars) seems to be the greatest need and helps to retain recipients. By allowing a more flexible schedule, and being able to worry less about finances, recipients are more likely to continue on with their schooling.

Aside from the financial support, few wrap-around services have been set up to be implemented as part of our GYO program. We do have a coordinator that is available to assist candidates/recipients as needs arise, but it really is more of an as-needed basis. This is one area that could be improved on moving forward in order to better meet needs and be proactive with any potential obstacles.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

A survey was sent to recipients to gather information on what they felt were strengths, what areas of improvement/concern they experienced, and any other feedback they had for the program going forward. Due to the timing of the survey being sent, few responses have been received at this time but will continue to be sought. The recipients that have completed the survey and provided feedback are most grateful for the support and assistance the grant provides and iterated several times how thankful they are for these programs being available to them. They see the need in the districts for staff, and how valuable it is for students to have a diverse community of educators. The biggest concern that was expressed was communication. Having stated above that wrap-around services and additional needs are addressed as needed, this supports that stance that this is an area that can be improved on, communicating with recipients in a more timely and regular manner.

## Hiawatha Academies

### Program Description

At Hiawatha Academies, in our first year of the GYO program, we prioritized efforts for current staff and did not do a targeted campaign externally (as we indicated in our application). Those prioritization efforts yielded 19 interested candidates applying to participate in the Hiawatha Academies GYO program. Our five-year goal is 25 participants all receiving the full tuition and stipend so I would argue that the efforts for internal recruitment are yielding more positive results than initially anticipated.

The focus during our first year was on an individualized support level. Many members of the leadership team provided support for each member of the cohort, including more heavily supporting program choice selection and application support than initially expected. Candidates have expressed gratitude for the intensity of support we have provided to get them set up and running with their PELS approved programming. Moving forward, we intend to be more planful and cohesive in our approach to improve the systems of support for our cohort members. We are grateful for the addition of pre-licensure coursework being included in the grant, which we are using as a recruitment tool with our external audience in addition to bringing in more candidates internally.

This year, all cohort members will have check-ins on our eight all-staff Network Days during circles (a restorative justice priority). Restorative justice circles in schools can help staff build relationships and understand each other's perspectives. They can also provide a safe space for staff to reflect and discuss their behaviors. This service is culturally responsive and will be cognizant of the candidates balancing many competing priorities, including their pursuit of teacher licensure.

### Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned

Given our shift to an individualized approach, we did not administer formal surveys to our cohort members. This will be a priority going into year two, the SY 24–25. We will be engaging our year one cohort members in their annual focus group in the next month, prior to the start of school, to invite them to formally provide additional information and feedback ahead of this year. Another lesson is our desire to work more closely with institutions to provide a more integrated experience for participants. For example, we could have "premiere" institutions that we can offer to participants so they can trust and know that we are all rowing together for their success.

## High School for Recording Arts (HSRA)

### Program Description

GYO Adult Pathways at HSRA has three staff members of color that are participating. They are attending college classes during the evening and during the summer. Two of the staff already have degrees but are working toward getting their teacher license in their area of interest. One is going for art and the other is going for Special Education. The third participant is working on getting her degree in secondary education in social studies. I have announced the opportunity at staff meetings to try and recruit other staff to earn their teaching degree. There are a few other staff that were interested but have not applied to college yet. The staff that are in the program are supported through HSRA by making sure everything they need for their courses at college is

supplied by the grant or the school. They are encouraged to get help through the tutoring programs at their college if they need extra help in a class they are taking.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

I talked to all three of the participants to see if any other support was needed at the end of semester two. Two of the participants took summer classes and one said she needed a break for the summer as working full time and taking classes was a lot.

## **Hmong College Prep Academy (HCPA)**

### **Program Description**

The adult pathway of the GYO program at HCPA currently includes two employees who are both pursuing a master's degree with initial licensure in teacher education. Both grantees are women of color and intend to serve the Hmong educational community now and in the future. While HCPA applied for GYO with seven employees expressing interest, not all seven have pursued teacher licensure for various reasons, including not feeling ready, no longer working at HCPA, or pursuing other career areas. Yet, HCPA continues to provide information about the GYO program should these seven employees, or any other employees, choose to pursue it. This is communicated through weekly emails from the principals to all staff at HCPA. It is also verbally communicated to relevant stakeholders.

Our hiring committees use the GYO opportunity to recruit possible candidates, and it is communicated during interviews and hiring processes. While HCPA only has two employees currently using GYO funds, overall HCPA's percentage of teachers of color has increased from 21% to 27%. Anecdotal feedback from several employees is that they appreciate knowing that they can consider GYO within the five-year grant period. Moving forward, information about the grant opportunity will continue to be communicated to current staff and through recruitment efforts.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The lessons learned so far is that GYO is an impactful opportunity for people who are indeed ready and committed to college coursework for teacher licensure. For people who need more time to ponder if education is right for them, they need more time to consider if a career as a teacher is the best fit. We have evaluated the program by considering the number of participants: only two. Thus, we will continue to communicate about the GYO opportunity to all staff during the SY 2024–25. And we will continue to use GYO as a marketing tool. The two program participants are women of color who are extremely grateful for the opportunity to pursue coursework to become an educator, and they have intentions of continuing to serve the Hmong community once they have completed licensure. Overall, HCPA's teachers of color have increased from 21% to 27% in the past three years. Anecdotally, several staff members of color have communicated that they appreciate being part of a district that is actively growing its own members to diversity the education force. The data was collected by Lisa Berken, Teaching and Learning Specialist, and Danijela Duvnjak, Chief Academic Officer.

## Intermediate District 287 (ISD 287)

### Program Description

During the SY 2023–24, ISD 287 worked to increase recruitment of Educational Support Staff (ESPs) and Tier 1 and Tier 2 teachers. In the past practice outreach was limited to email, flyers and word of mouth. During the spring of 2024 ISD 287 began holding presentations at mandatory building wide meetings. We assured this was during the hours that ESPs are still in the buildings. This was a commitment from Building Administration to assure a broader audience could be reached. Meetings were held with building administration to assure understanding and to have discussion regarding increased outreach and support as we worked to recruit all staff. The efforts brought forth a significant number of staff desiring to become special education teachers. Currently there are 28 staff that have expressed interest in a special education teacher pathway. Of the 28 staff interested, 13 are people of color. This outreach was combined with the new Intermediate District Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Collaborative (ITRAC) program. This appears to be a very effective partnership of programs. Multiple staff reported feeling hope and a willingness to begin a pathway knowing there was financial support and a possible apprenticeship in the future as well as individuals they could identify that would help them through the program. Moving forward the challenge is to continue to have more specific outreach to our staff of color.

Intermediate District 287 continues to make a concerted effort to build awareness of culturally relevant practices both in teaching practices and in building awareness within our staff and providing opportunities to continue to grow in their individual race equity journeys in order to continue building racially conscious and equitable school culture. During the SY 2023–24 the American Indian Program Advisory Committee (AIPAC) has been initiated to support the development of our American Indian Education program. This will address the ongoing need for building awareness and support for our Indigenous staff and students. Our department of Equity and Inclusion hired an outside consultant to perform an Equity Audit to inform us of our areas of need for growth and development as well as strengths. This information will help us increase our ability to effectively retain and support our staff of color and indigenous staff in a more culturally responsive manner.

The Equity Audit helped us to realign our equity teams to be even more local. Each building has advisory staff on equity teams to help increase more culturally relevant practices to support the specific culture of each building/program and create a way to receive more timely feedback from staff. In another effort to increase cohesive and comprehensive supports for staff, District 287 has revised its coaching model to support teachers and ESPs. Additionally, the district has hired a person of color as a teacher on special assignment (TOSA) to support our ITRAC and GYO candidates aspiring to begin their journey to become special education teachers.

ISD 287 will continue to strive to be more deliberate and strategic in efforts to recruit and retain a diverse, culturally responsive teacher force, as we continue to work within the MDE Equity in Action Framework. Many of the efforts to continue creating a more inclusive and culturally responsive environment to increase retention as well as a more positive work environment are in the beginning stages of the changes. One-to-one check-ins with teacher candidates have been positive and well received. Strong feedback loops where participants see results of their feedback and building a trusting community of support are goal areas for ISD 287.

We have provided wrap-around services in the following areas:

- Mentoring – we have provided participants with a mentor to support their work, which can involve tutoring as needed;
- Registration support – the mentor and other coaches with connections to participants have assisted in the registration process;
- Increased number of opportunities by addition of another higher education provider that includes an online pathway.

These meet the needs of candidates in making progress and feeling supported throughout the process. We are planning to expand and improve on these by:

- Expanding on one-to-one support;
- Developing affinity groups and/or cohorts of staff that are progressing through the various pathways;
- Collecting feedback on a one-to-one conversational level, which seems to be the most effective way to get clear and insightful information from the participants;
- Addressing staff needs on an individualized basis, according to the specific barriers and challenges they are facing;
- Continued exploration of higher education pathways and supports;
- Increasing tutor support from within our district (as wrap-around services);
- Adding a stipend to support additional expenses for participants; - Increasing engagement with our higher education providers to assure strong feedback channels for adjustments needed to support our participants.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Throughout the year we conducted interviews and informal conversations with participants, mentors, coaches and administrators involved in the program. We received feedback from five of the participants. Overall, the results demonstrated an overall need for increased support and communication, more individualized support a path to give feedback to high education providers, and ways to assure participant voice is being heard and given a response.

## **Lac qui Parle Valley**

### **Program Description**

The district has included this opportunity into a number of culturally diverse experiences in the district. These include Multicultural Parent meetings, Diversity Club at the middle school/high school level, and during the interview process for dual-language paraprofessional and teaching positions. We have had candidates who have shown interest in the opportunity but have not made a commitment to register or follow-through with the opportunity. These efforts are somewhat producing the desired outcome, but again we are struggling to get commitment from candidates. The district is partnering with the University of Minnesota-Morris to provide a Tecero Translation coursework. Our hope is that those enrolled in that course will then move onto this

opportunity. The district's English learner (EL) coordinator is also discussing one on one with potential candidates.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We do not have any data to evaluate at this time. However, the EL Coordinator, Department of Teaching and Learning (DOTL,) and Superintendent have discussed how the district can better leverage our current situation of numerous levels of interest and push toward at least one viable candidate.

## **Madelia Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

The GYO Adult grant is open to all paraprofessionals and support staff members in the Madelia and St. James school districts. Persons of color are encouraged to apply. Employees who have expressed interest in becoming teachers or exhibit the skill sets to become teachers are encouraged to apply for the grant. The grant is attracting paraprofessionals and international teachers to the GYO program. As rural school districts, we are excited that we currently have several people apply for the grant annually. Based on the necessary criteria, we are maximizing funding for the people of color who apply. There are other people who would like to apply for the grant, however, do not meet the criteria due to the state guidelines.

In order to support and retain individuals in the GYO program, we text, call, and meet online at least monthly with individuals. We also provide in person meetings to help with registration, class selection or other needs. We are available day or night to answer questions for our future teachers. In addition, we make connections with university personnel to assist with additional resources that grant does not provide. The superintendents in both schools who share the grant allow for leave time from positions to complete classes, school visits, and student teaching. We believe that the regular communication with candidates has allowed for the added support to help candidates be successful in their coursework. We had our first candidate graduate with a master's degree in May. A second candidate who was an international teacher completed the requirements to move from a Tier 1 to Tier 4 teacher. The only candidate who left the program early did so only because she was leaving her employment in the school district. We continue to survey the candidates regarding their needs and reach out to offer assistance. We will continue to seek out opportunities for additional resources as needed to ensure the successful completion of their programs.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Each GYO candidate completed a survey regarding their progress, needs, and ways to improve the program annually. The results from the survey and individual conversations showed that the GYO candidates are maximizing the grant dollars by going to college year-round in order to complete their degrees in the shortest amount of time as possible. The candidates are regularly on the dean's list. Five of the six candidates shared the following in their surveys: The greatest strength of the GYO program is the flexibility of school/work and not having to stress financially. The Academic support that it gave its scholars to professionally grow and be successful. I think the greatest strength of the program has to be the support. Whenever a question came up, I was able to easily get in contact with someone who was willing and able to help. It's a great program that gives

working adults who may have not had the chance to continue college. I also really appreciated the leadership from our superintendents who asked us how we were doing in our course and often offered to help out even in just proofreading our work.

## **Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS)**

### **Program Description**

The Minneapolis and St. Thomas Teacher Residency (MSTR), a partnership between MPS and the UST, is a 15-month pathway to K-12 special education or K-6 elementary education licensure that prepares highly effective and diverse teachers who will create increased access, opportunities, and educational outcomes for all students in Minneapolis Public Schools. MSTR is designed to recruit, prepare, and support strong, effective new teachers by selecting applicants from current MPS unlicensed educators as well as employees of our community partners, with an emphasis on BIPOC and multilingual educators. After a rigorous interview process, MSTR selects 15–20 members for our cohort of residents each year. Residents are then paired with an expert Cooperating Teacher at an MPS site for the entire SY, progressively building to the Resident fully leading all aspects of classroom planning, instruction, and assessment. Residents who are on track to successfully complete the program are allowed to participate in the internal MPS Interview and Selection process for teachers in the district. To date, all Residents in previous years who have successfully completed the program were hired in the district as the teacher of record in the spring of their residency year. Residents officially complete the program in August with either a master's degree in special education and a K-12 Academic and Behavioral Strategist Special Education license or a Master's in Elementary Education and a K-5 Elementary license.

MSTR is dedicated in our efforts to increase the diversity of our licensed teachers, and our data has shown that this program has been successful in recruiting, preparing and retaining our BIPOC residents. To deepen our recruitment efforts for BIPOC and multilingual educators, we do individual outreach to ESPs who have expressed interest in knowing more about the program and offer to walk them through the application process. One of our most effective recruitment strategies has been through the current and former participants of the program. Affinity is an important aspect for our BIPOC and multilingual staff in the district and we have found that hearing about the program from another person of color who has gone through it, leads to applicants completing the application process and interviewing. Residency programs have been shown to produce higher retention rates than traditional teacher prep programs. We know that increased retention rate of teachers trained through a residency model will have a positive impact on many students in the district. By retaining our graduates for multiple years, we are building experienced and dedicated teachers to provide continuous support to our students. Our retention efforts have included, organized affinity groups, navigating pairs (graduate supporting a current resident), social gatherings with refreshments, and a variety of opportunities for leadership. With support from various grants, we have been able to fund graduates to attend education conferences and leadership trainings both in state and out of state. Graduates have been able to take the new learnings and present to current residents and host teachers to further their learning. We have found many graduates appreciate these opportunities and continue to seek them out as they move into leadership roles in the district. To deepen our retention efforts, St. Thomas has hired a new staff member with the focus supporting graduates and current residents. She has already started multiple projects to gauge the needs and interests of graduates. We anticipate the capacity to engage in even more opportunities this year.

## **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

MSTR is a member of The National Center for Teacher Residencies. This membership includes a mid-year and end of year (EOY) surveys for comprehensive data collection. Surveys are sent via email to residents, cooperating teachers, and graduates of the program. Program staff works to set aside time for participants to complete the surveys in class or PD when possible. The survey contains several sections for collection such as, Overall Residency Year Experience, Resident Recruitment and Selection, Mentor support, Training site support and graduate support. The 2023–24 EOY survey was completed by eight residents, seven mentor teachers, and five graduates in May 2024. Overall, the program received positive responses in all areas. Multiple participants responded that being able to co-teach for a full SY made them feel more prepared and confident going into their own classroom. Some expressed that they were comfortable asking questions and felt supported by program staff in general. The mentor teachers shared that they felt the monthly PD was helpful and informative. In terms of challenges, residents shared that managing the coursework while working full time can be overwhelming. In addition, graduates expressed a need for deeper support in their school sites.

## **Monticello Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

The Monticello GYO Adult program has an end goal of increasing the percentage of racially and ethnically diverse licensed staff from 1.8% non-white certified staff in FY24 to at least 6.8% non-white certified staff in FY28.

We are focused on four major components in order to achieve our end goal:

- 1) recruitment and enrollment of potential teacher candidates,
- 2) financial assistance for adults of color and/or American Indian,
- 3) wrap-around services for candidates in our program from target populations, and
- 4) the establishment of an educational partnership with a PELSB approved teacher preparation program.

We actively recruit adult staff with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds from within our current workforce or connected to our school community who are interested in pursuing a career in education. Some candidates have college degrees outside of education, yet others have no post-secondary experience. They all require different levels of support. We are also recruiting students of color who are involved in our Introduction to Education program and are GYO student scholarship winners. We have developed a feeder program starting in grade 11 with students involved in our education pathway program. Our GYO Coordinator will provide wrap-around support for all grantees from grade 11 through college utilizing our GYO programs. In 2023–24, we served four candidates (two people of color and two white). Scholarship awards for candidates of color were \$20,000 where scholarships for white candidates were \$10,000.

In 2024–25 we have seven GYO participants (five candidates of color and two white) with more students of color in our pipeline for 2025–26. We are confident that we will meet our goals to diversify our teaching staff. Our

GYO Coordinator provides wrap-around support for adults who are engaged in PELS approved education programs. We implemented a peer mentorship program, invited GYO participants in district PD opportunities and cross-cultural training, and invited participation in affinity groups within Monticello Public Schools. This programming is in the early stages and will be measured for effectiveness at the end of our SY 2024–25 through participant surveys, interviews, and college retention in education programs.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

As we began our GYO program in 2023–24, there were four candidates. All candidates were successful in their coursework and continued in their education programs, so the success rate is 100% thus far. We collected transcripts each semester to verify coursework taken was following an education pathway and collected grades to show successful progress toward a teaching degree. We also assisted one student in dealing with diversity issues she faced in her program and assisted her in successfully transferring schools. This candidate even filled a long-term substitute position for Monticello last spring in our EL program through PELS approval. She has flourished in her pursuit of a teaching degree. In addition to grades and coursework data, the GYO Coordinator conducts personal interviews with each candidate to ensure their needs are being met and provides any support requested by the candidate. In 2024–25, we will collect survey data from teacher mentors, affinity group leaders, and colleges/universities on our GYO program to determine areas in need of improvement.

## **New Century School**

### **Program Description**

We offer informational sessions and workshops tailored for candidates of color, addressing their unique challenges and providing mentorship from leaders who share similar backgrounds. Recruitment messaging and outreach are informed by cultural competence training. For example, information sessions are held at times and locations convenient for candidates. We are getting some interest from a few individuals, but not as many as we had hoped by this point. We are reviewing feedback and exploring new strategies, such as expanding outreach to additional community networks. We offer flexible financial support, including stipends, childcare assistance, and transportation vouchers, which are tailored to address the socio-economic challenges faced by candidates of color. Mental health and wellness services are available on site at both of our schools, with counselors trained in culturally responsive care. We employ staff who share cultural backgrounds with the candidates and understand the specific challenges they face. Future improvements will be determined through surveys, focus groups, and advisory boards consisting of candidates and community leaders who reflect the populations served.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We did not conduct a formal program evaluation, but rather our assessment has been based on observational and anecdotal data gathered through informal feedback mechanisms. Specifically, we relied on input from program participants, including candidates, mentors, and instructional coaches, who shared their experiences and insights during check-ins, group discussions, and one-on-one conversations. The feedback gathered centered on participants' satisfaction, challenges faced, and suggestions for improvement. The data collected was primarily qualitative, consisting of notes from informal conversations and feedback shared during meetings.

Although no formal surveys or metrics were used, the feedback provided a valuable understanding of areas where the program is succeeding and where adjustments are needed. We estimate that feedback was collected from approximately 10 participants, including candidates, mentors, and instructional coaches. Through these interactions, we have learned that while participants appreciate the culturally responsive support provided, there are ongoing needs for more structured mentorship and additional financial assistance. Based on these observations, we plan to conduct more systematic evaluations in the future to better capture the program's impact and areas for improvement.

## **North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale**

### **Program Description**

ISD 622's students are extraordinarily diverse, and they deserve to have teachers whose ethnicities and backgrounds reflect their own. We also want students to see teaching is a desirable and attainable career option. ISD 622's GYO program goal is to recruit high-quality and diverse teacher candidates and tenured mentors to increase the entry of qualified, diverse candidates into the teaching profession. Recruitment efforts focused on ISD 622's own paraprofessionals, education assistants, and Tier 1 and 2 teachers of color. Internal candidates are more likely to have higher retention rates compared with teachers from traditional educator preparation programs. These efforts produced the intended results—11 candidates of color enrolled in our GYO program. GYO candidates are immediately paired with a mentor to assist with the application process. Mentor-mentee pairs hold bi-weekly check-in meetings to work through issues, concerns, successes, and make plans and goals for moving forward. To date, one candidate has started taking classes and 10 are on track to begin classes in August.

One of the biggest challenges we face is finding preparation programs that fit the candidates' academic needs, that working adults can manage the course load, and still be able to graduate in four years. Other challenges are ensuring candidates follow through with the application process and ultimately enroll and go to class. To address this, program staffing has been adjusted to provide more direct support to candidates and staff time allocated to initiate and build relationships between the district and teacher preparation programs. Thus far, the mentorship program supports have started and as more candidates begin classes, we will look to add a peer network, learning communities, access to counseling, and continue to provide the mentoring program.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Evaluation has been based on observation, document review and direct conversation with program participants. Two rounds of program applications have been accepted; the first garnered 22 applications and the second, 21. 100% of selected candidates are Indigenous and/or persons of color. 20% are male and 80% are female. Five already have a bachelor's degree and will be working toward their master's degree, and six are either starting or returning to a bachelor's degree program. Lessons learned are recognizing that these candidates are needing more intensive support to get from filling out an interest form to sitting in a college classroom. Many applicants are working full time jobs and have children at home, so the minutiae and deadlines are an extra challenge to manage. Providing more program staff support is helping, and as our program matures, we hope to develop

better processes such as "gate-check" meetings to verify progress, and to streamline our own coordination and mentoring processes that support candidates when and how they need.

## **Northfield School District**

### **Program Description**

Northfield Teaching Fellows is a GYO program intended to help BIPOC with a Northfield connection attain their Minnesota teaching license. The program is open to applicants who are BIPOC and are attending or planning to attend a PELSB-approved teacher preparation program.

Applicants must meet one or more of these criteria:

- Have graduated from Northfield Public Schools
- Be a parent of a current Northfield Public Schools student.
- Live within the Northfield Public School district boundaries; and/or
- Be a current Northfield Public Schools employee.

Our recruitment efforts have been focused in three main areas; the first is connecting with existing programs in our community that work with the BIPOC population. These programs, including Tackling Obstacles and Raising College Hopes and Northfield Community College Collaborative, are deeply connected to the communities served by this grant. Time is spent sharing information about the GYO program at general meetings and in individual conversations. The second group we have worked with is the District's Black Parent Advisory Group. Again, information is shared both generally with the group and through one-on-one conversations with those that show interest. Our final method for recruitment is a broader approach via social media, newsletters and postings. All information is translated into multiple languages and visuals highlight those Fellows that are already part of the program. Our recruitment efforts have been quite fruitful this past year and we are seeing an uptick in the number of applicants and the applicants come from groups in the community that represent a wider array of the population than they have in the past.

Our retention efforts for those in the program focus on an individualized relationship with a Student Services Coordinator based at the Northfield Community College Collaborative. Coordinators work closely with individuals and develop deep and meaningful relationships, that are based on mutual respect and understanding. Coordinators meet students where they are at in their educational and life journey and work in partnership with participants to overcome barriers, navigate challenges and celebrate successes.

Our outcomes with this program continue to evolve. We have had one participant graduate with their teaching degree, we have one participant that is two courses from completion, we have participants that are moving into their specialized educational classes, we have participants that are still taking general courses, and we have had participants drop from the program. As we learn from each participant, we continue to make changes to our program based on their feedback. Last year we moved to rolling admissions so that participants could come into the program at multiple points through the year, this year we are substantially increasing the financial support offered to students based on feedback that financial barriers remain high. This news of this increased financial

support has been energizing to our participants and we believe will make a significant impact on their ability to persist in their educational journeys.

Our wrap-around services are as described above; individualized supportive relationships with Student Services Coordinators that help our participants navigate barriers to their success. This support comes in the form of academic advising, tutoring, Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and tax-return help, financial literacy support, and help accessing community resources as needed. As you will hear below, the relationship with the Student Services Coordinators and the supports they offer is consistently mentioned by our participants as one of the most important and influential parts of this program. Our biggest change for the coming year is the increase in the financial support being offered through the program. The inspiration for this change came from feedback received from both participants and community members who were interested in the program and becoming teachers but did not have access to enough financial resources to make the program work. Based on this feedback the Student Services Coordinators met with the leadership of the School District and worked on a proposal that shifted money in the grant more directly to the hands of the participants. School District leadership was willing and eager to make the change to better support our participants.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Program evaluation has been both qualitative; conversations and feedback from participants and community members and quantitative; credits attained, degrees completed, etc. This data was collected via one-on-one conversations with our Student Services Coordinators, in conversations with potential applicants to the program, in strategy sessions with School District leadership and through transcript reviews of current Fellows.

Data was collected from eleven participants (Fellows, Students Services Coordinators, School District Leaders). The feedback from our Fellows reiterated that the program has been successful in helping them take the initial step into post-secondary education. The majority of our participants are first generation college students and having the Grow Your Own program with built in advising support has been critical in providing participants with the needed guidance on how to start their post-secondary journey. From help with FAFSA to class selection, to tutoring and academic support, the guidance provided by the Student Services Coordinators has been critical. Feedback from District Leadership and Student Services Coordinators identified the need to increase direct financial support for our students and to deepen the bench of mentors that are available to the Fellows.

Additional planning needs to take place to determine when to best connect Fellows with in-school mentors. From the community members who reached out as potential Fellows we learned that for those that already have a degree and had an interest in returning to school to get a second degree in education, the financial resources we were offering did not make the return to school feasible. Additional funds to be put towards tuition and/or used at the Fellows discretion were needed to allow that particular group of potential applicants make the program accessible for them.

## **Osseo Area Schools**

### **Program Description**

Osseo Area Schools was awarded the GYO FY24 in May of 2023 to support the expansion of Osseo Area Schools GYO Pathways Program. GYO Osseo (GYOO) Pathways Program offers various pathways for non-licensed staff and students to becoming teachers with the district. GYOO is to recruit and retain a diverse talent pool of educators to meet the needs of our growing and diverse student body. This grant has significantly expanded the GYOO to include the GYOO Adults Program. GYOO Adults Program provides scholarships, stipends, PD, and mentorship of BIPOC staff who are attending PELS teacher prep programs of their selection.

The SY 2023–24 marked the initiation of Osseo's new GYOO Adults Program, focusing on planning, recruitment, and implementation. Collaborating with key internal and external partners such as District HR, Learning and Achievement, the Department of Education Equity, Communications, Metropolitan State University, and SCSU/North Hennepin Community College, strategic meetings were held to ensure the program's success. Despite the fluid nature of the processes and programming, the program maintains a clear goal which is to close the gap between Osseo's percentages of teachers of color and students of color. As part of the recruitment efforts, an article about the program was published in the district-wide staff newsletter, 279 Insider, on September 12, 2023, coinciding with the start of the new SY. Prior to the start of the SY, Osseo had an opportunity to highlight GYOO on August 2023 [KSTP's news segment](#), SPPS and Osseo Schools race to fill hundreds of positions ahead of SY. GYOO Pathways Program heavily leveraged internal and external resources, including Osseo's building leaders, Department of Educational Equity, affinity groups, mentorship programs including District-Wide, Teachers of Color, Educational Support Professional programs, and higher education partners, to share information about GYOO. These efforts resulted in 24 BIPOC staff expressing interest. However, many were still in the research phase and needed to take further steps to apply to teacher preparation programs. By the end of the SY, two staff members were accepted into GYOO Adults program, received stipends, and participated in the first summer mentoring. This first summer focused on planning and engaging with the first cohort.

Key achievements of the first year of the grant include starting the first cohort group, hiring GYOO lead mentor, creating an internal website with program information and resources, creating business processes to release scholarships and stipends, holding one-to-one mentoring meetings, strengthening partnerships with internals and externals, and building connections with future cohort interests. The team recognized milestones and identified areas for improvement, such as offering year-round mentoring concurrent with the teacher preparation program, more resources for staff to understand and connect with teacher preparation programs, streamlining internal processes for awards, recruiting and retaining GYOO participants, and executing full PD programming.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

This year, data for the GYOO program was collected using Google Forms, intake meetings, and one-on-one meetings, with information recorded on a spreadsheet and through discussions. As this is the first year, the data primarily reflects interest inquiries. Streamlining this data collection process is a key area for improvement in the upcoming year. Out of 24 BIPOC staff members who expressed interest in the program, two met the eligibility criteria, applied, and were awarded GYOO stipends. One of these two members from the 2023–24 cohort will continue into the 2024–25 cohort.

## Owatonna Public Schools

### Program Description

"The Minnesota Educators Partnership (MEP) Teaching Fellows enjoyed a very successful first grant year. The initiative involves the collaboration of six school districts in southeastern Minnesota with significant numbers of students of color, but little diversity of staff. Working collaboratively over the five-year grant period, the MEP Teaching Fellows initiative aims to support 15 individuals of color in the region in successfully completing a PELS-approved teaching program. The initiative is overseen by a newly created MEP Teaching Fellows Council. Comprised of a majority of individuals of color, this council includes school district leadership, community partners, parents, and student representatives from across the MEP region. Meeting monthly throughout the grant period, the Council helped to oversee all components of the project – from the design of the application to the marketing plan to the interview of candidates to the ultimate selection of the initial Fellows. Shifting the power of the project from the school districts to grassroots, collaborative council represented an important component of the MEP Teaching Fellows model. A total of five individuals were selected as MEP Teaching Fellows during this first year. Given that the aim of the project is to serve 15 Fellows over the five years, this represents a tremendous start and speaks to the great interest that exists in the project. Per the originally submitted application, all Fellows (100%) are individuals of color.

Fellows must also meet one or more of the following criteria to qualify for the program:

- Be a current employee of an MEP school.
- Have graduated from an MEP school.
- Be a parent of a current MEP student or graduate.
- Live within one of the MEP school district boundaries.

Recruitment: As noted above, the MEP Teaching Fellows Council developed the initial marketing plan to promote the opportunity. This included flyers and posters hung throughout the MEP communities, coupled with a virtual push (via emails, e-newsletters, and social media) about the fellowship. The council recognized that this was just the launch of this initiative. As a result, they approached all components of the work (from the application form to the interview process to the marketing efforts) with a commitment to continuous improvement. They wisely recognized that changes were possible—and encouraged—and, thus, dedicated time this spring to additional reflections on what worked well and opportunities for improvements in the future. To this end, the council recommended the creation of short videos about the fellowship (in English, Spanish, and Somali) that could be shared online and via social media. They also noted ideas for additional places to spread the word about the program. These strategies will be implemented in Year two.

Support Services and Retention: As part of the support for the program, the selected Fellows began meeting with the project Navigator, discussing both their goals for the future and any additional support they need to achieve them. The navigator provides academic advising, financial aid assistance, connections with tutors, and linkages with social service and community resources. The Fellows also receive \$10,000 per year in stipends and scholarships to help support their postsecondary experience. Unfortunately, one of the challenges facing the program is that the initial Navigator who was hired recently resigned from the position, having secured a new

full-time job. As a result, the project will need to select a new navigator; in the interim, the MEP Coordinator is serving in this role. Thus far, all five of the Fellows have remained in the program and are actively pursuing teaching licenses.

Improvements: Moving into Year two, the MEP Teaching Fellows program will seek to enhance and improve the program offerings. In addition to the expanded marketing outlined above, the program will also aim to hire and retain a navigator to ensure that the Fellows receive the ongoing support and resources that they need to be successful. In addition, thus far, the five Fellows have come from four of the MEP districts. Expanded outreach and networking in the remaining two districts will continue so that the project most effectively serves the entire MEP region. Furthermore, each of the MEP districts is hiring a GYO lead for their district; while most will be part-time, these individuals will be able to help dedicate existing human capital to promoting all of the GYO opportunities in their community and better enact the project's developed outreach plan. Finally, the MEP Teaching Fellows Council will continue to meet throughout the grant year to review program results, discuss emerging challenges, and suggest modifications to the program to meet the intended outcomes. Building this continuous improvement framework right into the model design helps to ensure that the MEP Teaching Fellows initiative is continually responsive to the needs and opportunities for enhancement that emerge throughout the grant.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The grant calls for supporting 15 total Fellows over the course of five years. However, the initial interest in the program has been so great—and the quality of the applicants so high—that five Fellows were accepted in the first year alone! All (100%) are individuals of color pursuing teaching licenses. Each advising session with the Navigator includes a dedicated time for the Fellow to lift up any support that they need, as well as any suggestions they have for the MEP Teaching Fellows program.

In addition, an annual anonymous evaluation was developed to provide Fellows with the chance to offer additional recommendations for continuous improvement of the program. These results were collected in summer 2024 and will be reviewed by the MEP Teaching Fellows Council at their first meeting in fall 2024. Finally, the program will track each of the data items reported in the remainder of this report, including the number of Fellows still in school, the academic progress made by each, the number who have earned a degree, the number who have earned a license, and the hiring status of each completed candidate.

## **Partnership Academy**

### **Program Description**

I have presented about the GYO program during staff meetings and sent updates about college programs to all staff emails. Frankly, word of mouth travels throughout the building from other student teacher candidates who have had a positive experience with the program. As a bilingual (Spanish and English) Teacher of Color (English as a Second Language (ESL) Licensed) and an immigrant from Trinidad, our BIPOC staff feel comfortable to discuss their educational and life goals with me.

Recruitment has been made through hosting three "Lunch and Learns" with Augsburg University and St. Katherine University. Dr. Sergio Madrid Aranda (Special Education Department) and Dr. Yacub Aljaffery (ESL Department) at Augsburg University presented and discussed their program. Both professors are also immigrants from Mexico and Iraq with inspiring and culturally relevant stories. This was not lost on our BIPOC student teacher candidates who are walking a similar path to these professors. Tiffany Moore, Ed.D., Clinical Experience and Partnership Coordinator at Augsburg University has also done tabling at the school to introduce student teachers to the programs Augsburg offers. Tricia Wangerin, Assistant Director of Admission presented and discussed The Early Childhood Program Bachelor and Associates program at St. Catherine University. She was extremely knowledgeable about the bachelor's program and discussed the perks of attending St. Katherine University such as new laptops on loan, childcare etc. While we have many internal student teacher candidates, we also plan to put information on the school's website about the GYO program. Dr. Audrey Lensmire, a professor at Augsburg University teaches a class where students at the school get clinical experience and has been a great resource for our GYO students at Augsburg because they attend the school.

These efforts are producing results as we currently have eight student teacher candidates enrolled in the GYO program and five who are interested. One change I would like to make is to create a partnership with Hamline University (my alma mater) and Macalester University. I would like to strengthen our partnership with St. Thomas University so as to give students more opportunities to get their initial license with these accredited and respected institutions. Also, Dr. Audrey Lensmire from Augsburg University will be collaborating with Partnership Academy to create a mentorship program for student teachers to work with licensed teachers on the after-school program and other projects to give students more field experience.

All student teachers who are enrolled in the GYO program receive one-to-one academic and strategic support in terms of career and schooling. I research and connect them with the right person to help answer their questions. My classroom is also available to them to study and reflect during prep time. I feel as a teacher of color I can relate and help our BIPOC candidates navigate situations where there is a lack of cultural understanding on the college's part or their part. Also, two student teachers are planning to do their student teaching for ESL licensure with me as their cooperating teacher. Problem solving for student teachers is an area that is continually worked upon. One challenge was that books and supplies were very expensive to purchase first and then be reimbursed. It was a barrier to learning. I worked with financial aid and the bookstores at Augsburg University and St. Catherine University to add books and school supplies to the tuition billing so they would not have to cover these costs out of pocket. This wrap-around service coupled with free college tuition through the GYO program has helped with the retention of Associate Educator Staff.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

While a survey was sent out to participants, it was late in the year, and I did not receive feedback from this survey. However, all eight students gave verbal feedback. One participant did comment in a survey for Strategic Planning that they felt supported by the GYO program. Generally, students reported that they felt supported throughout the process of enrollment and connecting with the colleges.

Challenges were connected to having to pay for books out of pocket which was resolved. Also, students reported not getting to connect with their advisor in a timely manner at Augsburg University and then not

receiving good advice with long term planning. Students did not receive enough of an orientation at Augsburg University at the beginning of the semester. I reported this to the Clinical Experience and Partnership Coordinator. Another challenge was expectations for getting acceptance at Augsburg and St. Catherine. two students were turned down by Augsburg and St Catherine and needed to pay out of pocket to attend a community college for credits to get accepted. Participants would like to continue to attend college for free and work at their jobs This requires wrap-around support as this is a challenging process that is multi-layered. Childcare, fair treatment from advisors and other college personnel, mental health support and a quiet space to study are some challenges we have tried to resolve for students this year. Also, more options for programming which includes funding for an associate degree leading to a bachelor's degree would be helpful.

## **Prodeo Academy**

### **Program Description**

Prodeo Academy is a growing school district that develops students to be critical thinkers and reflective leaders, strengthening their character and expanding their opportunity to contribute positively and productively to society. Currently, we serve over 1000 scholars on two campuses in Columbia Heights (Pre-K through grade 8) and St. Paul (Pre-K through grade 7, growing to Pre-K through grade 8 over the next two years). We use best practices in education from many of the highest performing schools in the country and year after year, we have had two to three times as many Prodeo Academy students achieve proficiency on standardized tests compared to students with similar demographics, even during the pandemic.

To improve academic and personal outcomes for Minnesota children, we must grow a new generation of educators that reflect the diversity of our state's students. Prodeo is well positioned to play a key role in these efforts. Our individualized instruction requires a strong system of educational assistants (EAs), often called paraprofessionals) who are experienced in connecting students with the best supports for each individual situation working alongside and in partnership with our classroom teachers. Our EAs are at the core of our grow your own strategy. They have substantial training in supporting student learning, as each works with an instructional coach and manager. Many also have the cultural and linguistic skills we need to best support our diverse student body. They understand the needs of students and families in the community, and as a result often have an outsized impact on student outcomes. By supporting EAs in pursuing licensure, we can effectively grow our teaching staff while also increasing the numbers of teachers on staff who reflect our students' diversity.

Our GYO program enhances PD for EAs in order to support them in pursuing their teacher licensure. With the support of our GYO program, our EAs will move to the head of the classroom, making room for a new cohort of EAs and moving them into a different lane on our salary schedule and career path. This funding will break down systemic barriers that have prevented EAs from pursuing their licensure and promote equitable access to the profession, especially for those who have historically experienced marginalization and oppression. We launched a recruitment campaign to attract EAs to apply for GYO Scholarships throughout the SY 2023–24. This campaign included in-person information sessions, Zoom information sessions, and individual meetings with interested staff members. We utilized a variety of communication channels to share materials about the program—including our staff-wide monthly newsletter, weekly principal updates, and printed flyers across our campuses. Lastly, we

worked with our six principals to nominate staff members from their teams to apply and supported each interested applicant to complete their application materials. We are thrilled to officially offer nine staff members GYO scholarships to pursue teacher licensure starting in the SY 2024–25. The total award amount equals \$157,000, with 81% of funds supporting participants who are BIPOC.

We are eager to implement a variety of culturally responsive wrap-around supports and services to meet the needs of our scholarship recipients. We will lead monthly support sessions for scholarships to come together to discuss the challenges and opportunities within their licensure programs, forming a community of practice unique to them as full-time professionals also pursuing teacher licensure. All new teachers at Prodeo who identify as people of color are also paired with a mentor who also identifies as a person of color. This mentorship program supports their entrance to the teaching profession in a culturally responsive way, offering them individualized coaching, support, and feedback to ensure they excel within their first few years of teaching and remain in the profession for years to come. One improvement we plan to make for following recruitment campaigns is to limit the number of program partners that scholarship recipients can choose. For this first year, we opened up scholarship awards to a wide variety of programs and schools, which made it difficult for our grant administrators to learn the particular intricacies of each program. In future years, we plan to limit the number of program partners to under five such that we can become more knowledgeable and supportive as candidates matriculate through these licensure programs, as well as better tailor our PD and coaching to a smaller number of programs to create a more streamlined candidate experience.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We plan to administer quarterly surveys of scholarship recipients to gather feedback and adjust our programming and supports accordingly. We will also solicit feedback from recipient mentors and their principals to better understand the individual needs, strengths, and growth areas of each recipient in order to maximize their retention in their licensure programs. Ultimately, we will track the retention of candidates throughout their licensure programs and in the teaching profession once they graduate.

## **Rochester Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

Our recruitment efforts have consisted of info sessions, flyers, news coverage, employee newsletters, attending various in person events around our community, etc. Brochures are handed out at our hiring events as well. We plan to continue these efforts until we feel that we no longer have the funds available to support students. The different forms of marketing for this scholarship that we have utilized has helped us reach more members of our community. We have made connections with various employment agencies to help spread the word about this opportunity. We have made great progress and are mindful of the fact that there is still more work to be done in terms of culturally relevant recruiting.

As of right now, we have 11 candidates identified. Some have started in the spring and summer while others are waiting for their cohorts to begin in the fall term. We have a rolling application, so that as people join us, they can take advantage of this scholarship opportunity. We believe we have made great progress so far in terms of

our numbers. Retention efforts include regular check-ins, mentors, and a survey that we plan to redistribute biannually. So far, we believe these efforts are working.

As the program grows, we are aware changes will most likely need to be made in order to meet the needs of our participants. This is why amplifying our participants voices is very important to us. We want to ensure they have the appropriate platforms to voice feedback and concerns—whether it be to a mentor, directly, or via anonymous survey. We will continue to revisit any feedback given in order to ensure we are meeting the needs of the candidates. Our current agenda of improvements is the mentorship piece. Our plan going into fall 24 is to revisit our current process. We plan to get feedback from candidates, current and future mentors, as well as our Employees of Color Resource Group.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We sent out a survey to candidates asking for feedback via Google Forms. Participants were able to respond anonymously. It was important to us to ensure candidates felt safe giving us feedback both positive or negative. We sent the survey to seven participants who have received scholarships already. The survey included brief questions regarding strengths of the GYO program, weaknesses, and areas for future improvement. Four of the seven recipients responded.

We received positive feedback in terms of collaboration and recipients finding community within our district as well as positive remarks about the opportunity itself. Candidates seemed excited for the future and how a career in teaching will positively impact not only themselves but their families and our community. Areas of improvement that were mentioned were access to the two plus two pathways (feedback received before legislative changes) and concerns regarding us only paying for tuition and books at this time.

## **Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan (ISD 196)**

### **Program Description**

In May 2023, the MDE awarded \$750,000 to District 196 Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan to implement the GYO Adult Pathway Program. This GYO Program is designed to support adults who identify as Indigenous and/or people of color in completing a teaching degree and obtaining an initial teaching license. This grant would provide 30 district teacher candidates of color over two years with:

- \$10,000 per year for tuition,
- Up to \$3,000 for daycare per year, as applicable and as funds are available,
- Up to \$1,000 for textbooks per year, and
- Program support with wrap-around services.

The first of two cohort teacher candidates were chosen for the 2023–25 GYO Adult Pathway Program. They continued or began their teacher education program July 1, 2023, through one of District 196's partnering institutions: Bethel University; Concordia University, St. Paul; Metropolitan State University; Southwest Minnesota State University; and UST.

The GYO program supports the district's Achievement and Integration Plan and World's Best Workforce goals to increase teachers of color serving in the district from 5% to 8% by 2026 to meet the increasing students of color population of 43% (as of 2023). Efforts to recruit, retain, and provide wrap-around services for the first cohort of 15 GYO candidates who are Indigenous and/or people of color began with word of mouth, which has proved to be the most effective form of communication for collectivist cultures. This form of communication was shared with colleagues and friends and at districtwide meetings. Presentations were given at meetings as well. Flyers were distributed to interested parties and emails were sent to district leaders, such as building administrators, district coordinators and directors. Two virtual informational sessions were held by the Coordinator of Equity and Inclusion and partnering institution, Metropolitan State University's Director of Recruitment, Retention and Induction. These sessions were recorded and emailed to all interested parties. After about a month of intense recruitment, 30 viable candidates applied and interviewed. Out of 16 who were selected, six declined; one decided to seek out the University of Minnesota's GYO program that had her desired degree, one did not find the degree he desired from the five supported GYO higher education institutions, one decided not to pursue teaching at the time, and three had personal reasons for not continuing.

The 10 GYO candidates who decided to participate in the program are all working adults of color in District 196, nine of whom are district employees and one who is a contracted substitute teacher. To support the retention of these teacher candidates, they receive small cohort mentorship and PD to enhance their equity literacy. Three mentors/coaches were recruited to each support three to four GYO candidates. They are teachers with 20 plus years of experience and are equity-minded practitioners. Two are classroom teachers with one being a person of color and one is a Q-Comp Peer Leader. They provided bi-monthly or more check-ins with each of their GYO candidates. The check-ins supported the individuals' academic (e.g. proofing a paper), personal (e.g. health conditions), professional (e.g. how to continue to work while student teaching), and emotional (e.g. concerns about graduating in a timely manner) needs.

Support was also given by the GYO manager, the TOSA-Equity Coach and PD, from the Equity and Inclusion Department. She provided explanations about the program, financial assistance (e.g. health benefits, employment) and was a second mentor/coach as applicable. The GYO candidates and their mentors/coaches also participated in four program meetings throughout the year. The first one was a GYO kick-off where GYO candidates met their mentors/coaches for the first time, learned more about the GYO logistics (e.g. payment plans, who to contact regarding certain topics), and had opportunities to learn more about each other. Metropolitan State University's Director of Recruitment, Retention and Induction and the Director and Coordinator of Equity and Inclusion attended. The kick-off showed candidates the internal and external supports they have throughout their GYO journey. The next two meetings were to enhance their equity literacy.

Of the 10 candidates, four are studying special education and five work with students who have special needs. Thus, the second meeting was on special education - the evolution of inclusion, Special Education programs in District 196, high leverage practices that can be used with adults to adults and adults to students. Another topic that has been of importance in District 196 is transgender individuals. The third meeting was about transgender matters—the impact on mental health, introductory gender terminology, supports for gender diverse individuals, and microaggressions. The end-of-the-year meeting was an opportunity for the first cohort to reflect on their experiences and share words of wisdom to the second cohort beginning their GYO journey in fall 2024.

The first cohort met four times each year and feedback from guests who attended these meetings was that the group is very joyous. They bonded further every time they met. The candidates and mentors/coaches bantered and learned together as if no time had passed between meetings.

In 2023, District 196 implemented their first GYO Adult Pathway Program under the leadership of the Equity and Inclusion (EandI) Department. The EandI Department members sought out suggestions from more experienced districts, such as Worthington District and Eden Prairie, who readily shared resources (e.g. budget spreadsheet, flyer) and their connections. Their learnings led to connecting with higher education institutions, such as Southwest Minnesota State and other institutions, to see what documents were necessary to complete third-party billing agreements and who their GYO contacts were.

Research on the MDE GYO website led to learning about creating a contract with each institution. Metropolitan State University's Dean of the School of Urban Education worked with their legal team and the district's legal team to construct the GYO Collaboration Contract, which became the contract model used with the other four GYO partnering institutions. Additionally, the EandI Department and Finance and Operations Department collaborated on financial recordkeeping and creating a payment plan schedule.

Reflections and feedback show District 196 GYO Program has both strengths and areas that can be improved. The biggest GYO program strength has been recruiting Indigenous and/or people of color. This continues to be an asset with the second cohort and with the second GYO grant. Recruitment communication has been expanded by emailing other listservs such as 10- and 12-month secretaries, sharing flyers with Q-Comp Peer Leaders who posted them at the schools they serve, and creating a GYO webpage. The strong connection between candidates and their mentors/coaches was so evident at meetings, at GYO manager and mentors/coaches' check-ins, and during manager and candidate conversations that the manager wanted this support to continue for year two of the candidates' GYO journey. New mentors/coaches would need to be recruited for the second cohort as well as for the second GYO grant. By learning about each candidate and understanding changes in District 196, the manager sought out PD opportunities to prepare individuals to become future teachers of color.

The SY 2024–25 will be the last year the first cohort will be financially supported with wrap-around services by the GYO Program. As such, the PDs will include preparing candidates to create resumes/portfolios, apply for teaching positions, and practice mock interviews. Another strength is the GYO Collaboration Contract only needed minor adaptations to include future GYO cohorts and other documentation (e.g. acceptance letters to candidates, notification letters to partnering institutions) required minimal changes. An area of improvement was to be creative in seeking more teachers of color to become GYO mentors/coaches. The effort and timing were right as the next five out of six GYO mentors/coaches are teachers of color who might share similar lived experiences as their candidates and can offer their experiences with working and going to school with their candidates. Since these working adults took night classes, no candidates were able to access daycare funds. Therefore, daycare funds were not included in the second GYO grant. Seeing that seven out of 10 GYO candidates will not graduate after two years in the GYO Program, the second GYO grant requested that funds last for three years. Other candidate feedback indicated that the interest form was simple for candidates and the reference forms were easy for references to complete, but the interviews were not long enough to get to know candidates.

Future recruitment efforts for the second cohort and for the second GYO grant included one-on-one, in-person conversations between the GYO manager and prospective candidates and 30-minute interviews with the GYO manager and GYO coordinator. More data within this report will show the successes and challenges of District 196 Grow Your Own Adult Pathway Program.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

A Qualtrics survey, designed to collect program feedback, was distributed via email at the beginning of April 2024 and at the GYO meeting May 21, 2024, followed by an email reminder the next day. Ten out of 10 responded to the first survey and six of ten responded to the second survey for a combined total of 16 participants providing feedback. All participants identified as a person of color with one race and/or ethnicity or as biracial. Of the 10 GYO participants, there were three Special Education Paraprofessionals, one Student Support Specialist, one Special Education Center based Teacher (Tier 2 license), one Instructional Clerk, one 10-Month Secretary, one Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Board who became a Cultural Family Advocate, one Cultural Family Advocate, and one Teachers on Call Substitute Teacher. The survey asked for demographic information (e.g. name, program of study, institution attending and race/ethnicity), programming questions about their mentorship experience both in Likert scales (strongly agree/agree/disagree /strongly disagree) and open-ended questions, management questions in Likert scales and open-ended questions, and open-ended feedback questions. The results from the open-ended feedback questions are shared under the Participant Feedback section of this report.

## **Roseville Area Schools**

### **Program Description**

In partnership with the UST Work and Learn Graduate Pathway, Roseville Area Schools Innovative of Scholars (RISE) Movement program which aims to recruit, prepare, and retain individuals interested in becoming educators. The focus of our grow our own is to recruit individuals who share similar life experiences that reflect our diverse student population.

This initiative is tied to a key strategy within our strategic plan which states that we are a culturally responsive, inclusive, anti-racist district which includes the following:

- We work to ensure our educators are committed to our anti-racist practices.
- The intentionality to retain a workforce that is aligned with our mission, vision, and equity vision statement.
- We strive to initiate early recruitment endeavors, all while broadening the commitment and involvement of leaders in our district who are supportive in hiring BIPOC teachers, and who understand the intentionality in the hiring practices to ensure we seek out, hire, and retain exceptional educators.

In our first cohort, we have successfully onboarded six participants who underwent a rigorous application process, and subsequently admitted into the Roseville Area Schools Innovative of Scholars (RISE) Movement program. Of these six participants, three members were admitted in UST's summer 2024 session whereas, the other three participants Fall 2024. Roseville Area Schools is intentional about retention efforts. Some intentional

efforts include a districtwide affinity group, Future Orientated Community of United Support (FOCUS) Affinity Group and stay interviews. FOCUS, in particular, actively contributes to the support of new and incumbent BIPOC educators. Members of FOCUS present in school board meetings, participate in interviewing process of new hires, and make recommendations and provide feedback on retention efforts. As a result of these initiatives, we have seen an increase in the number of new hires BIPOC educators from 12–15 % during the SY 2023–24.

We have a stay interviews process which allows our district to obtain feedback on the incumbent employee experience. This process provides invaluable insight into the experiences of our BIPOC educators with the intent of utilizing the acquired data to make necessary improvements. These efforts are vital to the success of our staff within our district. These endeavors are also necessary when recruiting and retaining staff for our grow your own program as we strive for excellence, innovation, and equity in all we do.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

There is no data evidence to provide at this time. Roseville Area Schools has not participated in data collection because the Grow Your Own Adult Pathway initiative is a pilot program for the district which began in the latter part of 2023.

## **Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)**

### **Program Description**

The GYO FY24 Adult Pathway Annual Report focuses on key initiatives aimed at advancing educational opportunities within the Saint Paul Public School community. This includes a scholarship program with Metropolitan State University and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities to enhance opportunities and outcomes for teacher candidates (from the GYO FY22 award). We are also leveraging the FY24 GYO award to fund Saint Paul Urban Teacher Residency (SUTR) residents as well as to build out an undergraduate program with Saint Thomas. Details about all three initiatives are included in this report. Initiative with Metro State and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities: The goal of the initiative is to support current Saint Paul Public School employees or Saint Paul community members who are seeking initial licensure at the undergraduate level at Metropolitan State University and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. This includes collecting and analyzing data to better understand the barriers and needs of this target group, as well as working with teacher preparation partners to build wrap-around support services for participants. This includes providing scholarships to a select group of current Saint Paul Public School employees enrolled in the teacher preparation programs at Metropolitan State University and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities to address financial barriers they may face.

The results from the initiative with Metropolitan State University and the University of Minnesota Twin Cities has produced a positive result of qualified recipients from the St. Paul community that are BIPOC and in pursuit of an initial licensure at the undergraduate level. SPPS is in collaboration with Metropolitan State University Urban Education program, "The School of Urban Education has the most diverse students of any teacher preparation institution in Minnesota in terms of overall numbers and percentages of teacher candidates who are

of color or American Indian," thus Metropolitan State University own program supports and garners the GYO grant's goal to bring diverse teacher candidates into a career in education.

Related to retention efforts and how they are culturally responsive to candidates of color including Indigenous candidates, educators participate in the Mentor Mentee Program (MMP) during their first year of probation. The MMP is individualized, differentiated, and flexible to meet the professional growth goals for educators new to the field of education and for those new to SPPS. New educators/mentees have the option of identifying a preference for a racial affinity-based mentoring partnership and being matched based on that preference. MMP offers at least 20 hours of collaborative support from a colleague over the course of the SY. Educators have the opportunity to develop a mentor-mentee relationship with differentiated activities that may include observations with feedback, job shadowing, review of student work/data, discussions around professional goals, and other individualized support. Mentors receive training on creating effective mentoring partnerships, multiple support functions for new educators, and principles of adult learning as well as training around developing equity leadership skills, including how race and gender might impact mentoring partnerships. In order to help facilitate effective collaborative activities, a full-year mentorship pairing gets one substitute day. The mentorship pairing decides how to best use this day to support the mentee's growth and development.

The outcome of the GYO award recipients applying for positions in the SPPS district has been challenging as a result of the district's budget cuts. As a result of cuts in our district, many of the GYO recipients were in licensed areas that were not considered in "hard to fill areas" and were limited in the available vacancies. There were only three GYO recipients that were within the licensed areas of hard to fill that were accepted with early contracts to the district and one GYO recipient that was not in the hard to fill area that was hired in the district. Unfortunately, as of July, the remaining four recipients were not able to obtain positions in the district due to their license areas. We will continue to work with these individuals that are expressing interest in pursuing a career in SPPS by communicating updates on any positions we see that are available that may match their license areas and any other resources that we may have that would provide them opportunities to be employed in our district.

The wrap-around services that the district is providing these GYO recipients are resources that are intentional in the hopes to recruit them for a career in SPPS. The resource provided was supporting resume building and scheduling individuals for mock interviews. The district recruiters scheduled a date and times for GYO recipients who are interested to take part in reviewing their resumes and mock interviews. This support was accessible via virtual platform where recipients interact and inquire with their own questions to clarify and support their understanding of what they can anticipate from their resume and an interview.

St. Paul Urban Teacher Residency (SUTR) Initiative: Regarding updates on the SUTR, the first disbursement from the allocated \$455,000 living stipend fund for 12 teacher residents (comprising 11 individuals of color and 1 Caucasian) program only began on July 1, 2024, resulting in no additional updates.

Initiative to Develop an Undergraduate Pathway with the University of Saint Thomas: Additionally, updates are provided on the progress of our undergraduate teacher apprenticeship program in collaboration with the UST. The project goal is to recruit and prepare individuals who are passionate about teaching SPPS students, with an

emphasis on recruiting and preparing more teachers of color and more culturally responsive teachers of all races/ethnicities.

In January of 2024, St. Paul Public Schools hired Dr. Kellie Krick Oborn in a temporary professional .5 position focused on development of an undergraduate teacher pathway program with the UST. Below you will find linked artifacts and documentation related to project activities.

- Activity 1: Establish subcontract with the UST
- Activity 2: Form design team: SPPS and Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) for Teaching Steering and Design Team
- Activity 3: Set design team schedule with at least quarterly milestones MDE Apprenticeship Planning Grant was awarded SPPS Letter of Support Grant Narrative Preliminary RAP for Teaching Informational Sessions held with Special Education (SpEd) Admin, SUTR Mentors and University Supervisors, and Educator Development Team Participation in NCTR Apprenticeship Design Academy SPPS and SLP Registered Apprenticeship Program Kick-Off Event Weekly cross-department collaboration with Department of Specialized Services
- Activity 4: Analyze local data and national research related to undergraduate program design, barriers to participation, support for linguistically and culturally diverse teacher candidates, etc. Gathering SPPS Interest Holder Feedback Framework for input from SpEd Admin, SUTR Mentors and Supervisors, and Educator Development Team Synthesis of SPPS Administrative Feedback on development of RAP for Teaching shared with multiple interest holders and groups Analysis of EA/(School and Community Service Professional SCSP and Teaching Assistant (TA) personnel data indicates a large number of existing staff hold minimum requirements for pilot cohort (note we are missing data) EA/SCSP/TA with Associates of Arts (AA) Degrees: 47 EA/SCSP/TA with some college or technical credit: 98
- Activity 5: Organize focus groups and collect additional data to identify barriers to participation in undergraduate teacher preparation programs, if needed.
- Activity 6: Design undergraduate cohort program to address barriers Design committees convening in August.
- Activity 7: Design recruitment process and marketing materials. Recruitment committee convening in August.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Initiative with Metro State and the University of MN Twin Cities: The scholarship program with Metropolitan State University and the University of Minnesota (Twin Cities) to enhance opportunities and outcomes for teacher candidates collected data from the GYO participants. The type of data collected from GYO participants pertained to questions about their experience and how the scholarship affected their student teaching placement. The survey was given to all eight GYO participants and of that five GYO participants provided feedback. The results from the data collected from the five out the eight GYO participants provided a general consensus that the award supported them financially and provided them the opportunity to work in their St. Paul community schools they had intentionally sought out. There were some areas that the GYO participants expressed wanting more focus on the wrap-around support from the district with timing of information relayed

about hiring and navigating the hiring process. Therefore, we plan to provide additional support leading up to and during the hiring cycle next SY.

Overall, the scholarship awarded was expressed with much gratitude as it allowed GYO participants to focus on the skills they needed to be prepared as an educator. SUTR Initiative: Not applicable (N/A) Initiative to Develop an Undergraduate Pathway with the University of Saint Thomas: Information gleaned through focus group discussion, interest survey, and staffing data analysis provide insights that will continue to guide program development.

Given identified staffing needs in Special Education, and based on St. Thomas approved undergrad programing, Academic Behavior Strategist will be the primary licensure of the pathway. District leadership has determined, based on projections and planning, that Elementary licensure will also be included, with potential to differentiate how many apprentices in each licensure will be accepted. Cross-department and interagency collaboration and communication is essential for determining how the pathway will be lead and run, and the selection criteria for both mentors and apprentices. Careful consideration must be given to placement sites and mentor-apprentice matching and learning opportunities across levels and federal settings. Analysis of staff data indicates that at least 34 current Educational Assistants and 15 Teaching Assistants hold associate degrees; given missing data this number is likely much higher.

Analysis of interest and input data collected from 55 prospective apprentices to date indicates that 47% of respondents are interested in Elementary Education while 60% are interested in Special Education. Respondents identify as Asian (12%), Black (30%), Hispanic (20%), White (40%), Other (1%), Prefer not to answer (7%). Respondents have been employed by SPPS for 1-5 years (70%), 5-10 years (18%), 15 or more years (7%). When asked about the preferred learning environment that best meets their learning style and preference, 25% indicated in-person, 14% indicated on-line, and 60% preferred a hybrid model. Preference for when to attend class (during day, afternoon, evening, weekend, combo) were mixed. Barriers anticipated to pursue a teaching license included money (92%), time (67%), anxiety about returning to school (36%), childcare/family obligations (25%), and encouragement/support (21%). Given the requirements of the Department of Labor and Industry for progressive wage, Departments will need to discuss and determine how the Apprentice position will be structured to include a progressive wage. Related Technical Instruction (University Course Content) should include and embed priorities SPPS has identified for example around equity and culturally sustaining practices, due process, and reading intervention, classroom management, rituals and routines foundations.

## **Shakopee Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

"Shakopee Public Schools will use the GYO grant to fully fund and remove the barriers for adults of color seeking a pathway to obtain a teacher license. Not only will Shakopee Public School provide a pathway to the license from any educational level, but we will also use the GYO grant funding to provide wrap-around supports and remove barriers to success such as childcare, tutoring, transportation, and supplies. Below is an overview of how Shakopee plans to help participants obtain a teacher license and a brief description of targeted groups that will benefit, wrap-around supports to remove barriers and primary project goals.

Project Goal 1: Obtaining a Pathway to Licensure: Meet participants and any level of education that they have (high school, some college, or college degree) and provide a pathway to licensure through a PELSB Approved Program. Pay licensing fee and give support for obtaining a PELSB license. Guarantee student teaching placement within Shakopee Public Schools and a teaching assignment in Shakopee Schools for three years.

Project Goal 2: Provide Wrap-around Supports for Success Provide scholarships, supplies, tutoring, transportation, and childcare for participants to successfully complete the licensure program. Additional support can be offered in the form of providing a job at the school as a paraprofessional as they complete the licensure program. Almost 90% of the funds will go directly to scholarships and wrap-around support. As stated in the table below, scholarships will be provided for tuition to Mankato State University as well as pay for books, application, and licensing fees. Wrap-around services provided will be dinner nights and study sessions, daycare, and dinner nights for evening classes, onsite or online programming, and cohort support/speakers to help with the social and emotional stress that will come with completing an education program on top of daily activities.

Project Goal 3: Recruitment and Support Work in collaboration with our community groups and HR department when hiring our support staff to promote this opportunity within our community and give information to interested participants in addition, hold information and educational sessions to help participants enter into the GYO program and begin their licensure. In addition to working in collaboration with our community, Shakopee Schools will also promote and recruit our current paraprofessionals in the district to obtain their teacher licensure by holding educational meetings and providing information to them at professional learning days and before/after school sessions.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Check-Ins - Monthly check ins with program facilitators. All participants receive a monthly personalized check-in to ensure participants are supported and successful. Survey: All participants receive an end-of-term survey. District Feedback GYO Program facilitator sought feedback from District Administration including Special Education and HR to help support the program and make any necessary changes. PELSB Approved School Partnership Feedback Reviewed and sought feedback from our partner institutions as well as PELSB to ensure our program was compliant with Grant guidelines. Program facilitator meets periodically with institutional partners.

Lessons Learned: Many classes that participants need are not offered online—from foundational to K-12 licensure areas. The new memorandum of understanding that participants can attend Normandale will be very beneficial. As an employer we need to be flexible in order to help support our team. We must rely on a wide range of institutions to help support all participants needs, and not just one college or university There is a lot of institutional bureaucracy, which is why it is important to have someone help our participants navigate this process; and this goes above and beyond an academic counselor at the university. It is important to project forward in order to anticipate when a reapplication is needed for continuous support for participants in the program. We need to and will be more deliberate in recruitment for specific licensure areas and particular groups of participants to reflect our student population.

## **St. Cloud Area School District**

### **Program Description**

Recruitment efforts are focused on current district staff that are non-licensed and interested in pursuing licensure. The recruiting efforts are mostly in person, with one-on-one conversations and additional group offerings. The efforts are producing a strong candidate pool, and continued support by the grant managers is helping the efforts stay strong. The retention efforts are handled by our equity department, through strong partnership and communication regarding what the needs of candidates are and their overall experience. The outcomes are still to be seen as none of our candidates have graduated with their license yet. The wrap-around services are consistent communication, financial support in areas of need, and consultation. In addition, connecting candidates with the needed resources has shown to be successful in supporting their academic pursuit. Improvements for the future would be to better inform our principals and leaders to recruit and retain with their buildings rather than leading the effort as a district.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We are still in our program, so still evaluating. We are collecting feedback, number of participants, participants to successfully complete a license, number employed in our school district. So far, we've had a slow start to this program but are gaining traction. We expect to see great growth and progress over the next year with our GYO candidates.

## **St. Paul City School**

### **Program Description**

The overall GYO program here at St. Paul City School has gotten off to a good start. We recruited during the opening week of the SY and presented the staff with GYO info and instructions on how to apply. We specifically expressed the need for BIPOC educators and made that our target area. All of our GYO recipients represent the BIPOC community. There was an end of the year check-in meeting with all of the GYO recipients to discuss the starting process, how they felt it was going and to discuss future plans. All have indicated that they are planning to continue with GYO and half of the group are attending summer courses. We are satisfied with how the first year of the GYO has transpired however, we would like to recruit more candidates and will begin recruiting at the beginning of the SY. We are conducting a GYO recipients Focus Group this month to gather feedback and seek ways of improvement. Our priority is recruitment.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We are partnering with Wilder researchers from the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation to conduct a focus Group for our GYO recipients. The information gathered will be used to determine areas we have done well and identify areas for improvement. Also, through annual pre and post surveys we will proactively seek areas of improvement.

## **West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Schools**

### **Program Description**

As a Tri District collaborative (South St. Paul, West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan, and Inver Grove Heights), we work independently and collaboratively to recruit current employees, community members, and graduating seniors of color that are interested in pursuing a career in education. With this emphasis on diversifying our teaching ranks, we've heavily involved our district/community cultural liaisons in our recruiting and retention efforts. Much of this has involved strengthening and supporting existing relationships and connections with staff, community members, and students. Our districts have specific staff that have been identified to support candidates, with an emphasis on these staff not being "supervisors" or others with positional authority. These individuals have been the primary supports, both logistical, personal, and professional for the candidates. We currently only have two candidates that have been served by the grant as of June 30, 2024, so these supports are evolving.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Evaluation data collection from our two candidates has been qualitative and anecdotal. Participants are grateful for the financial support, especially for the resources for related expenses that reduce participation barriers. Some of the anecdotal data has reflected some challenges in working through the post-secondary system—they've never "gone to college." Navigation has been supported by both district and post-secondary staff, so it's improving.

## **Winona Area Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

The GYO Program has not been in the forefront due to personnel changes at the HR Director level and at the Superintendent level. I am excited to reignite this program. We have a couple educational assistants who are seeking information and trying to get enrolled in programming for the second semester. I also want to promote the program within our HR newsletter, as well as work with our high school BIPOC or Indigenous seniors who have an interest in education. There is lots of room for improvement, as we have done very minimal in this area, as far as I can tell. My goal is to support these candidates in the interim, as well as supply mentors for them in the process moving forward. This all seems to go along with the original grant request.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We have not collected any data, except for the two candidates who have reached out.

## **Worthington Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

The Southwest Teacher Preparation Partnership (SWTPP) is a collaboration including Southwest Minnesota State University's Teacher Education Programs, Minnesota West Community College, and the Worthington Public Schools (ISD 518). The partnership was developed to serve a need identified by the Worthington Public Schools for more teachers, and particularly for more teachers of color, to better reflect the student population of the district (one of the most diverse in Minnesota). SWTPP was created to look for ways to increase the numbers of teachers of color and to provide pathways/remove barriers to the teaching profession. SWTPP received grants from the McKnight Foundation and the Southwest Initiative Foundation to conduct surveys of stakeholders to

develop the partnership and its goals. SWTPP used the stakeholder survey responses to develop a program that would address the barriers of time and distance, since the nearest teacher preparation programs were over 60 miles away.

Minnesota West Community College developed an Elementary Education Associate of Science (AS) degree as a Transfer Pathway two-year program. SMSU received approval from PELSB for a non-conventional elementary education program that utilized foundation coursework in education from Minnesota West and provided the remaining coursework through SMSU but delivered at Minnesota West in Worthington on their campus. Minnesota West also offers concurrent enrollment courses in education including EDUC 1100 Introduction to Education and EDUC 1102 Technology in Education to area high school students to encourage them to consider teaching as a future profession to recruit candidates to all teaching licensure programs. ISD 518 hosts a Future Teachers of America club at the high school to encourage interested high school students to consider teaching as a future career.

SWTPP identified multiple pathways toward teacher licensure for candidates in this program. The first is for high school students enrolled in the concurrent enrollment courses; they continue at Minnesota West and then complete the teacher licensure program through SMSU. The second is for candidates already at Minnesota West who are interested in a career in teaching; they take the foundation courses as part of the Elementary Education AS Pathway and then complete the teacher licensure program through SMSU. The third pathway is for paraprofessionals at ISD 518; these candidates also take the foundation courses as part of the Elementary Education AS Pathway and then complete the teacher licensure program through SMSU. A final pathway is for Tier 1 or 2 teachers and other community individuals who have a bachelor's degree and are seeking licensure. These candidates also take the foundation courses as part of the Elementary Education AS Pathway and then complete the teacher licensure program through SMSU.

SWTPP and SMSU hired a faculty member to deliver the bulk of the education coursework offered at the Minnesota West campus. These courses are offered online or in a hybrid format with class meetings scheduled for late afternoons, evenings, or occasional Saturdays to accommodate the schedules of working candidates. The GYO funding covers any tuition/fees/books not met with financial aid, and also reimburses candidates for lost wages incurred while completing field experience requirements for education courses. Candidates complete a year-long, half-time student teaching experience which allows them to continue their employment while student teaching. Candidates are reimbursed for lost wages incurred while completing student teaching. Finally, candidates are reimbursed for the costs of the edTPA, any licensure testing required, and for the cost of obtaining teacher licensure.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We had one completer for the GYO program during the 23–24 academic year. For this candidate, we have the following data: university supervisor evaluation for student teaching; mentor teacher evaluation for student teaching; and edTPA scores from Tasks 1 (Planning), 2 (Instruction), and 3 (Assessment of Student Learning). MTLE test requirements have been discontinued, so that data point is no longer available. University supervisor evaluation scores are 3-Competent and 4-Proficient on Standards of Effective Practice (SEP) 1-10, with a Recommendation for Licensure. The candidate received three classroom mentor teacher evaluations from

mentors at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. Again, the candidate received scores of 3-Competent and 3-Proficient on all SEP 1–10, with a Recommendation for Licensure from each mentor. On the edTPA, the candidate earned a score of 16 on Task 1 (a score of 13 is the minimum required for passing); a score of 16 on Task 2 (a score of 13 is the minimum required for passing); and a score of 15 on Task 3 (a score of 12 is the minimum required for passing). The candidate has earned a Tier 3 Minnesota Teaching License in the fields of K-12 ESL and K-12 Reading.

## **Zumbro Education District**

### **Program Description**

By working with our local directors of special education, principals, cultural liaisons, and community organizations, we aim to recruit community members of color and American Indians to pursue special education licensure in our local districts. We are hosting outreach nights to share information about the Grow Your Own Grant, funding opportunities, and available programs for potential teacher candidates interested in special education. Our cultural liaisons are engaging in one-on-one conversations and building connections with the regional low incidence facilitator overseeing the grant to provide additional information about the Grow Your Own initiatives. We are also working with students and family members in schools where our district leaders have built relationships to recruit them into the field of special education. Most of our success has come through personal relationships with cultural liaisons and special education directors and leaders in individual districts. We have seen a few applicants through this model apply for the GYO Grant. However, we have not found success with hosting information nights or putting information up in local community centers.

We are revising our recruitment strategies for the coming year to have a greater impact on local communities with students and families who might be interested in transitioning to special education. In many of our smaller rural communities, families already have jobs and are not interested in transitioning to special education. Therefore, we will continue to recruit outside the districts and partner with the MDE to bring people into Minnesota. Through the initial application process, we have supported candidates by helping them complete the application, identifying necessary materials to complete the FAFSA, and assisting with their application process for university special education preparation programs. To support internet access, we have provided candidates with technology such as laptops. We have not received any requests for funding for childcare.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

A survey was sent to the participants of the GYO grant to collect the following information: Audience: Candidates interview/survey Please tell us how effective our recruitment process was in sharing information about the grant, special education career field, support in place for enrollment and completing the FAFSA, sharing information about program components, classes, etc. Rating scale Likert scale questions: How well organized was the information for your classes? How easy was registration into the program licensure/special education teacher preparation program? How effective were the information sessions? What would you change about the recruitment process? What would you change about the information sessions? What would you add to enhance the recruitment process? Additional questions: How many credits did you complete in the last semester? How many credits do you plan to take next semester? Confirm your expected graduation date.

## Student Pathway Grantees

### Austin Public Schools (APS)

#### Program Description

In year one of implementation of the GYO grant, Austin Public Schools started by readying the system. Information was shared at each building site to explain what the GYO grant and program is and to gather support from educators across the Austin Public School system. The next step was working with the HR department to ensure that we were within contractual guidelines to post three positions in our district. These positions included a Future Teacher Coordinator and two Future Teacher Club leaders. APS posted these positions and hired them in January 2024. Staff hired for the program have knowledge working with students across the K-12 system and themselves had different paths to the field of education.

The staff immediately started planning opportunities for students which included the MDE information meetings. They then began to recruit students. Austin High School (AH) has a diverse student population. The goal was to be inclusive of all students in our school, but to especially seek out students of color. There were several measures taken to recruit students:

- Posters around the school
- Information in the student announcements
- Information shared with parents via the AHS Newsletter
- Connections were made with the AHS Pathway Coordinator to gather known students who had identified as being interested in a teaching career.
- Connections were made with AHS counselors to further gather a list of interested students in an education career
- Connections were made with the APS Success Coaches who have connections with our diverse students and families.

Once students were identified, the GYO Future Teacher Coordinator create invitations and personally delivered them to students inviting them to come to club meetings or to stop and see her to learn more about the opportunities.

The year one goal for the GYO program at APS was to hire teacher leaders for the Future Teacher Coordinator and Club Leaders and to recruit students to participate in a Future Teacher Club. APS successfully met those goals. Longer term goals are to provide opportunities for students to learn about the roles of teachers and to visit K-12 school in our district and across the region to see teaching in action, provide wrap-around supports to help students successfully move from high school, to college, and to support our students through their education to earn their teaching degree and to then choose APS as their choice district to teach, diversifying the APS teaching staff and better representing the students in the APS district.

The format for the program year one was to engage students in a GYO Future Teacher Club. The club activities started in February 2024 and included meetings two times a month. The first meetings provided opportunities

for student to get to know one another and build community. The meetings provided and opportunity for student to ask questions about the teaching profession and provide feedback on what they wanted to learn more about and what experiences they would like to have as part of the club.

Based on the planning of the club leaders and input from the students the following were some of the opportunities and supports provided:

- Introduction to the GYO program
- Current student teachers in the Austin Public School district shared about their college and student teaching experiences
- Guest Speakers from Riverland Community College shared about the Austin Assurance Scholarship and transfer pathway opportunities to Minnesota college and universities
- Austin High School Pathways Coordinator shared about how to find scholarships specifically focusing on scholarships for teachers
- The Summer School Coordinator visited and shared how students could volunteer in summer school classrooms to work with student and teachers to learn more about the profession
- A college visit to the Minnesota State University, Mankato education program.

The year end culminating event for the GYO Future Teacher Club was a future teaching signing event. Students were recognized and celebrated for choosing to pursue a career in education. Students also recognized an educator that was influential in supporting them.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The program was evaluated using a Microsoft Form survey sent to students through email. The survey was sent to student the end of May 2024 at the conclusion of the year's activities. The survey was completed by 12 students in grades 10 and 12 that participated consistently in the program during the second semester of the SY 2023–24. All students in the program were invited to participate. Students were asked to share strengths and challenges of the program and what experiences they would like to see included in the program next year.

## **Brooklyn Center (BC) Community Schools**

### **Program Description**

Brooklyn Center Grow Your Own pathways is off to an outstanding start. This year we were able to design and implement several program experiences to enrich the students within our community. Below you will find descriptions of our programs.

*Future Educators Club (FEC)* Future Educators is a preparation club that motivates and encourages students (grades 8 through 12) to explore a range of educational career pathways. While in this club, students gained classroom experience through observations and service projects. Through early exposure, we hope to develop great and qualified future educators. This club takes place in the form of an elective credited course. Registration is open at the beginning of each semester.

*Work-Study.* Our work-study program is offered to students in grades 11 and 12. To be selected, students will go through an application/interview process. Ideal candidates are students interested in educational careers following graduation. Also, students must be in good academic standing and possess positive attendance. Within the program students can work within a few different areas. Two major areas being math and science. Work-study students will go into middle school spaces and act as a support aide. Supporting teachers and students in tasks to support academic gains. This allows work-study participants to get some vital classroom experience. Scholarships. All BC graduating seniors are eligible to apply. To apply one must complete the standard application and submit a letter of teacher recommendation. Requirements state: Students must have at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA), plan to attend a Minnesota State four-year University or College and be pursuing a degree in the field of education. Award recipients are selected by a panel. The scholarships that we currently offer is \$5,000 for one-year. By offering the following experiences, we are hoping to create continuous opportunities for students in grades 8 through 12. By doing so we want to capture students early and keep them intrigued throughout their journey to licensure.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

All participants within the FEC were invited to complete an anonymous survey. The survey was sent out via email at the end of May. The survey captured data on what activities the students enjoyed, didn't enjoy as well as gave the opportunity for students to provide suggestions for the following year. The survey even recorded participants' thoughts as to gaining information about the profession and assessed how many students are still interested in the career field of education.

### **Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools**

#### **Program Description**

For our project this year, we recruited a cohort of 11 Future Teacher Academy (FTA) high school students to participate in a week-long summer program in residence at SCSU. The FTA Cohort participated in coursework in order to earn three college-level credits. The introductory education course titled, SPED203, allowed high school students to experience college-level content delivered by a college professor on the specific disability categories as well as accommodations, modifications and adaptations to improve the achievement or success of these students in the classroom. The course also utilized interactive exercises, seminar discussions, guest lecturers and application assignments to study topics of relevance. The FTA cohort also experienced life on campus by living in a residence hall and participating in a variety of activities that simulate an SCSU first-year student's campus experience. Finally, the FTA students are required, post-the SCSU campus residency week, to engage in 10 hours of work in an approved setting with children or youth.

We will offer multiple opportunities for ways in which the FTA participants can complete this portion of the requirement.

- The expected outcomes are as follows: Increase interest and curiosity in entering the field of education as a future profession.
- Increase interest in further education beyond high school.

- Expand students' knowledge about the field of special education and meeting the needs of all students.
- Build community and relationships between students and mentors in the field of special education as well as the university professors and leadership.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The program was evaluated through a survey that was completed by 100% of program participants at the close of the week on campus at SCSU. Data was collected using Likert scale questions as well as open ended questions. The following areas were evaluated: The college coursework, the schedule, dorm life, speakers and activities, as well as strengths/highlights, challenges and recommendations.

## **Burnsville Public School District**

### **Program Description**

Burnsville's GYO program format focuses on an Education Pathway. The district has two GYO student grants that support students in different ways, which will be highlighted in subsequent paragraphs. Both grants, however, support the Education Pathway and supports for successfully entering a teaching career.

The Pathway offers multiple concurrent courses, student teaching experiences, scaffolded classes that support an education career focus, and scholarships in postsecondary studies. All students are eligible for the Education Pathway courses, with intentional recruiting of students of color from other programs like AVID. We have intentionally removed barriers that often serve as exclusionary practices for marginalized and underrepresented students.

Students in the Education Pathway take two concurrent courses (six credits) offered by our partner, Metro State. We have also added a third concurrent class with Dakota County Technical College for students wanting to pursue early childhood education (Child Growth and Development). The classes align with the values and practices in our district and focus on an urban setting.

Although Burnsville is a suburban district, its population (79% students of color) and Free and Reduced-Price (FRP) (72%) reflect an urban environment. Given those statistics, only 4% of instructional staff are BIPOC so the need for creating a successful GYO program is critical.

Through counseling students who express an interest in skill areas that align with a teaching career, students begin taking classes that will ultimately lead them to the Education Pathway concurrent courses, experience student teaching at the elementary level, and enroll in an approved Education postsecondary program.

Students who enroll in a postsecondary program receive a \$6,000 scholarship. If students remain in good standing in the program, they will receive a second scholarship. A second GYO grant will support students who are in the district's AA Degree Pathway. Students take all their college courses on the Burnsville campus and will receive their AA Degree from Inver Hills Community College just before graduating from high school. Students who plan to enroll in a postsecondary institution to pursue a teaching degree will have their tuition paid up to \$15,000 per year for two years. All GYO/Education Pathway students have access to counseling services at both the high school and the respective college partner institutions. A guidance counselor is assigned to directly

support the (AA)Degree students, and a .2 Full-time equivalent (FTE) Education Pathway teacher is assigned to work with middle school and high school students for recruitment and support.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Surveys, focus groups, reflections, and research projects were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Feedback was collected throughout the year to ensure the program was meeting the needs of the students and accomplishing the outcomes of the program. Students visited University of Wisconsin Eau Claire. This was the first college campus visit for 60% of the students. This was an important activity in the program because 37% of the students' parents have no college experience, and 40% have only one parent who completed a two-year or trade program.

Students also participate in a student teaching/field experience. Students are required to write a reflection paper on this experience. Students shared, "I loved how the students' identities were respected", "Every single interaction between me and the teacher and students were all extremely positive. The teacher acknowledged me, put me to work, and got to know some aspects of who I am and who I want to be in the future", and "Next time I assist a class, I would like to learn more about the teacher's experience in college with student teaching and understand when she realized that teaching was the right career choice for her."

## **Columbia Heights Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

Grant funds are being used to enhance the education pathway program in Columbia Heights Public Schools by providing paid service-learning experiences for up to 24 high school students per year who are enrolled in or have expressed interest in Columbia Heights High School's education pathway courses. The targeted groups that would benefit from this project include students who have enrolled, or plan to enroll, in education pathway courses offered at Columbia Heights High School. These students would receive competitive pay, mentorship from a current teacher, and experience that will increase their interest in pursuing a teaching career. Younger students enrolled in summer school classes will also benefit from having additional support in their classes, as well as racially and ethnically diverse role models.

To monitor the progress of the goals and activities, multiple methods of evaluation will be used. The goal is to determine if the activities supported the students in pursuing a career in education. The Teaching and Learning department will work in collaboration with the Columbia Heights High School administration to collect and analyze data. The data will be used for continuous improvement of the service-learning program and opportunities provided to students.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The district is in the process of collecting surveys from the students who were part of the program as well as the teacher mentors. The program was finishing at the end of July. Survey data will be sent in one received.

## **Freshwater Education District (FED)**

### **Program Description**

Our GYO Student Pathway program has been difficult to get going. This is largely due to turnover in the grant coordinator position, and a combination of misunderstandings related to what activities were part of the student pathway GYO grant and the various roles and responsibilities not being clearly defined. We did meet with MDE this spring to discuss where this left us in regard to need to start spending down our dollars. We followed this up with several planning meetings as a team including the current coordinator, FED's executive director, and representatives from Sourcewell. Things that we discussed would continue to benefit all students, but with the American Indian and Hispanic student populations of our districts in the center of planning.

District level partners that we need to continue to rely on are the Indian Education Directors in the districts. These individuals are already part of our GYO advisory council and have valuable knowledge and input of how to connect with target student populations. We've also identified the school counselors in the districts as a team that we can connect with to better understand district needs and put processes in place.

Tasks and activities that we discussed as needing to give attention to next fall include processes for awarding scholarships and identifying students who might be interested in future educator groups/clubs and organizations. At one of our member schools, the Indian Education Director shared about the TA program they have in place and how we might be able to start working with those students. Having had these conversations, we feel strongly that we will be able to "right the ship" and start utilizing the GYO dollars for what they were intended to do.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Not yet completed. As noted, we are working on identifying how to build interest and reach students for participation in the GYO Student Pathway activities.

## **High School for Recording Arts (HSRA)**

### **Program Description**

We had three students that graduated from 2022 in which one continued, the other two decided it was not for them. We then added three students that graduated from 2023. The one student from 2022 dropped last year as she said it was just too much for her as she had tried to move off campus and it did not work for her. Of the three remaining students, one dropped in semester two as he was home sick and was not doing well in his classes. One decided to not return this year as he felt he was not ready to continue. One is still in the program and started her second year. The students have support from two staff at HSRA that check in regularly via text message and phone calls as well as take visits to the college two times a year. There are also staff at SCSU where they are attending assigned to check in with the students. The students that were chosen were students of color that expressed wanting to become teachers.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The data was based on how well the students did, those that dropped during the year were not doing very well and failing most of their classes, one being home sick and not always attending and the other trying to live off campus prioritized work for school and ended up failing many classes. The student remaining did well and returned to college. The third student that dropped from the program, decided he was not ready to continue and not sure if he wanted to become a teacher. The students did complain that they did not get checked in on as often from the staff at SCSU.

## **Intermediate District 287**

### **Program Description**

Our current program consists of a student internship and a World of Education course for students. The internship program allows students to shadow a teacher and participate in some instructional activities with students. This internship program is open to Alternative Learning Center (ALC) and Fed IV high school students interested in education or working with youth. The World of Education course is an online course through Northern Star Online school. We've partnered with staff in the District in our SpEd programs and Northern Star Online.

Our expected outcome for the internship is to increase student interest in education as a career pathway and increase participation in the Future Educators Club. Students that participate in the internship or the Future Educators Club will be eligible for a college scholarship. We also used the funding to provide transportation for students to get to and from the internship and provided stipends for staff mentors. We also paid students for their work during the internship. After the success of this program, we hope that students will want to continue to their internship through the SY.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We interviewed students and mentors about their Extended School Year (ESY) experience. Based on the data collected in interviews last year, we made several changes to the program this year. The single student in the internship program last year enjoyed the program but wished the mentor teacher provided more opportunities to interact with students and lead in the classroom.

The single mentor teacher suggested having more of an orientation so that the interns knew how to create professional distance between themselves and the students. The mentor teacher said she would do it again, if there was more training for the students. To address their suggestions, we included students in a two-day orientation and had a matching session with mentor teachers. Additionally, mentor teachers gathered for a meeting to discuss expectations for the students and provided students with sample activities to help them prepare.

## **Madelia Public School District**

### **Program Description**

Students of color who are pursuing a degree in teaching and going to Minnesota State University, Mankato or Southwest Minnesota State University, Marshall may apply for tuition, books, and on-campus housing assistance through the GYO Student Pathway program. The district coordinators provide assistance with registration, course selection, on-campus resources, academic advising, monthly texts, calls, online, or in-person meetings as needed. Students who participate in the Introduction to Teaching course in high school are made aware of the scholarship. Throughout their junior and senior year of high school, the counselors and coordinators provide opportunities for additional information regarding the GYO program. Students at Madelia also participated in an Elevate Teaching session to learn more about why students decide to become teachers or do not want to go into the field of teaching. The majority of the students in the program are first generation college students. The additional support of the GYO program coordinators and the college advisors are both essential to ensuring the candidates have the resources they need to be successful.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Each GYO candidate completed a survey regarding their progress, needs, and ways to improve the program annually. The results from the survey and individual conversations showed that the GYO candidates are maximizing the grant dollars by going to college year-round in order to complete their degrees in the shortest amount of time as possible. All five student GYO pathway candidates completed the survey.

## **Minneapolis Public School (MPS) District**

### **Program Description**

Our GYO program encompasses four programs for non-licensed staff to earn their teacher licensure: There are three adult programs (MPS Academy, Minneapolis and St. Thomas Residency, Minneapolis Public Schools Apprenticeship) and multiple pathways within some programs. We also have one Minneapolis Public School student program, our Future Educator Program. MPS Academy is our own PELSB approved teacher licensure program that is eligible for any current staff member that holds a bachelor's degree but is interested in earning a teaching license. We specifically are recruiting BIPOC for this program. This is our own MPS PELSB-approved program that is coordinated solely by MPS staff and faculty. We currently have 20 participants and all 20 are on pace to complete their teacher licensure by the end of the 2025 summer. Tuition and books are supported for the candidates. Additionally, funds are used to support the compensation of the teacher faculty for the program. Minneapolis and St. Thomas teacher residency is the partnership between St. Thomas university and our district to provide a master's program and teacher licensure program in either Special Education Academic Behavioral Strategist (ABS) or Elementary Education to 25 teacher residents from MPS. These are folks that have bachelor's degrees and are interested in earning their teacher licensure and the accompanying master's degree.

We recruit and have retained 70% residents that identify as BIPOC. Supports such as tuition, books, fees and various other supports are provided to the participants. We are in the eighth year/cohort for this program, and we expect to have this year's cohort graduate in the Spring of 2025.

Our newly established Minneapolis Public Schools Teacher Apprenticeship program is our district's partnership with Mankato State university (Special Education ABS) and Metro State University (Elementary Education with Pre-K certificate) to provide a job embedded teacher licensure program where participants are earning their

bachelor's degrees as well as their teaching license. We, again, are recruiting candidates that identify as BIPOC and over 60% of our inaugural cohort identifies as BIPOC. Supports include tuition, books, fees as well as several other needs.

Finally, our Future Educator program at Camden High School and South High School is an elective course sequence program that has identified and recruited students that are interested in becoming teachers following graduation from high school and eventually college/university. We have over 150 students engaged in this program across the two sites. Support includes college and career readiness coaching, internship opportunities and affirmation/celebration support and events throughout the year.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

While two of the programs are just launching, we have had significant outreach and data collection with our residency and our future educator programs. Note that most of this data is anecdotal in nature and more from a lens of feedback for the participants of how we can better support their experience. We use that data to determine next steps or revised supports. Mostly the data that was collected was positive feedback data but upon the data shared leaning towards constructive feedback, we use that data as a team to determine next steps. Data collection and responses to data collected is an area of growth for our team that we plan on addressing during the SY 2024–25.

## **Monticello School District**

### **Program Description**

Monticello's GYO Initiative serves as a pathway for students who have expressed an interest in Human Services specifically pursuing a career in education and training with an emphasis on students of color, EL, and Indigenous students. This initiative focuses on experiential learning, wrap-around support, building academic community, service and comprehensive understanding of the subject matter while paving a path into Education.

The Monticello Grow Your Own program includes the following base components:

- opportunity to act as a Peer Tutor
- option of enrolling in any one of the three rigorous courses in Education and Training along with field experience focusing on Education as a career
- experiential service-learning group called Youth Service
- scholarship opportunity.

Starting in SY 2024–25 students can enroll in a class that focuses on Early Education will be paid to work there while being a conduit of creative, maker space and recreational play with students pre-K through grade 5. Peer Tutoring is a research-based student partnership focused on academic achievement. This collaborative instructional strategy is an academic support offered to all students at Monticello High School (Pre-K through grade 12). Peer Tutors participate in Teach Tutors training prior to starting as a peer tutor.

The goal of Peer Tutoring benefits both the student requesting the support and the student who is giving the academic support.

- Students receiving academic support build the confidence and skills needed to grasp concepts.
- Students receiving the support develop academic self-talk and build a baseline for knowing what to ask while in class.
- Students providing academic support develop and practice effective communication skills.
- Students providing academic support enhance their critical thinking skills.
- Students who take an Education rigorous course and choose to be a Peer Tutor are eligible to apply for a paid peer tutoring position.

Wrap-Around Support for students who aspire to enter the field of education which is driven by Personal Learning Plan that focuses on the whole student. All students in Foundations of Education have a Personal Learning Plan that monitors four areas: academic, career, social/emotional, and post-secondary. The goal of Wrap-Around Support is to give comprehensive and equitable support to increase student achievement. Wrap-Around support also included individual or small group session on how to complete job and college applications. Including brainstorming sessions on what kind of questions to ask college advisors/recruiters.

Youth Service provides students with the opportunity to grow their skills through meaningful and gratifying hands-on experiences by serving our school district community (Pre-K through grade 8). Youth Service students participate in Educator Rising classroom lessons during instruction time at the high school. Students are assigned (based on their interests) to a placement school within our district and have a certified staff member as their teacher mentor. Youth Service students support younger students, classrooms, and teachers in a variety of academic, recreation, and educational driven tasks. Students build leadership skills that can be used in all areas of life. Students who meet the expectations of the base components are celebrated with pins, certificates of completion and a visit from our District Superintendent.

In addition to the base components, Monticello's GYO program's outreach included education pathway students presenting to the Monticello Chamber of Commerce about the details of Education Pathway and the leadership skills (soft skills) obtained through their hands-on experiences. We are also marketing a career in education through education career pathway video, flyers (multi-lingual), bulletins, presenting to students in grades 6-12 about careers, college campus tours (multi-lingual), parent Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) and college application night for EL families, and Career Fair with teachers of color and Elevate Teaching present. We use data from Minnesota Career Information System (MNCIS) to focus recruiting efforts on those students who have expressed an interest in education and training. All the students who expressed an interest was offered the opportunity to attend Be a Teacher, Change the World Conference at Anoka Ramsey Community College (ARCC). Michael Turner, 2023 teacher of the year, was the keynote speaker. During the SY 2023–24, our Foundations of Education, Youth Service and Education Field Experience had the opportunity to film for the Teaching Channel.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Students participating in Education Pathway opportunities are given a short answer google survey at the end of each semester (twice a SY). Teacher mentors who host education pathway student in the service-learning

environment are given a rating scale and short answer google survey to collect data; this is collected four times a SY. Parents/guardians are emailed at the end of each semester to share feedback specific to their student from their teacher mentor. Parents are also provided descriptions and open-ended questions pertaining to the part of the program their student participates.

## **Osseo Area Schools**

### **Program Description**

Osseo Area Schools was awarded the GYO Secondary Students FY24 to support the expansion of Osseo Area Schools Grow Your Own Pathways Program. GYO Osseo (GYOO) Pathways Program offers various pathways for non-licensed staff and students to becoming teachers with the district. GYOO Secondary Students Program is to create awareness and access to teaching careers. Students can receive concurrent enrollment credits and paid internships working in Osseo Area Schools.

The GYOO for the Secondary Students Pathway can also lead students to enrolling into our GYOO Adults program. The GYOO Students Pathway is one of our district's strategies to recruit and retain our BIPOC students in the educational career field.

The grant provides funds to pay summer (and possible year-round) internships over the five-year span. The paid internships will help reduce/eliminate the financial challenges that most of our students of color face, while also getting hands-on experience in the educational field. The GYOO program offers financial support, work-readiness skill development, internship opportunities, and mentorship. The program provides a dedicated Lead Mentor who is committed to the program's vision and purpose, culturally competent, and focused on enhancing students' well-being and PD throughout the year and during summer services. In this first year, the GYOO Student Pathway Program expanded at Osseo's Park Center Senior High School, a racially diverse school with 89.95% students of color. The program involved collaboration with HR, the school principal, classroom teachers, learning and achievement, department of educational equity teams for planning and implementation. A challenge faced was that students' class selections were determined the previous year, and current 12th graders would be exiting the school district.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Data collection for the GYOO program came from the class roster and student discussions. This coming year, we aim to establish effective data collection methods, utilize feedback forms, and continue partnerships with Learning and Achievement, classroom teachers, principals, and internship supervisors.

## **Owatonna Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

The Minnesota Educators Partnership (MEP) "Teachers of Tomorrow" initiative involves the collaboration of six school districts in southeastern Minnesota. The MEP's mission focuses on the "recruitment, preparation, and sustainability of equity-minded educators who reflect and support all Minnesota students." Working

collaboratively, the MEP Teachers of Tomorrow pilot aims to support 100 students of color in the region who are interested in teaching to successfully graduate from high school and matriculate to college. Each Scholar meets every other week with a program Navigator, who provides academic advising, financial aid assistance, connections with tutors, and linkages with other resources and wrap-around supports. Scholars also have access to:

- Tutoring
- PSEO/concurrent enrollment courses (not paid through grant)
- Family engagement
- Jobs and internships working with children
- College visits
- Assistance with identifying and applying to colleges
- Support with completing the FAFSA and other financial aid documents
- Launch Scholarships to help with their initial expenses in starting their PELSB-approved teacher education program.

The lead partners in the project are the six participating MEP school districts – Mankato, Owatonna, Faribault, Waseca, LeSueur-Henderson, and Tri-City United. The eligible participants are 10 through 12 grade students in each of these districts. In addition, MEP is convened by Minnesota State University in Mankato and has enjoyed a very strong relationship with this lead partner.

As a result of this work, partners expect to see the following primary measurable outcomes:

- At least 100 students of color will be Scholars through the MEP Teachers of Tomorrow initiative.
- 100% of Scholars will remain in high school and progress towards graduation.
- 100% of Scholars will ultimately earn their high school diploma.
- 100% of Scholars will apply for postsecondary education while in the program.
- 100% of Scholars will be admitted into a postsecondary program.
- At least 85% of Scholars will enroll in a postsecondary program within the first year after high school graduation.
- At least 75 Scholars will ultimately enroll in a teacher preparation program (partners hope this is 100% of participants, but also recognize that through participation in the program, some young people may decide that a teaching path is not what they want to pursue. Recognizing this earlier – before going through extensive schooling and expending significant costs – is valuable for Scholars and allows them to pivot to careers that are of greater interest).

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

In this initial launch year, the evaluation for MEP Teachers of Tomorrow consisted of three primary activities:

- **Student Feedback:** At the end of the advising sessions, students were asked by the Navigators to share additional needs they had, feedback they had on the Teachers of Tomorrow program in general, and any recommended changes they would like to see moving forward. All 15 students participated in these

ongoing navigation sessions. Because many are so new to the program, details of responses were limited, but are included in Questions 15–17 below.

- **MEP Teaching Fellows Council:** One of the major systems shifts that took place this year was the creation of the MEP Teaching Fellows Advisory Council. Comprised of a majority of people of color, the Council contains school administrators, community partners, parents, and students from across the participating MEP school districts. Meeting approximately monthly, this group serves as the key leadership body for this project – creating the application process, developing the marketing plan, selecting the Teachers of Tomorrow, reviewing data/evaluations, and making recommendations for future improvements. During the year-end debriefing session, Council members suggested a number of continuous improvement efforts to further enhance the program, which are also incorporated into Questions 15–17 below.
- **Navigator Reflections:** The MEP Teachers of Tomorrow model places part-time Navigators in each of the participating school districts. These are the individuals who complete the biweekly advising sessions with the students, as well as lead recruitment/marketing in their district and serve as their community's point-of-contact for the program. As a result, they have a front row seat to the MEP Teachers of Tomorrow initiative, what is going well, and areas for improvement. As a result, their feedback is also included in Questions 15–17 below. The project will implement a more extensive year-end evaluation during the SY 2024–25 (once the program has had the opportunity to really get its roots in the ground, have staff in place in each partner district, and see a full-year cycle through)."

## **Robbinsdale Area Schools**

### **Program Description**

For the SY 2024–25, we will be intentionally reaching out to our student of color about a career in the educational field. We will be working with several departments within our school district to ensure connections are being made. These include R Pathways, Counseling, Achievement and Integration, and Indian Education. We will also be collaborating with SCSU and Southwest State University.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

TBD

## **Rochester Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

The GYO Student pathway program is a scholarship program used to help increase the number of students of color and Indigenous students pursuing careers in education after graduation. Students of color and Indigenous students who are interested in becoming teachers are eligible to apply for this scholarship opportunity. Interested students submit an online application, and then are interviewed in person. At this time, we keep the interview panel small, only consisting of two people who work closely with the scholarship program. Students are asked questions pertaining to their professional goals and aspirations as well as tentative plans on how they plan to succeed. Three of the students who applied and interviewed this year were selected to receive the

scholarship. All three of these recipients are students of color and have been accepted into PELSB approved Minnesota universities. Two of our students plan on attending Winona State University, one of our partner institutions. The other student plans on attending Mankato State University, our other partner institution. All three of these students will receive support enrolling in courses, orientation, and other guidance/support they may require.

During our outreach, we have also identified a few students who will be eligible to apply for the scholarship in the upcoming SY 2024–25. We will continue to engage with these students in hopes of building and maintaining positive repour as well as encourage them along on their path to becoming licensed educators. Our plan for this coming school year is to continue our ramp up activities including the creation of a Future Teachers Club. We are also planning some college visits in the fall for students who are enrolled in our Intro to Teaching Course. We will also continue our marketing efforts to hopefully increase the number of students who are interested in entering the field of education.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

We have not sent any surveys at this time as candidates were just identified. Tuition amounts will be billed in the fall.

Next SY, we plan on surveying students who are enrolled in our Intro to Teaching Course. We also hope to have our Future Teacher Club up and running this coming school year. These will be the students we survey in the near future.

## **Roseville Area Schools**

### **Program Description**

Our GYO Student Pathway program is designed to grow, enhance, and expand upon our Education pathway. We currently only offer one section of Introduction to Urban Education (concurrent enrollment in partnership with Minneapolis College), and we are hoping to grow this pathway to offer multiple sections of Intro to Urban Education as well as additional concurrent enrollment education courses (Technology for Educators, Multicultural Education). Currently, students in grades 10–12 can take the Introduction to Urban Education course. One of the things this grant will help support is creating a Future Educators Club. I am working with Educators Rising on getting a chapter started, which is going to be a wonderful opportunity for students in grades 9-12 to explore the education career field. Another thing that the grant will support is offering scholarships - renewable for four years - for students of color pursuing a degree in education. This is an exciting opportunity, as we are hoping to award renewable scholarships for 25 students over the course of the five-year grant cycle. We will be using this grant funding to help recruit for our Education Pathway courses and related opportunities, for supporting a Future Educators Club, for supporting experiential learning experiences for our Intro to Urban Education courses and providing wrap-around services for our Intro to Urban Education students.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The first year of the GYO program has been challenging for a number of circumstances. Our Intro to Urban Education teacher and I have been working together to create plans for more intentional recruitment and experiential learning opportunities for our Intro to Urban Education students for the upcoming school year and beyond. We are also working with Educators Rising to create a chapter, which will allow us to create a Future Educators club and give us access to a larger, national community of educators invested in GYO programming and promoting the career field of education in high schools. At this point, we have not completed any official program evaluations but will be doing so going forward, when we have more concrete actions related to our GYO program.

## **Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)**

### **Program Description**

The goal of SPPS's Education Pathway is to provide opportunities for students, specifically students who identify as students of color to explore the field of education. During the SY 2023–24 there were a variety of opportunities throughout the district for students to explore the field of education.

High School students from across the district have access to Education Pathway courses. The foundational course that is open to students in grades 9–12 is called Exploring Education and Social Justice. This course was offered at three SPPS High Schools. Students also had the option to take concurrent enrollment courses offered both at home high schools and at SPPS's District Wide Career Pathway Program. The two partner post-secondary schools include Minneapolis College and the University of Minnesota. The Minneapolis College Courses that were offered are Introduction to Urban Education and Reflective Practice, Introduction to Special Education and Multicultural Approaches to Education. The University of Minnesota classes that were offered are College in Schools (CIS) Exploring the Teaching Profession 1 and CIS Exploring the Teaching Profession 2.

Students also had the opportunity to participate in paid internship experiences. During the internship experience high school students were partnered with an elementary or middle school teacher and their students. Through this opportunity, students got a glimpse of what it is like to be a teacher.

SPPS students also participated in a variety of enrichment activities with the focus of exploring careers in education. These included Minneapolis College Future Educator Day, University of Minnesota Field Day, classroom observations/volunteer opportunities, Black Men Teach Summit, volunteering at Junior Achievement, Middle School Flipside Dreamseekers (career exploration), and school leadership experiences.

Through the GYO Grant, we were able to award the SPPS Future Educator Scholarship. This \$5,000 scholarship was awarded to a student of color who is studying education at a board approved post-secondary school.

In order to develop and grow these opportunities for students we partnered with a variety of contributors that support the goal of providing opportunities for students to explore careers in education. Our two post-secondary partners are Minneapolis College and the University of Minnesota. We partnered with these two education programs because the curriculum for the concurrent enrollment courses are rooted in antiracism and culturally relevant pedagogy. Through this partnership students also had the opportunity to go on college visits to Minneapolis College and the University of Minnesota. We have also partnered with nonprofit organizations

that are supporting the work we are doing. These include the organizations Black Men Teach, Junior Achievement, the City of St. Paul Right Track and Greater Twin Cities United Way.

An Advisory Board met throughout the year to advise, assist, support and advocate for the SPPS Education Pathway on matters that will strengthen instruction and expand learning opportunities for SPPS students. Members on the Advisory board include the Executive Director of Freedom Schools, College of Education faculty, the SPPS Lead Elementary Counselor, SPPS HR Recruitment and Retention, Community Education Project Coordinator, Breakthrough Twin Cities Program Director and Saint Paul Federation of Educators President. This group was instrumental in helping guide and develop programming for this last school year and into the future.

In the initial narrative, an outcome was to increase participation in the Education Pathway classes by 40% by the end of the SY 2023–24. The baseline 2021–22 participation was 60 students. During the SY 2023–24, 182 students participated in Education Pathway classes, this is a 203% increase. There were a variety of student supports provided in order to make this outcome a reality. These supports include built-in classroom support for students who are taking concurrent enrollment courses, hands-on learning experiences either through a paid internship or volunteering with transportation support, and support with guiding students to post-secondary opportunities including navigating funding sources.

The Education Pathway program for the SY 2023–24 was a SY of great growth for the program. Students had a variety of opportunities to explore the teaching profession, strong partnerships were established to provide students with quality opportunities, and initial outcomes were met with being intentional about student support.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

Student data was collected through the SPPS Infinite Campus system, exit surveys from education pathway classes, and qualitative focus groups. Data was collected during each semester. The types of data collected includes, the number of students enrolled in education pathway classes, the number of students earning college credits, and the projected amount of money students saved by earning college credits in high school. The exit survey questions included information regarding why students took the course, what was valuable about the course, if the class helped them become a better writer, reader and speaker, if the students are interested in becoming an educator and what the class did to influence this.

## **Shakopee Public Schools**

### **Program Description**

The goal of Shakopee Public Schools Student GYO Grant is to support local activities that will increase and diversify the teacher workforce in Minnesota by encouraging students, especially students of color and American Indian students, to pursue teaching. Understanding that participants will be at different points in determining their career choice - we have created a variety of experiences in education to solidify their desire to become an educator: a future teacher club will allow for any high school student to explore the teaching profession, field trips and field experiences for students taking education courses, opportunity to serve as tutors

and teacher aids, and field trips to Minnesota colleges and university education programs. Wrap-around supports and service will be provided as well. The intent of the systems for support is to navigate and remove barriers that may interfere with a student's ability to engage in events and experiences within and outside of the school day.

These services address the educational, physical and social and emotional needs of participants:

- Educational Needs: Application and fees if applicable to apply for a teacher educator program at a Minnesota College or University Scholarships to Minnesota Colleges and Universities College visits
- Physical Needs: Food for educational events and experiences Transportation to field experiences
- Social and Emotional Needs: Speakers Mental Health Support Organizational Support Cohort support for those entering into a Minnesota College or University Education Program.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The grant coordinator/pathway teacher/future teacher club advisor created two google surveys at the end of the year - one for the Future Teacher Club participants (Nine students who participated regularly from September to May) and another for students who completed the Education Pathway (74 students—fall and spring term). This survey helped us identify the strengths and challenges of the program and provided an opportunity for students to recommend adjustments or changes for next year. After the field trip and the leadership conference, the advisor spoke with students to gather insight into how it went and if we'd like to continue participating in these events in the future.

## **St. Cloud Area Schools**

### **Program Description**

The original grant was written to have two cohorts with a maximum of 25 FTA high school students each to participate in a week-long summer program in residence at SCCU (June - 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026.) The grant was amended to one cohort with more than 25 students due to lack of capacity to staff this program for two weeks. This year we increased the number of students that we would accept into the program to 40 students for one cohort. We invited 35 qualified students that applied to participate in the program. In the end 27 students participated in the program. This is the largest number of students that we had since the program started.

Each FTA cohort participates in coursework to earn three college-level credits (ED196 or ED100). The coursework includes Intro to Education coursework (based on the "Teacher Cadet" training). Each FTA Cadet experiences life on campus by living in a residence hall. Students also participate in a variety of activities that simulate a SCSU first-year student's campus experience. Participants go to a childcare facility or school every day for an hour during the weeklong program i.e. Boys and Girls club. During that hour they will read aloud to students and observe specific types of play after they receive training. Finally, the FTA cadets are required, post-the SCSU campus residency week, to engage in 10 hours of work in an approved setting with children or youth. We offer multiple opportunities for ways in which the FTA participants can complete this portion of their requirement.

In the original grant the cohort participants received a \$125 stipend for their successful completion of the FTA activities. This year participants can earn a \$300 stipend when they complete all their requirements. This was increased to keep up with the economy and attract more participants for the one cohort. During the SY, recruitment of the FTA Cohort occurs (Dec. and Jan.) prior to the summer program. Last year we only visited senior advisories to talk about the program. This year we visited both junior and senior advisories to introduce the program and answer questions. Once the participants are chosen, we held a few sessions to begin team building and support positive group dynamics. During these sessions we also begin the Intro to Education coursework. There will be follow-up in the through-out the year with participants and High school seniors to provide wrap-around support.

### **Program Evaluation and Lessons Learned**

The program was evaluated by providing participants with a Google survey the last day of the program. The following questions were asked:

- What is your grade level?
- What race do you identify with?
- Before the program started how much were you interested in teaching?
- How much are you interested in teacher now?
- What were the strengths of the FTA? (Multiple choice question)
- What was positive about this program?
- What do you think are the challenges of this program?
- What additional information would you like to share as a recipient of the Grow your own grant?

We learned that students really enjoyed the program, especially the social aspect and having the opportunity to explore teaching. In fact, 72% of the students that completed the survey indicated that exploring teaching was a strength of the program. This survey response was great feedback because it showed that main goal of the program, to explore teaching, was the biggest strength of our program.

This year since we had a much larger group, we broke into three smaller groups to do learning reviews and community building activities. We learned that many enjoyed the small groups however the students didn't get to connect as a whole group that often. It was an advantage having the college counselors who previously participated in the program so they could connect with and support students and share their relevant experience. As coordinators we discussed that may need to do more supervision training prior to the week especially for counselors that are new to their role. We also learned that students really wanted a school experience instead of a childcare experience. This was the first year we did clinical hours at the district's summer school program. We will continue this and expand the number of students that participate in a school experience next year since this was successful. We plan to explore why we lost eight students that were accepted in the program but decided not to participate. We accepted some students with low GPA 2.0–2.5 however there were some students with a below 2.0 that applied, and it might be worth looking into whether or not it is feasible to consider accepting those students.

Regarding the student's interest in teaching, we had the following results on a rating scale of 1–5 for the following questions:

- Before the program started how much were you interested in the career of teaching?
  - 50% Not very interested
  - 31% Somewhat interested
  - 18.2% Very interested
- How much are you interested in the career of teaching now? (At the end of the program)
  - 4.5% Not interested
  - 18.2% Somewhat interested
  - 77.3% Very interested

This is a huge increase in the career of teaching. We increased the number of students interested in teaching from 4 students to 17 students by the time the program ended which was a significant increase.