

MINNESOTA  
**2012**

Minnesota Minority Education Partnership – MMEP  
**STATE OF STUDENTS OF COLOR AND  
AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS REPORT**



# **The State of Students of Color and American Indian Students Report Outline**

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## **A. Executive Director's Message**

Welcome to the 2012 Report by the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership (MMEP) of the "State of Students of Color and American Indian Students in Minnesota."

Since 2001, MMEP has issued these reports about every two years. We first did so before the term "achievement gap" was coined and in the year U.S. President Bush and Senator Ted Kennedy passed the landmark "No Child Left Behind" federal law that put the issue of racial disparities in K-12 education outcomes on a new level of public policy.

At that point MMEP was a little over ten years old and we were frustrated with the seemingly disconnected manner in which public policy approached the persistent failure of our schools and colleges to produce the same level of quality academic outcomes with students of color as with white students. At that time these outcomes were not framed as the result of a systems-wide issue so much as problems unique to a particular grade level, i.e. a problem of high school drop outs or third grade literacy or failure to teach math at 7<sup>th</sup> grade. There was little attempt to "connect the dots" of what we now know are inter-connected manifestations of a systemic failure that begins prior to formal schooling and repeats itself year after year through a student of color's journey along the pathway of education.

This failure to see systemic forces produced efforts to "fix" students at those points in time where we assessed their weakness. We rarely spoke then about fixing the system within which they were failing.

When MMEP first put together in one place the Kindergarten through college student academic outcomes data, the truth of what our society was struggling with jumped out at us clearly: students of color were not the problem – no more than white students are the problem – year after year, the academic performance assessments of student of color were consistently predictable, and negatively so. Since we worked in these communities and knew these students and their aspirations, this heavily suggested to us that Minnesota was attempting to educate a different type of student than the one our schools were designed to educate. We now know that racially predictive results were foreseeable – however back then we had only a limited understanding of how academic success across racial/cultural diversity is impacted by a school's structure and management. To change the outcomes, we needed to change how we delivered education.

Thus, our Report demonstrated the power of telling a whole story – not just a high school graduation or early childhood education access story.

With very limited resources, we kept capturing the data and telling this story throughout the decade. It is a testament to Minnesota's earnestness that it listened and began to move policy and practice in response. Many others are now telling the story. New data analysis tools that drive instruction and management have been developed and used by schools and colleges to better shed light on how students do as they move along the education pathway and even how they do from day-to-day.

We are proud to continue our truth-telling with this Report. We find both much to be disappointed in and to be hopeful about in the data collected here and in the ways Minnesota's educators are responding. We hope you can use the information gathered here to support your efforts to create a new Minnesota, one where access to a rigorous high quality educational program is a promise we make to every single young person in our state, one where we are wise enough to meet the needs of each student as opposed to using a "one size fits all" approach, and one that challenges the systemic structure of our schools and colleges to redesign in a way that maximizes the racial/cultural diversity and potential of our student bodies.

Pa'lante! Forward!

Carlos Mariani Rosa, August 2012.

## **B. Social Context**

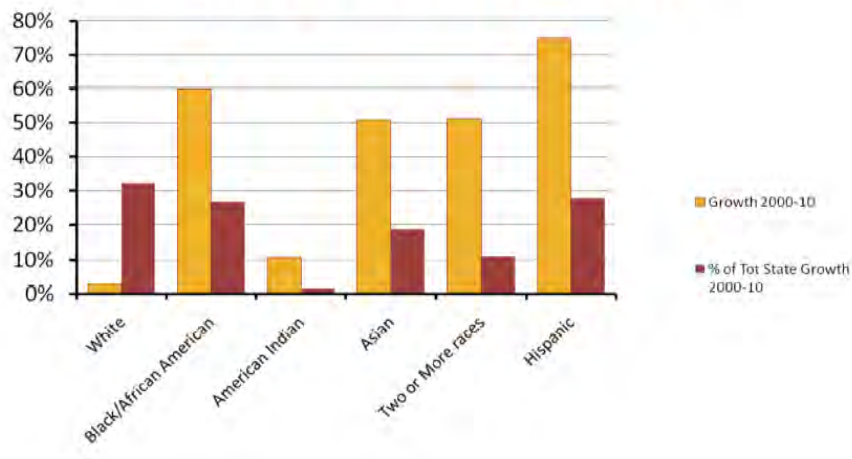
### **Trends in an Increasingly Diverse Population**

Education is both the most important commodity and personal goal for individual and communal advancement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is the key underpinning to Minnesota's long-term economic competitive advantage and to its ability as a community to help shape the quality of life on our planet. Countless variables, needs, and interests impact educational opportunities and progress for Minnesota's students. This element of our report gives an overview of key data in Minnesota's educational system, highlighting issues of educational equity and excellence.

## 1. Racial/Ethnic Diversity: A Changing Student Population

Minnesota has seen tremendous demographic changes since the first State of Students of Color and American Indian Report a decade ago. For example, according to the State Demographer, the Hispanic/Latino population has grown by more than 70% during the past decade and the Black/African-American population has grown by 60%. The White population still accounts for the majority of the state's population, but its 5% growth rate was much slower than communities of color.

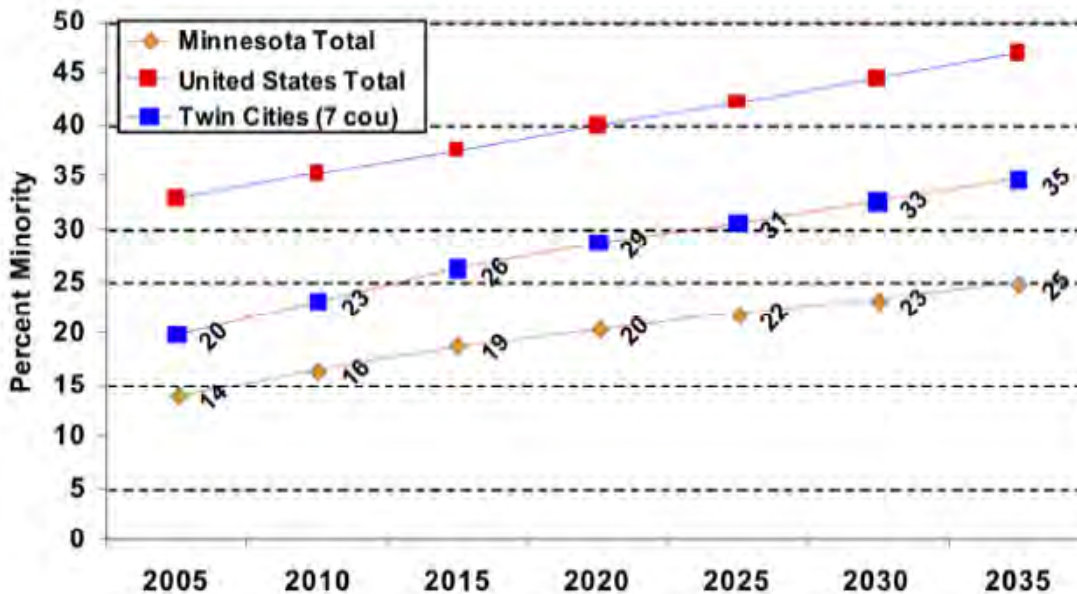
### Minnesota—Growth & Percent of State Growth 2000-10



Source: State Demographer / Census Bureau

Data projections indicate that Minnesota will continue its trend of population diversification and is expected to see about 25% of the state's population being people of color and American Indian by 2035. Although it is expected that Minnesota will remain less diverse than the nation as a whole, Ramsey County will reflect the diversity of the rest of the United States, with a minority population of close to 50% by 2035.

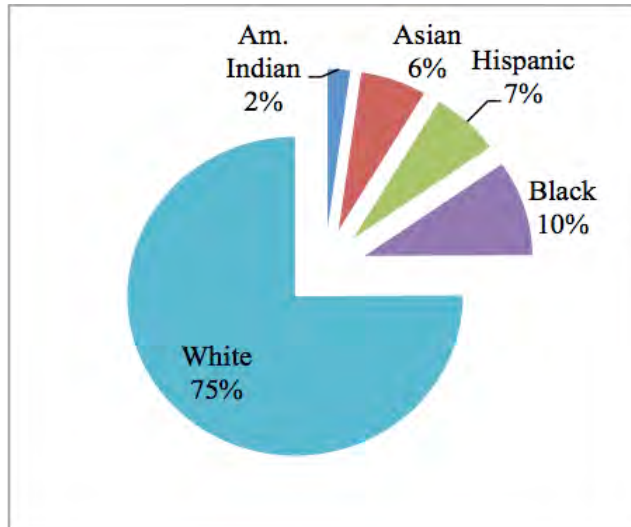
## Minnesota Will Grow More Diverse; Remain Less Diverse Than The Nation



State Demographer & Census Bureau projections

### Changing Demographics in Minnesota's Students

K-12 enrollment indicates a rich diverse student population with significant representation from Students of Color and American Indians. The degree of racial and ethnic diversity evident in the K-12 student population is greater than the overall diversity found in the state's population. Currently 25% of Minnesota's K-12 students are Students of Color and American Indian students compared to 16% of the state population.

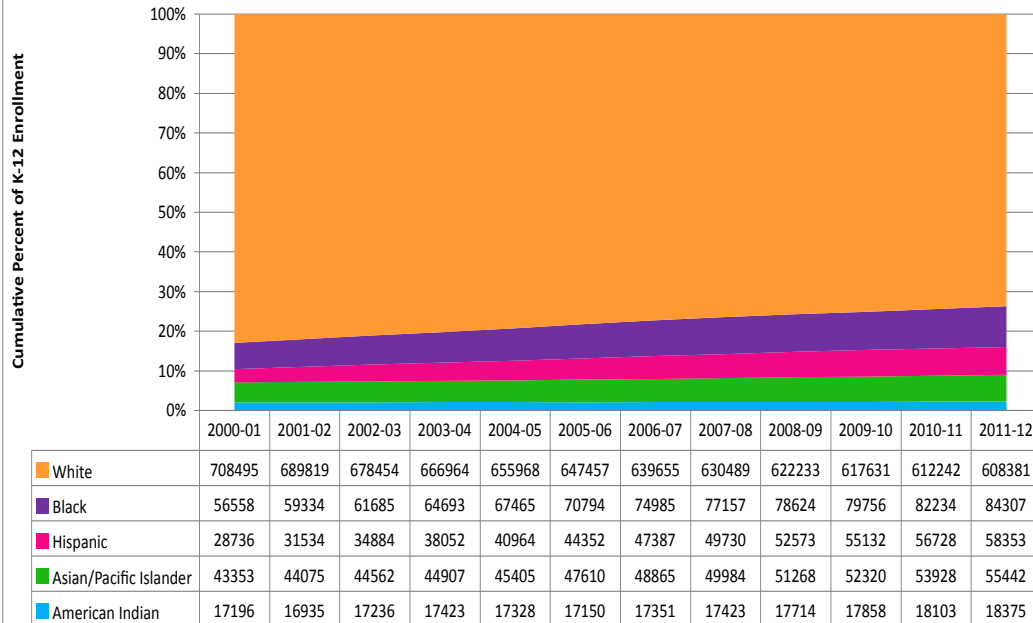


Source: Minnesota Department of Ed 2010

Further, while Minnesota's K-12 total student enrollment has declined slightly during the decade, the number of Students of Color and American Indian students has grown by 43%, offsetting much of the decline in White student enrollment.



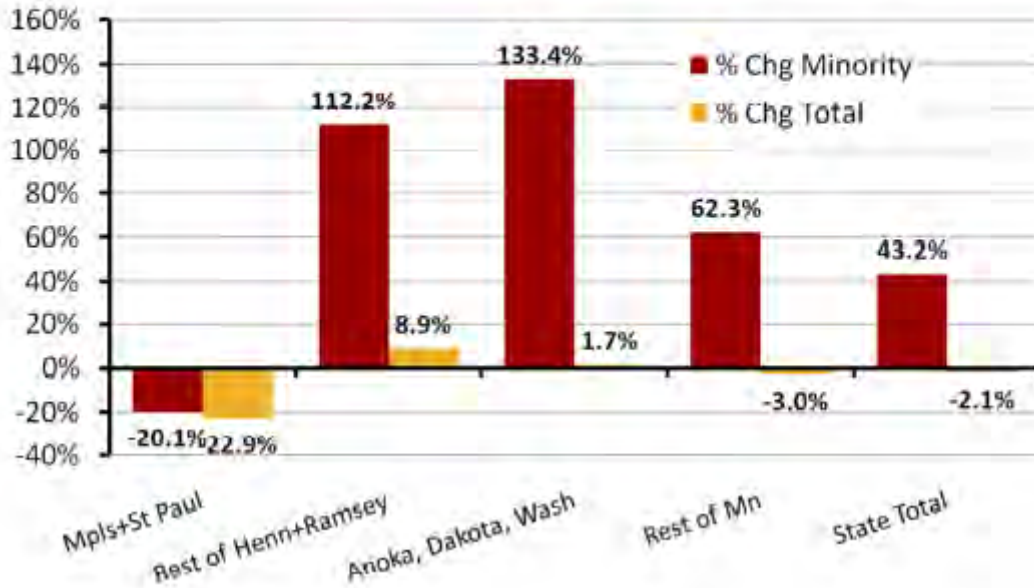
### 2000 to 2011 Change in K - 12 Enrollment by Ethnicity for October 1



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

The major urban school districts of Minneapolis and St. Paul have experienced a decrease in enrollment of White students by 23% (a loss of 13,199 students) while Students of Color and American Indian students have dropped comparably by 20% (a loss of 21,538 students). During this same time, the rest of Hennepin and Ramsey counties had a dramatic 112% increase in Students of Color and American Indian students (a gain of 32,925 students). The Minnesota State Demographer has also identified a tremendous influx of Students of Color and American Indian students in several other surrounding counties; Anoka, Dakota, and Washington counties have seen a 133% increase in their Student of Color and American Indian student population (a gain of 21,715 students).

## Change In K-12 Enrollments 2000-01 to 2009-10



Source: State Demographer

## 2. Important Social/Economic Student Variables

### Minnesota Other Measured Variables

	Total Number K-12	English Language Learners		Students with Disabilities		Free/Reduced-Price Meals	
		Number	% Of Total	Number	% Of Total	Number	% Of Total
All Students	822,697	62,810	7.6%	108,286	13.2%	293,062	35.6%
American Indian	17,858	206	1.2%	4,027	22.6%	12,791	71.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	52,320	21,579	41.2%	4,414	8.4%	28,708	54.9%
Hispanic/Latino	55,132	25,250	45.8%	7,939	14.4%	41,976	76.1%
Black	79,756	12,491	15.7%	14,557	18.3%	62,996	79.0%
White	617,631	3,284	0.5%	77,349	12.5%	146,591	23.7%

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

When considering the data surrounding special education, free or reduced lunch, and English language services we learn that Minnesota's Students of Color and American Indian students disproportionately come from poor families, often are in need of English language support, and find themselves placed in special education programs.

### **Special Education Services**

According to MDE, "students in special education both have a disability and are in need of specialized instruction" (MDE, 2012). As we consider the educational experiences of Students of Color and American Indian students it is important to note that, according to the data, Students of Color and American Indian students are receiving special educational services at disproportionate rates than their white peers. American Indian and Black/African American students are predisposed to being identified as disabled and in need of specialized instruction at alarming rates; 22.6% and 18.3% respectively, while 12.5% and 8.4% of white and Asian/Pacific Islander students respectively are identified as disabled and eligible for special education services. According to Artiles, Harry, Reschly, and Chinn (2001), the over-identification and misplacement of students in special education programs is problematic in that it is not only stigmatizing, but it can also deny individuals equitable, high quality, life-enhancing education that they are rightfully entitled to.

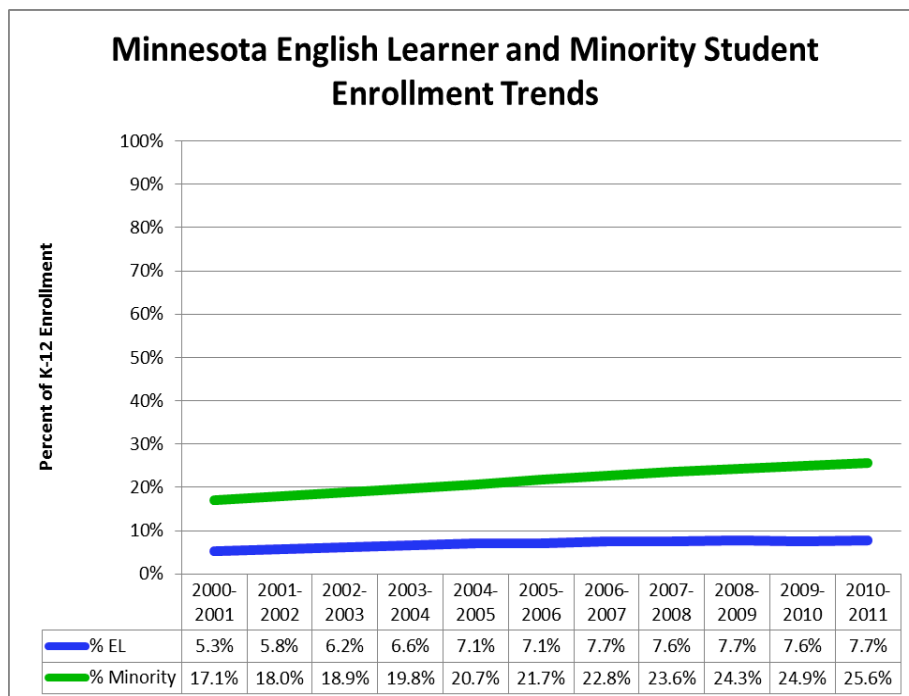
### **Free or Reduced Lunch**

The data for students eligible for free or reduced-price meals reveals that overwhelming percentages of Students of Color are poor; 79% of Black/African-

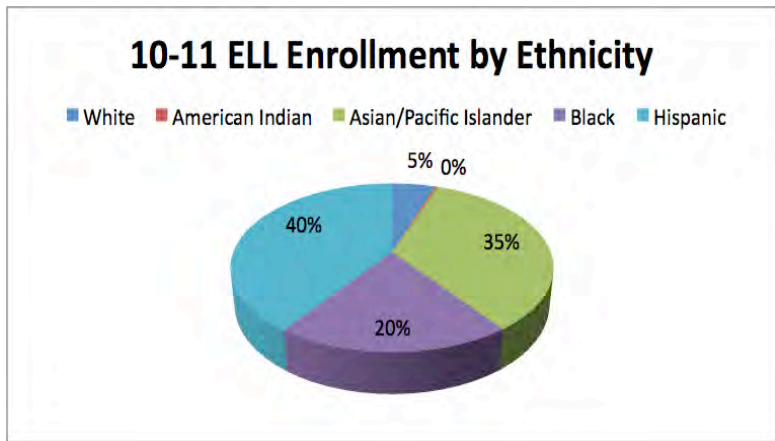
American, 76.1% of Hispanic/Latino, and 71.6 of American Indian students qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Asian/Pacific Islander students are living in households classified as poor at over twice the percentage rate compared to White students; 54.9% compared to 23.7%.

### English Learner (EL) Students

Another variable for many Students of Color is the issue of language. Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic/Latino communities have the highest percentages of students needing help learning English. These are also the two largest groups, making up three out of every four EL students. Yet whatever the background, a student’s academic journey gets complicated when his or her family does not speak English at home. Nearly one in ten Minnesota students are English Learners (EL). From the 2000-2001 school year to 2006-07, the EL population grew in its share of the Minnesota K-12 student body, from 5% to nearly 8% of total students. It has held relatively steady since then.



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

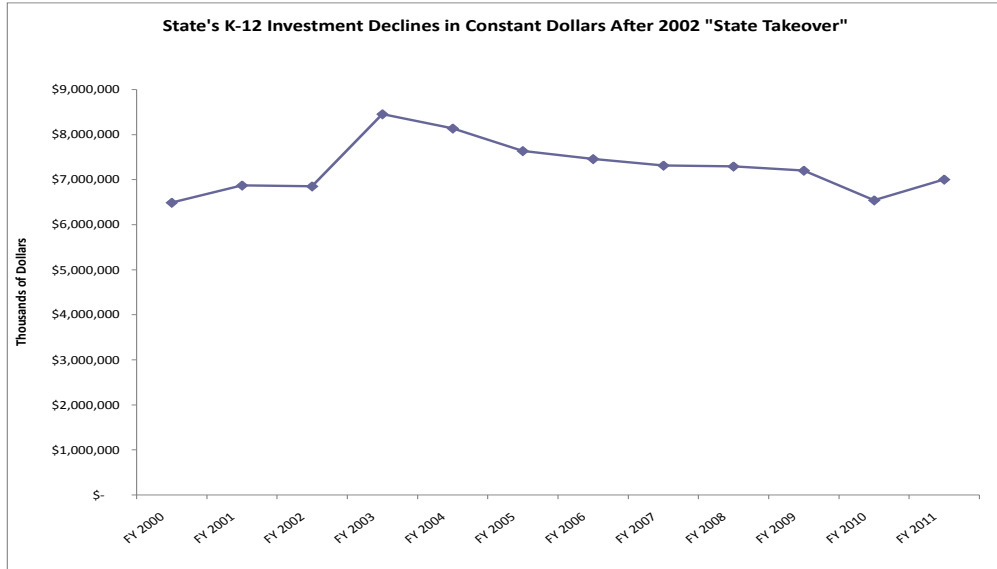


Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

### 3. State Investment in K-12 Education

In a time where Minnesotans have called for a renewed commitment to education and educational reform to meet the growing needs of an increasingly competitive global economy, the state's financial investment in education has not allocated the necessary funding to meet these needs. The state's K-12 education investment has declined since 2003 as measured in constant dollars. While K-12 enrollment has declined also, it has done so only slightly. Minnesota's education investment today mirrors what it spent a decade ago.

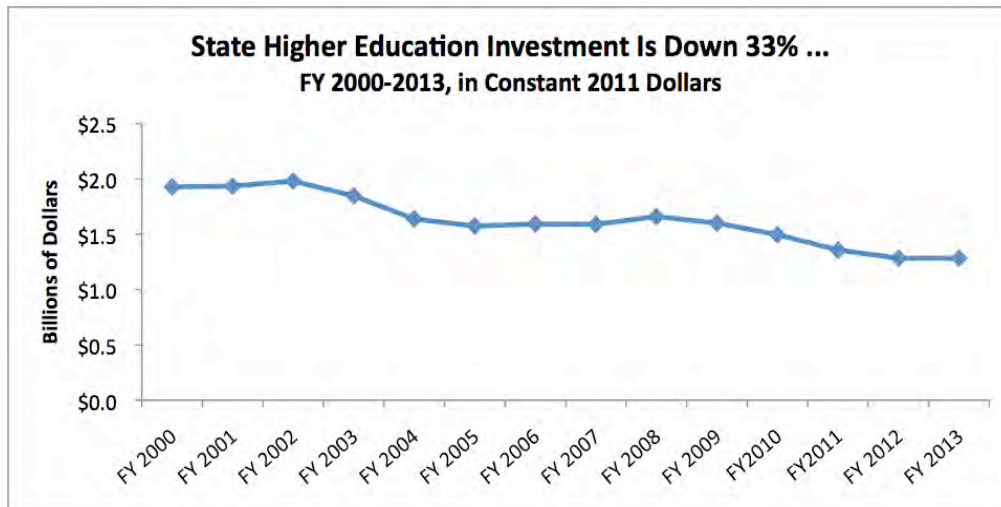




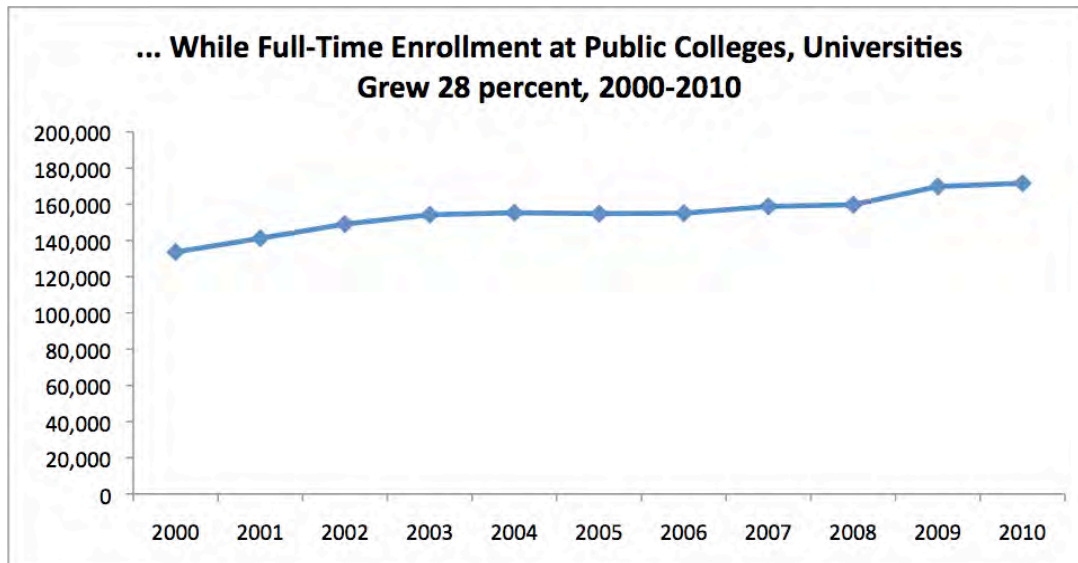
Source: Minnesota Budget Project

#### 4. State Investment in Higher Education

Minnesotans have reason to worry about our ability to meet the goal of ensuring college and career readiness for all of our Minnesota students. During the 2011 legislative session, the state cut higher education funding by 12% for the FY 2012-13 biennium, part of a longer-term trend of reducing funding for our higher education institutions. Although our public colleges and universities are serving tens of thousands of more students, state funding for higher education has fallen over the past decade. This results in higher tuition costs to families and decreased access to students who can't afford it.



Source: Minnesota Budget Project analysis of state financial data



Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

Minnesota's economy is currently outperforming the national economy. State Economist Tom Stinson attributes our relative success to a well-educated, highly productive workforce. If the state wants to continue cultivating a strong economy and good-paying jobs, it needs to keep investing in higher education, not retreat from it - a move which would place our competitive edge at risk.

## **C. K-12 Academic Success: Basic Achievement Data**

### **1. Challenge in Reporting Trend Data**

We set out to show what progress, if any, Minnesota had made in student outcomes in the slightly over ten years since we published our first report (2001). However, we faced a major challenge in conducting an “apples to apples” trend analysis. State law requires a review and revision of state academic standards every six years. This produces constant changes to curriculum and testing procedures, generating new assessed student achievement levels. Based upon this reality, we have chosen to focus our analysis on the most stable data available while accepting the limitation of what data is available. The following provides some historical perspective surrounding the several changes which made it impossible to accurately provide 10 years of comparable data surrounding academic trends as well as why we selected specific data to bring forth in this report.

#### **Academic Trend Data Breaks**

The first break in trend data analysis for 2001 and 2011 appears in 2005. The 2005-2006 academic year was the first that all Minnesota schools were required to fully implement the 2003 *Minnesota Academic Standards* for all content areas, replacing the *Profile of Learning*. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment – Series II (MCA-II) was implemented in mathematics and reading for grades 3-8, 10 and 11. New performance standards, as well as new achievement levels, were identified. Based upon these significant changes, an

interruption in reliable trend data appeared. Results from the previous years are not comparable to the results for student achievement in 2005-2006.

The second break in trend data occurred in 2006 for reading. In 2005-2006, most students eligible for English Language Learner (EL) services were not tested on the Reading MCA-II. In 2006-2007, the EL students were required to take the Reading MCA-II. Thus, a proportion of students were excluded one year and included in the next year's testing. This change in testing procedures made it impossible for valid comparisons for reading assessment results across years, especially when focusing on Students of Color and American Indian students.

The third break in trend data appears for mathematics in 2010. The 2010-2011 academic year was the first year all Minnesota schools were required to implement the 2007 Minnesota Academic Standards for Mathematics, which require all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to take algebra. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment – Series III (MCA-III) was implemented for grades 3-8 and new performance standards based on new mathematics constructs were implemented. This change has made it impossible to produce valid comparisons for mathematics testing with prior year assessments.

### **Academic Data Selection**

Our choice to use group **proficiency data** provides the state overall proficiency rates for each racial classification in aggregate. This data combines all students tested in Minnesota grades 3-8 and 11. The purpose is to provide an overall proficiency landscape which is directly linked to the emphasis both the

federal and state governments have placed on measuring academic accountability as required by the federal *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* legislation governing the use of Title 1 funds and impacting the whole of K-12 education in every state.

The state accountability tests referred to in this report (which measure proficiency) are the tests in the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment Series and all alternative tests used for NCLB Title I accountability. As mentioned, the tests used in a given year have varied over time, yet all of them measured student performance on the Minnesota Academic Standards for mathematics and reading. The table outlines the various tests used in different years beginning with 2006, which was the first year the state was required to test all students in grades 3 – 8 and once in high school.

Based upon this information, it is important to note that when considering trend data, consistent and comparable testing results only exist from 2007 – 2010 for mathematics and 2007 – 2011 for reading, thus providing the most stable data for analysis. Based upon all the aforementioned changes, consistent comparable data is simply not available prior to 2007, which has made it impossible to provide integral comparisons of prior years.



## NCLB Title I Accountability Assessments from 2007 Through 2011

Subject	Year	Test Options by Years with Grades Identified					
		MCA-II	MCA-III <sup>1</sup>	MTELL <sup>2</sup>	MCA-Modified <sup>3</sup>	ALT <sup>4</sup>	MTAS <sup>5</sup>
Mathematics	2006	3–8, 11				3–8, 11	
	2007– 2010	3–8, 11		3–8, 11			3–8, 11
	2011	11	3–8		5–8, 11		3–8, 11
Reading	2006 <sup>6</sup>	3–8, 10				3–8, 10	
	2007 – 2010	3–8, 10					3–8, 10
	2011	3–8, 10			5–8, 10		3–8, 10

<sup>1</sup>Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment—Series III administered online with paper option. First year was 2011.

<sup>2</sup>Mathematics Test for English Language Learners administered online for EL eligible students.

<sup>3</sup>Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (Series II or III) – Modified administered online to qualifying special education students.

<sup>4</sup>The Alternative Assessment was administered to all special education students.

<sup>5</sup>Minnesota Test of Academic Skills administered to qualifying special education students with the most severe cognitive disabilities.

<sup>6</sup>EL students were allowed to use the Test of Emerging Academic English (TEAE) as an alternative to the Reading MCA. A proficiency cut score equivalent to the Reading MCA was used to determine proficiency. This data is not published separately by MDE, but was used for calculating NCLB Title Accountability results for districts/schools.

Each student who took these state accountability tests received a score that fell into one of four achievement levels:

- 1- Does Not Meet the Standards,
- 2- Partially Meets the Standards,
- 3- Meets the Standards, or
- 4- Exceeds the Standards.

All students who scored at achievement levels “3” and “4” are considered “proficient” by the state for the content area being measured. Based upon these standards and accepting the documented limitation we have chosen the following data on which to focus our analysis.

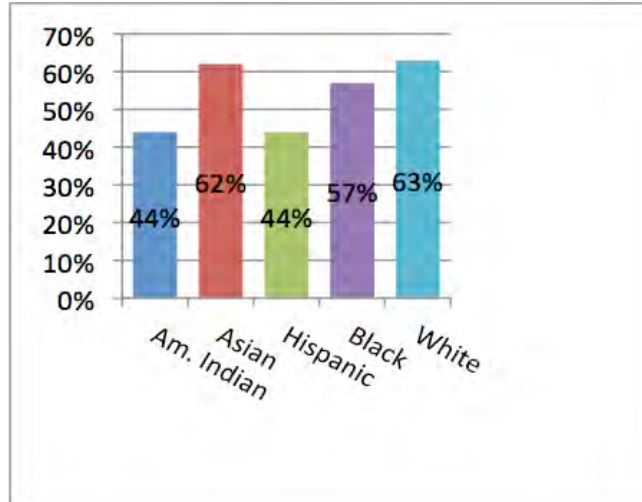
### 2. Kindergarten Readiness: 2010

Emerging information suggests that the achievement gap starts before

students enter the K-12 educational system. Research has indicated a critical relationship between early childhood experiences, school success, and positive life-long outcomes. Early childhood research has been a focal point for many states as they strive to reduce the achievement gap. Unfortunately, Minnesota has little state-specific data to show the impact of early childhood education. This may change with the state's new focus on early childhood education and with the creation of the Office of Early Learning (OEL); a coordinated effort of Minnesota's Departments of Education and Health and Human Services in obtaining a U.S. Department of Education *Race to the Top* federal grant to align programs and services for young children.

The state does, however, have a snapshot of school readiness based on the Minnesota School Readiness Study: Developmental Assessment at Kindergarten Entrance, which is an assessment of the skills and accomplishments that children should have as they enter kindergarten. The assessment covers physical development, the arts, personal and social development, language and literacy, and mathematical thinking. The differences in readiness between Black/African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander and White students are small; however American Indian and Hispanic/Latino children are less well-prepared for school.

## Percent of 2010 Kindergarten Students Meeting Standard at Entrance



Source: Minnesota Department of Education

### 3. Reading Proficiency Trends: 2007 – 2011

Minnesota measures overall reading proficiency through MCA tests and alternate assessments combining students tested in multiple grades, which provides the state overall proficiency rates for each racial classification. When looking at proficiency data from 2007 to 2011, various trends are identifiable. The good news is that all students have improved in reading proficiency; American Indian students increased 7.1%, Asian/Pacific Islanders rose 9.5%, Hispanic/Latinos gained 9.6%, and the greatest increase in reading proficiency was found in the Black/African-American racial classification with a double-digit increase of 11.0%. White student scores increased the least at 5.6 percentage points (Minnesota Reading Accountability Test Proficiency Trends / Percentage Point Change 2007-2011).

While there has been an increase reading proficiency for all students, a deeper look at the data indicates some disturbing realities for Students of Color

and American Indian Students. According to the data, 2011 reading proficiency scores were the highest for this period (Minnesota Reading Accountability Test Proficiency Trends / 2011). However, American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, and Black/African American students all scored less than 60% proficient over this five-year period of time. The reality of this data indicates that greater than four out of every ten of these students are not proficient in reading.

While the reading scores during the same time period for Asian/Pacific Islanders students are higher (65.3% proficient) the data still indicates that nearly one out of three of these students are not proficient in reading (Minnesota Reading Accountability Test Proficiency Trends / 2011).

### **Minnesota Reading Accountability Test Proficiency Trends**

Student Group	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Percentage Point Change 2007-2011	Rate of Change in Proficiency	Rate of Change in Proficiency Compared to Whites
American Indian	49.4%	53.6%	53.2%	54.8%	56.5%	7.1	14.4%	6.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	55.8%	59.5%	61.3%	61.9%	65.3%	9.5	17.0%	9.6%
Hispanic/Latino	44.1%	46.9%	48.9%	49.9%	53.7%	9.6	21.8%	14.4%
Black/African-American	43.1%	45.5%	47.8%	49.6%	54.1%	11.0	25.5%	18.1%
White	75.3%	77.9%	79.2%	79.6%	80.9%	5.6	7.4%	

(Represents students enrolled October 1<sup>st</sup> and test in spring at the same school)  
Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

### **Reading Proficiency Gap**

In Minnesota an achievement gap in overall reading proficiency exists between Students of Color, American Indian students, and White students. The

achievement gap is calculated by subtracting the percent of proficiency for a racial classification of students from the percent of proficiency for Whites. For example, in 2011 Whites percent of proficiency in reading was 80.9% and Hispanic/Latino percent of proficiency in reading was 53.7%; thus the equation would be  $80.9 - 53.7 = 27.2$  percentage points. The 2011 reading proficiency gap is lowest during the past five years with the Asian/Pacific Islanders at 15.6%, followed by American Indians at 24.4%, Blacks/African Americans at 26.8%, and the greatest distances of 27.2% between Hispanic/Latino students and Whites (Minnesota Reading Proficiency Achievement Gap / Gap in 2011).

### **Minnesota Reading Proficiency Achievement Gaps:**

Reading	Gap in 2007	Gap in 2011	5 –Year Rate of Change in the Gap	Average Annual Rate of Change in the Gap	5-Year Percent of Change in the Gap
American Indian	25.9%	24.4%	1.5	0.3%	5.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	19.5%	15.6%	3.9	0.8%	20%
Hispanic/Latino	31.2%	27.2%	4	0.8%	12.8%
Black /African American	32.2%	26.8%	5.4	1.1%	16.7%

(Represents students enrolled October 1<sup>st</sup> and test in spring at the same school)  
Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

### **Academic Achievement Gaps in Reading**

An important question surrounding these disparities is whether or not the gap is changing. According to Rowan, Hall, and Haycock (2010), to gain an accurate understanding of gaps in student achievement, data must be looked at from various perspectives. Based upon the data available, this analysis used several methods:



- The first method used was *Simple Gap Narrowing*, which is the most common approach. It considers the absolute gaps in mean performance between groups decreased over time (Rowan et. Al, 2010). Using this approach, between 2007 and 2011, ***Students of Color and American Indian students have only seen a marginal closing of the reading proficiency gap with their White counter-parts***, ranging from a rate of change of 1.5% for American Indian Students to 5.4% for Black/African American students (Minnesota Reading Proficiency Achievement Gap / 5 –Year Rate of Change in the Gap).

To understand what changes are occurring in this gap per year requires the data to be analyzed using the annual average rate of change. To generate this information, the rate of change is divided by the number of years (5), which provides the annual average rate of change. The annual average rate of change in reading proficiency for Students of Color and American Indian students is very low ranging from .3% for American Indians to 1.1% for Black/African Americans (Minnesota Reading Proficiency Achievement Gap / Average Annual Rate of Change in the Gap).

- Another method used in this analysis was *Progress for All*, which considers all groups of students' gains over time (Rowan et. Al, 2010). When using this approach, which takes into account the percentages of change for all students (including Whites), the ***data indicates an improvement in rate of change in reading proficiency scores for all students***, ranging from 5.6 percentage points for Whites to 11 percentage points for Black/African-

American (Minnesota Reading Accountability Test Proficiency Trends/Percentage Point Change 2007-2011).

- Another method used in analyzing the reading proficiency achievement gap is calculated by determining the percentage of change each *five years* per racial classification. For example using the Asian/Pacific Islander data the equation would be  $4 / 31.2 = 12.8$ . Using this formula the *5-Year Percent of Change in the Gap* was; Asian/Pacific Islander 20%, Black/African American 16.7%, Hispanic/Latino 12.8%, and American Indian 5.8% (Minnesota Reading Proficiency Achievement Gaps / 5-Year Percent of Change in the Gap).
- In addition to these standard methods a new method was used called *Percentage of Progress (POP)* (Hillstrom, 2012). The POP score is a measure of relevant change in proficiency in an environment where *Progress for All* (Rowan et. Al, 2010) has been identified. POP scores compare the rate of increase for White students against the rate of increase for all other racial classifications.

### Minnesota Reading Percentage of Progress (POP) Score Table

	Percentage Point increase 2007-2011	Percentage Point Difference Between Whites	Rate of Change in Proficiency	POP Score
American Indian	7.1	1.5	14.4%	7.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.5	3.9	17.0%	9.6
Hispanic/Latino	9.6	4.0	21.8%	14.4
Black/African-American	11.0	5.4	25.5%	18.1
White	5.6		7.4%	

(Represents students enrolled October 1<sup>st</sup> and test in spring at the same school)  
Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

One approach that helps understand the data driving POP scores requires simply subtracting Whites' percentage point change from the

different racial classification's percentage point change. If we use White's and American Indian's percentage point change as an example the equation would look like this;  $7.1 - 5.6 = 1.5$  percentage points. The percentage point difference between Whites and the other racial classifications are: American Indian 1.5, Asian/Pacific Islander 3.9, Hispanic/Latino 4.0, and Black/African-American 5.4 (Minnesota Reading Percentage of Progress Score Table / Percentage Point Difference Between Whites).

The difference in percentage points is not very large, however when comparing the overall percentage that these numbers represent for each group you begin to see a different picture. To make this comparison requires that percentage point of change be calculated into a rate of change in proficiency relevant to each group.

For example the reading percentage point of change for White students between 2007-2011 was 5.6 percentage points which equaled a rate of change in proficiency of 7.4%; when compared to American Indian students we see a 7.1 percentage point change which equaled a rate of change in proficiency of 14.4% in reading (Percentage of Progress Score Table / Percentage Point Increase 2007-2011 / Rate of Change in Proficiency).

To complete the POP score requires subtracting the rate of change in proficiency for Whites from the rate of change in proficiency between each racial classification and Whites. The equation for American Indians would be ( $14.4 - 7.4 = 7.0$ ). The difference of 7.0 percentage points is the POP score

and represents a greater increase for American Indian students and does suggest that the gap is closing. **Based upon using the POP method, the difference in rate of change in proficiency in 2011 was highest for Black/African-Americans at 18.1 percentage points, followed by Hispanic/Latinos at 14.1 percentage points, Asian/Pacific Islanders at 9.6 percentage points and American Indians at 7.0 percentage points** (Percentage of Progress Score Table / POP score).

**Minnesota Reading Proficiency Achievement Gaps:**

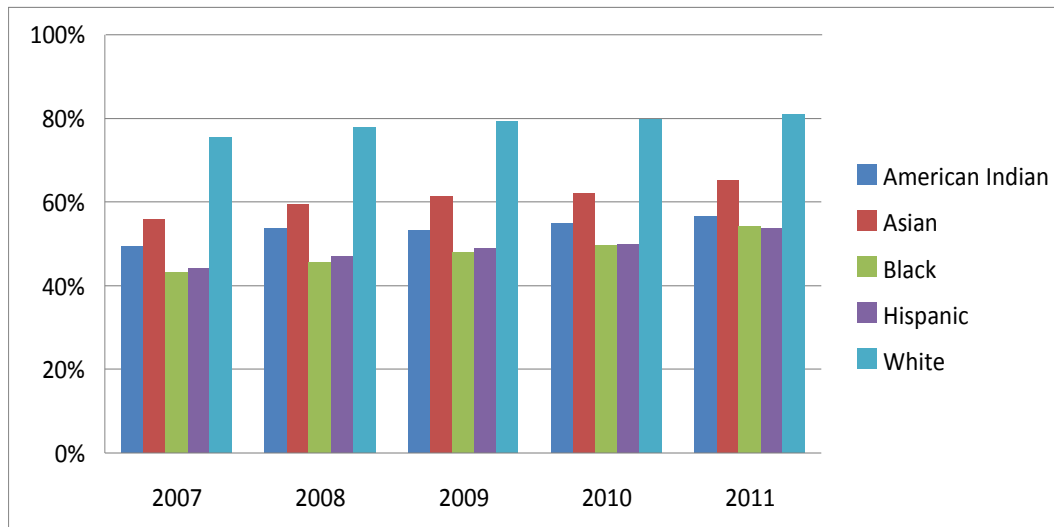
Reading	Gap in 2007	Gap in 2011	5 –Year Rate of Change in the Gap	Average Annual Rate of Change in the Gap	5-Year Percent of Change in the Gap
American Indian	25.9%	24.4%	1.5	0.3%	5.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	19.5%	15.6%	3.9	0.8%	20%
Hispanic/Latino	31.2%	27.2%	4	0.8%	12.8%
Black /African American	32.2%	26.8%	5.4	1.1%	16.7%

(Represents students enrolled October 1<sup>st</sup> and test in spring at the same school)  
 Source: Minnesota Department of Ed / Hillstrom 2012

**K-12 Reading Assessments Overall Conclusion:**

Based upon these multiple approaches to analyzing the available data for reading proficiency in Minnesota between 2007-2011, **it appears that the reading proficiency gap for Students of Color and American Indian students is slowly closing with the most notable improvement for Asian/Pacific Islander students.**

## Reading Proficiency Achievement Gaps: Disaggregated by Race



Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

### 4. Mathematics Proficiency Trends: 2007-2010

In addition to reading proficiency, the Minnesota Department of Education also measures mathematics proficiency using an assessment that blends MCA tests and alternative assessments for students in multiple grades.

A similar trend to reading proficiency appears in the data regarding mathematics proficiency. When reviewing the data available between 2007 and 2010 there has been an increase for all students; once again Whites have the lowest increase in proficiency percentage points at 6.7, followed by American Indians at 6.8, Black/African-Americans at 7.2, Hispanic/Latinos at 7.4 and Asian/Pacific Islander students with the largest increase at 9.1 percentage points (Minnesota Mathematic Accountability Test Proficiency Trends / Percentage Point Change).



While there has been an increase in mathematics proficiency for all students, ***the data indicates even greater disparities in mathematics than in reading for Students of Color and American Indian Students.*** According to the data, mathematics proficiency scores in 2010 were the highest for this period (Minnesota Mathematic Accountability Test Proficiency Trends / 2010). American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, and Black/African American students all scored between 38.8% and 45.6%. The reality of this number modestly suggests that potentially six out of every ten of these students are not proficient in mathematics. Mathematics scores for Asian/Pacific Islanders students were higher (62.9% proficient), however this data still indicated that more than one out of three of these students are not proficient in mathematics (Minnesota Mathematics Accountability Test Proficiency Trends / 2010).

### **Minnesota Mathematic Accountability Test Proficiency Trends**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	% Point Change 2007-2010	Rate of Change in Proficiency	Rate of Change in Proficiency Compared to Whites	Average Annual % of Change
American Indian	38.8%	40.7%	43.5%	45.6%	6.8	17.5%	7.2%	4.4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	53.8%	56.4%	58.9%	62.9%	9.1	16.9%	6.6%	4.2%
Hispanic/Latino	35.9%	38.2%	39.9%	43.3%	7.4	20.6%	10.3%	5.2%
Black/African-American	31.6%	33.3%	35.7%	38.8%	7.2	22.8%	12.5%	5.7%
White	65.1%	67.4%	69.5%	71.85	6.7	10.3%	0%	2.6%

(Represents students enrolled October 1<sup>st</sup> and test in spring at the same school)

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

## **Academic Achievement Gaps in Mathematics**

In Minnesota, an achievement gap in mathematics proficiency exists between Students of Color, American Indian students and White students. The mathematics achievement gap is calculated using the same formula that was used to determine the proficiency gap for reading (subtracting the percent of proficiency for a racial classification of students from the percent of proficiency for Whites).

The 2010 mathematics proficiency gap was lowest between 2007 and 2010, with the Asian/Pacific Islanders at 8.9%, followed by American Indians at 25.9%, Hispanic/Latino students at 28.5%, and with the greatest distances of 33% between Black/African American students and their White peers (Minnesota Mathematic Proficiency Achievement Gap / Gap in 2010).

### **Minnesota Mathematic Proficiency Achievement Gap**

Mathematics	Gap in 2007	Gap in 2010	4 –Year Rate of Change in the Gap	Average Annual Rate of Change in the Gap	4-Year Percent of Change in the Gap
American Indian	26.9%	25.9%	1%	0.3%	3.7%
Asian Pacific Islander	11.3%	8.9%	2.4%	0.6%	21.2%
Hispanic/Latino	29.2%	28.5%	0.7%	0.2%	2.4%
Black /African American	33.5%	33%	0.5%	0.1%	1.5%

(Represents students enrolled October 1<sup>st</sup> and test in spring at the same school)

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

For consistency, similar research methods were used with analysis of all proficiency/trend data (i.e. reading, mathematics, graduation, dropout rates) to address the important questions of possible changes.

- Using the *Simple Gap Narrowing*, **Students of Color and American Indian students, over the 4 year period, have only seen a marginal closing of the mathematics achievement gap with their White counter-parts** ranging from .5% for Black/African American Students to 2.4% for Asian/Pacific Islander students (Minnesota Mathematics Proficiency Achievement Gap / 4 – Year Rate of Change in the Gap).

To understand what yearly changes are occurring in this gap requires the data to be analyzed using the annual average rate of change. To generate this information the rate of change is divided by the number of years (4), which provides the annual average rate of change. The annual average rate of change in mathematics proficiency for Students of Color and American Indian students is extremely low, ranging from .1% for Black/African Americans to .6% for Asian Pacific Islander (Minnesota Mathematics Proficiency Achievement Gap / Average Annual Rate of Change in the Gap).

- When using *Progress for All*, which takes into account the percentages of change for all students (including Whites), the data **indicates an improvement in rate of change in mathematics proficiency scores for all students**, ranging from 6.7 percentage points for Whites to 9.1 percentage points for Asian/Pacific Islanders (Minnesota Mathematic Accountability Test Proficiency Trends / Percentage Point Change 2007-2010).

- When using a *4 Year Rate of Change in the Gap* per racial classification method the gap was as follows; Asian/Pacific Islander at 21.2%, American Indian at 3.7%, Hispanic/Latino at 2.4%, and Black/African American at 1.5% (Minnesota Mathematics Proficiency Achievement Gaps / 4-Year Percent of Change in the Gap).
- In addition to these, a new method was used called Percentage of Progress (POP) (Hillstrom, 2012). The POP score is a measure of relevant change in proficiency in an environment where *Progress for All (Rowan et. Al, 2010)* has been identified. POP scores compare the rate of increase for White students against the rate of increase for all other racial classifications.

### **Minnesota Mathematic Percentage of Progress Score Table**

	Percentage Point Change 2007-2010	Percentage Point Difference Between Whites	Percentage Rate of Change in Proficiency	POP Score
American Indian	6.8	.1	17.5	7.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.1	2.4	16.9	6.6
Hispanic/Latino	7.4	.7	20.6	10.3
Black/African-American	7.2	.5	22.8	12.5
White	6.7		10.3	

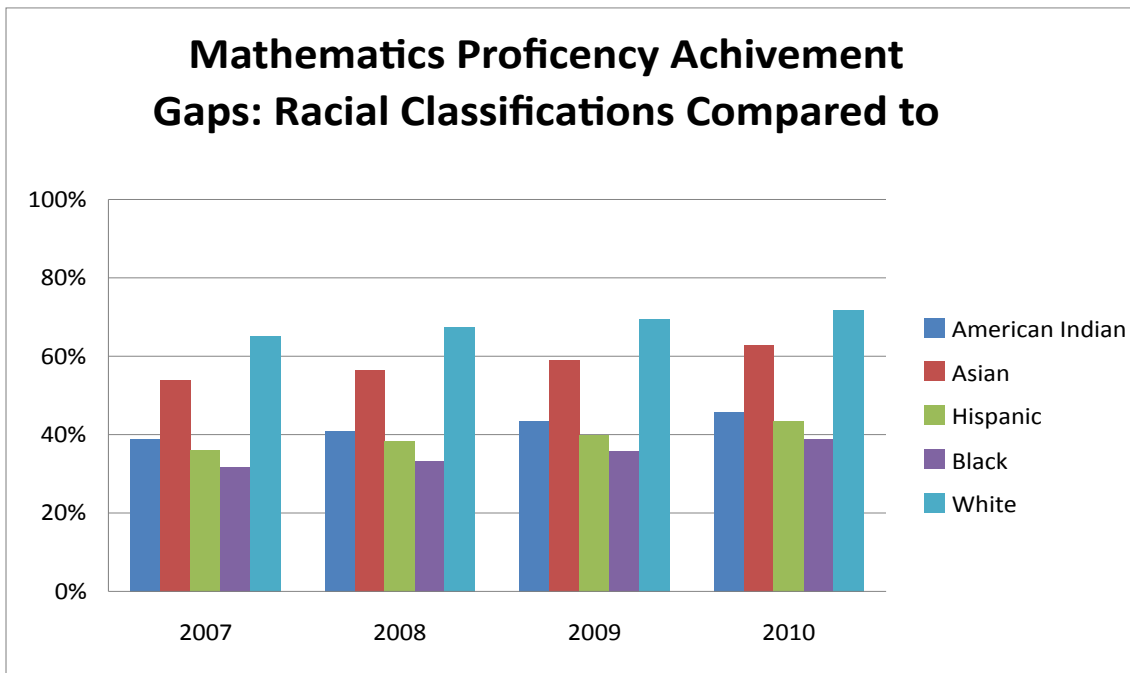
(Represents students enrolled October 1<sup>st</sup> and test in spring at the same school)  
 Source: Minnesota Department of Ed /Hillstrom 2012

One step in understanding POP scores requires simply subtracting White's percentage point change from the different racial classification's percentage point change. The difference ranges from .1 percentage points for American Indians to 2.4 percentage points for Asian/Pacific Islanders. The

amount of percentage points is not very large. However, to better understand the achievement gap and to complete the POP score, the next step requires that the overall percentage that these numbers represent for each group be determined. To make this comparison requires that percentage point of change be calculated into a rate of change in proficiency relevant to each group.

The relevant rate of change in proficiency per group is the following: White 10.3%, Asian/Pacific Islander 16.9%, American Indian 17.5%, Hispanic/Latino 20.6%, and Black/African-American 22.8% (Percentage of Progress Score Table / Percentage Point Increase 2007-2010 / Rate of Change in Proficiency).

To complete the POP score requires subtracting the rate of change in proficiency for Whites (10.3 percentage points) from the rate of change in proficiency for all other racial classifications. The difference is the POP scores and represents a greater increase for Students of Color and American Indian students and does suggest that the gap is closing in mathematics. ***Based upon using the POP method the difference in rate of change in proficiency in 2010 was highest for Black/African-Americans at 12.5 percentage points, followed by Hispanic/Latinos at 10.3 percentage points, American Indians at 7.2 percentage points, and Asian/Pacific Islanders at 6.9 percentage points*** (Percentage of Progress Score Table / POP score).



Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

#### **K12 Mathematics Assessments Overall Conclusion:**

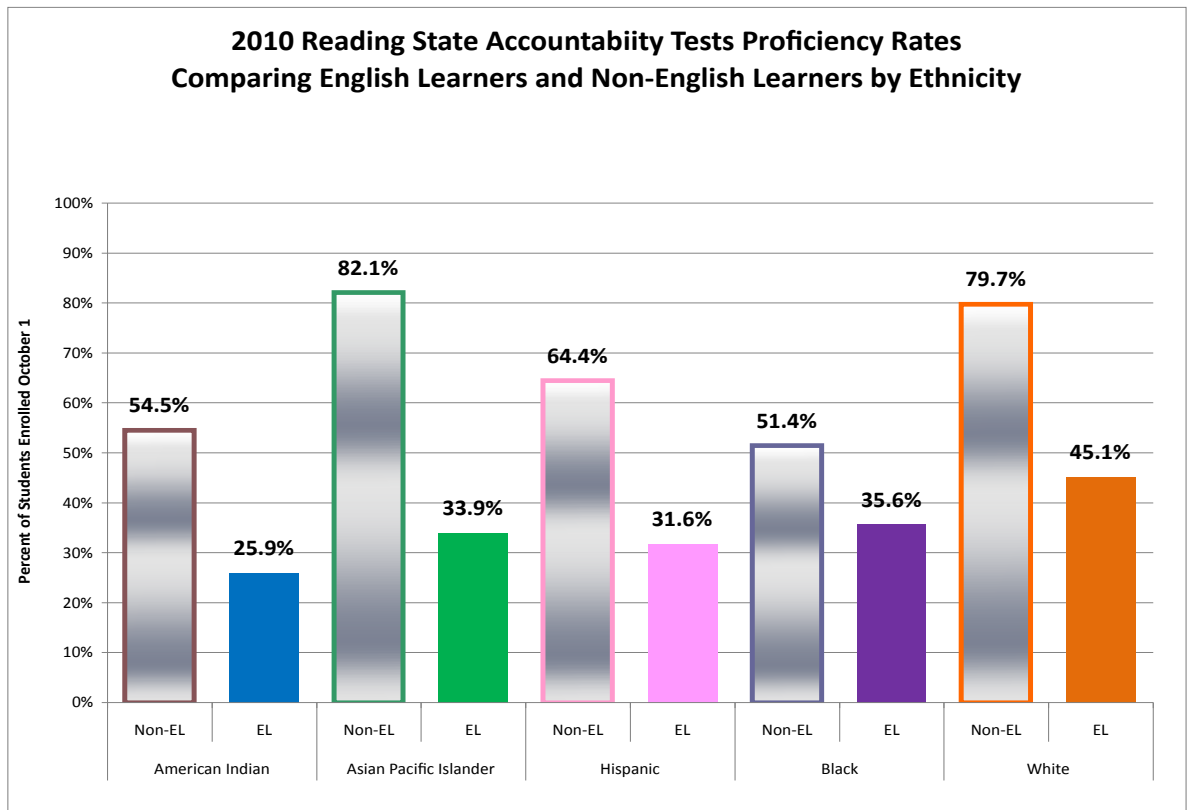
Based upon using these multiple approaches to analyze the data available for mathematics proficiency between 2007-2010 *it appears the mathematics proficiency gap for Students of Color and American Indian students is closing more slowly than the reading proficiency achievement gap with the most notable improvement for Black/African-American students.*

### **5. English Language Students Proficiency Outcomes: 2010**

#### **a. EL Reading Proficiency**

Students of Color and American Indian EL students face critical academic challenges, as reading skills are a key indicator of future academic success. When looking at racial classifications and comparing EL students to non-EL

students in reading proficiency, we see huge disparities between the two groups. In most instances, proficiency rates are half for EL students when compared to their non-EL counterparts in each racial group.



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

The widest disparities in reading proficiency between EL and Non EL exist for Asian/Pacific Islander; 82.1 % of non-EL students met state proficiency rates for reading while only 33.9% of the EL students were proficient in reading - a difference of 48.2%.



## EL Reading Proficiency 2010

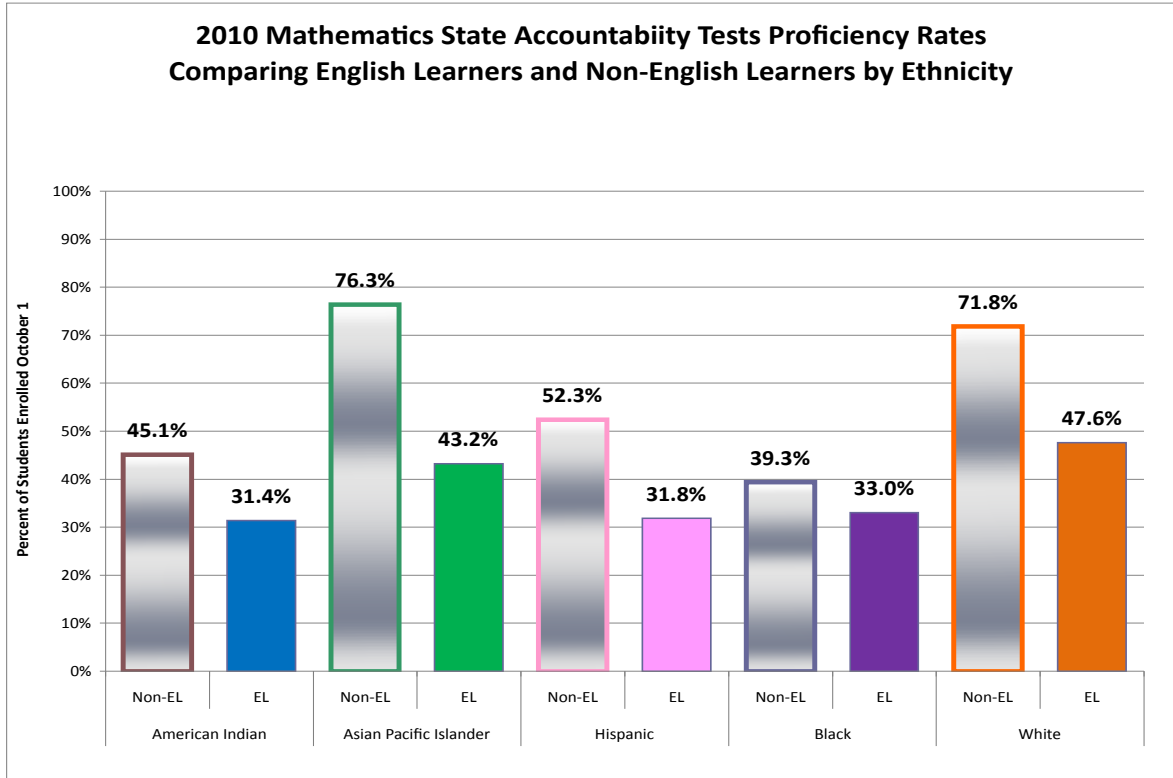
Racial Classification	Proficient Non EL Students	Proficient EL Students	EL Gap Between Whites
American Indian	54.5%	25.9%	19.2%
Asian Pacific Islander	82.1%	33.9%	11.2%
Hispanic	64.4%	31.6%	13.5%
Black	51.4%	35.6%	9.5%
White	79.7%	45.1%	

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

When considering the reading proficiency gap between EL Students of Color, EL American Indian students, and EL White students we see another story. The reading proficiency gap is the largest for American Indian EL students at 19.2%, followed by Hispanic/Latino at 13.5%, Asian/Pacific Islander at 11.2%, and Black/African American students at 9.5%. This suggests that although all EL students have a lower proficiency rate than their non-EL peers, a considerable proficiency gap exists between White EL students and American Indians and Students of Color.

### b. EL Mathematics Proficiency

When focusing on racial classifications and comparing EL students to non-EL students in mathematics proficiency, we see similar disparities to those identified in reading proficiency.



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

The widest disparities in mathematic proficiency between EL and non EL exist for Asian/Pacific Islander 76.3% of non-EL students met state proficiency rates for mathematics, while only 43.2% of the EL students were proficient in mathematics for a difference of 33.1%.

### EL Mathematics Proficiency 2010

Racial Classification	Non EL	EL	EL Gap Between Whites
American Indian	45.1%	31.4%	16.2%
Asian Pacific Islander	76.3%	43.2%	4.4%
Hispanic	52.3%	31.8%	15.8%
Black	39.3%	33.0%	14.6%
White	71.8%	47.6%	

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

When considering the mathematics proficiency gap between EL Students of Color, EL American Indian and EL Whites students we see a comparable story with EL reading proficiency gap except for Asian/Pacific Islander students. The mathematics proficiency gap is largest for American Indian EL students at 16.2%, followed by Hispanic/Latino at 15.4%, Black/African American students at 14.6%, and Asian/Pacific Islander students at 4.4%.

## **6. High School Completion: 2003 -2010**

### **a. Four Year Graduation Rates**

As the federal government increases accountability for all states, there is a need to compare graduation rates across all states. The National Governors' Association (NGA) developed a common method, the Adjusted Cohort Graduation Indicator, for calculating graduation rates that will become the model for calculating and reporting graduation rates in Minnesota starting in 2012. The Adjusted Cohort Graduation Indicator reports the graduation rate of a cohort of students who enter 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the same year and graduate within 4 years; the adjustment is the addition of students transferring into or out of a district or school during the four years the cohort is in the process of completing high school. In Minnesota, this is the *4-Year Graduation Rate* and is sometimes referred to as the on-time graduation rate. The calculation also reports a 5-Year and a 6-Year graduation rate for each cohort that reflects those students in the cohort taking more than four years to complete high school graduation requirements.

***The 4-Year Graduation Rate trends show increasing graduation rates for all students over the eight-year period.*** The change in the Hispanic/Latino 4-Year Graduation Rate from 2003 to 2010 was the greatest among racial classifications, increasing 16.8% in eight years. Black/African Americans saw a 12.4% increase, and American Indian 4-Year Graduation Rates showed a positive increase of 9.9%. The Asian/Pacific Islander 4-Year Graduation Rates show some negative fluctuations from 2006 to 2010. However, over this eight-year period of time, an overall positive change of 7.9% occurred. Whites increased 5.2 percentage points during the same period of time (Minnesota Graduation Trends 2003 – 2010 /Percentage Point Change 2003-2010).

**Minnesota Graduation Trends 2003 – 2010**

	2003 Percent of Graduation	2010 Percent of Graduation	Percentage Point Change 2003-2010	Rate of Change in Proficiency	Rate of Change in Proficiency Compared to Whites	Average Annual % of Change
American Indian	35.4%	45.3%	9.9	28.0%	21.3%	3.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	62.1%	70.0%	7.9	12.7%	6.0%	1.6%
Hispanic/Latino	32.4%	49.2%	16.8	45.6%	38.9%	5.7%
Black/African-American	34.5%	46.9%	12.4	35.9%	29.2%	4.5%
White	77.6	82.8	5.2	6.7%	0%	.8%

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

According to the data, 2010 marked the highest rate of graduation for all students during this period (4-Year Cohort Graduation Trends / 2010). However, the percentage of American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, and Black /African American students graduating in four years was less than 50% for each group. The stark reality is that more than one out of two of these students did not receive a high

school diploma. Graduation rates for Asian/Pacific Islanders students were higher (70.0%), however this data still indicates that three out of ten students did not receive a high school diploma (Minnesota Graduation Trends 2003 – 2010 /2010 Percent of Graduation).

**b. 4 Year High School Graduation Gap: 2003 – 2010**

In Minnesota a gap in graduation rates exist between Students of Color, American Indian students, and White students. The graduation gap is calculated using the same formula that was used to determine the proficiency gap for reading and mathematics (subtracting the percent of graduation for a racial classification of students from the percent of graduation for white students).

In 2010 the graduation gap was lowest during this period of time, with the Asian/Pacific Islanders at 12.8 percentage points below their White peers, followed by Hispanic/Latino students at 33.6%, Black/African American at 35.9, and the greatest distances of 37.5 percentage points between American Indians students and Whites (Minnesota Graduation Gaps 2003-2010 / Gap in 2010).

**Minnesota Graduation Gaps 2003-2010**

4-Years Graduation Gaps	Gap in 2003	Gap in 2010	Average Annual Percent of Change	8 –Year Rate of Change in the Gap
American Indian	42.2%	37.5%	0.6%	4.7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	15.6%	12.8%	0.4%	2.8%
Hispanic/Latino	45.2%	33.6%	1.5%	11.6%
Black /African American	43.1%	35.9%	0.9%	7.2%
Whites	0%	0%	0.7%	5.1%

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

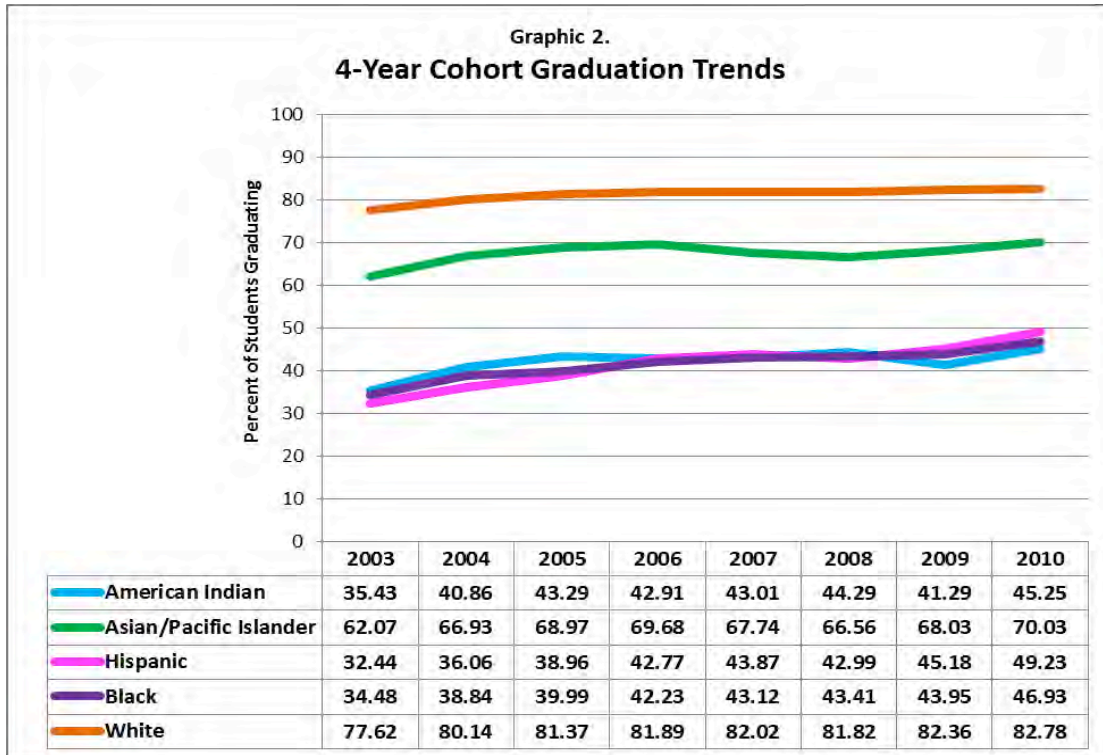
***While all students 4-Year Graduation Rates increased, the data suggests that the gap surrounding graduation is not as consistent for all racial classifications.*** To address the question of possible change in the graduation rate gap we have chosen to use a similar analysis approach that was used to determine the reading and mathematic proficiency gap.

- When using *Simple Gap Narrowing* (Rowan et. Al, 2010) to analyze data surrounding graduation gaps we see that ***the average annual percentages of increase is comparable for Whites (.7%), American Indians (.6%), Black/African Americans ( .9%), and higher for Hispanic/Latinos (1.5%).*** This data indicates that there is a slight widening of the graduation gap between American Indians and Whites (.1%) and a modest (.2%) difference between Black/African American students and Whites. However, when we compare the data for Asian/Pacific Islander and Whites we see a significant difference. Asian/Pacific Islanders data indicates a .4% average annual increase which is nearly half of the increase White students have shown (.7%) during the same time period. This data actually indicated a widening of the graduation gap between Asian/Pacific Islanders and Whites (Minnesota Graduation Gaps 2003-2010 / Average Annual Percent of Change).

The *Simple Gap Narrowing* methodology appears to show good news for Hispanic/Latino students in regards to closing the graduation gap. During this eight year period of time, Hispanic/Latino students average annually a 1.5% increase in graduation rates, which was over twice as high as their

White counter-parts (.7%) (Minnesota Graduation Gaps 2003-2010 / Average Annual Percent of Change).

- Using *Progress for All* (Rowan et. Al, 2010) to analyze the graduation gap, the data supports the findings using Simple Gap Narrowing (Rowan et. Al, 2010). As mentioned, all students realized an increase in graduation rates during this eight year period. Whites increased at 5.1% and American Indian at 5.4%, indicating no significant change in the graduation gap between those two groups. Unfortunately this is not true for the Asian/Pacific Islander group who only increased by 2.9%. The variance between Whites and Asian/Pacific Islanders of 2.2% represents a widening of the graduation gap between these groups. Conversely, there is good news for Black/African Americans with an increase of 7.3% and Hispanic/Latino Americans at 11.7% increase in graduation rates over the eight year period. (Minnesota Graduation Gaps 2003-2010 / Overall Percent of Change).
- Due to the fact that the POP method (Hillstrom, 2012) is best used when *Progress for All* (Rowan et. Al, 2010) is strong and apparent for all racial classifications; no further analysis on graduation rates was completed.



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

While no one knows for sure why there are different patterns in graduation rates, several speculate that they may be a result of the exclusion of students who take more than four years to successfully achieve all high school graduation requirements and the inclusion of any students who transfer into a cohort.

***Based upon the data available, the analysis indicates that the graduation gap between Students of Color and White students is closing at a slow rate for some (Hispanic/Latino), possibly not at all for others and even widening for many of our minority students (American Indian, Asian Pacific Islander and Black /African American (Minnesota Graduation Gaps 2003-2010).***



**c. Other High School Completion Data: “Drop Out,”**

**“Continuing,” and “Unknown” Between 2003 – 2010**

Students in the 4-Year Cohort who do not complete all of the high school graduation requirements on time (i.e., within 4 years of entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade) are categorized into one of three different categories: “dropout,” “continuing,” or “unknown.” These categories provide a picture of what is happening to students who do not graduate on time as well as raising some interesting questions.

**Dropping Out:** All dropout rates have improved between 2003-2010. Hispanic/Latino have had the greatest change in 4-Year Dropout Rate, (17.8 percentage points) yet the data suggests that dropout rates are not as strong for all racial classification (Minnesota Dropout Trends 2003 – 2010 / 2010 Percentage Point Change 2003-2010).

**Minnesota Dropout Trends 2003 – 2010**

	2003 Percent of Dropouts	2010 Percent of Dropouts	Percentage Point Change 2003-2010	Rate of Change in Dropouts	Rate of Change in Dropouts Compared to Whites	Average Annual % of Change
American Indian	25.0%	17.6%	7.4%	30.0%	-7.2%	3.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.8%	4.0%	5.8%	59.1%	21.9%	7.4%
Hispanic/Latino	31.8%	14.0%	17.8%	56.0%	18.8%	7.0%
Black/African- American	19.5%	9.9%	9.6%	49.2%	12.0%	6.2%
White	5.9%	3.7%	2.2%	37.2%		4.7%

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

***According to the data, the dropout rate in 2010 was the lowest for all students during this period. American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, and Black***

/African American students' dropout rates were between 9.9% and 17.6%. Dropout rates for Asian/Pacific Islanders students were significantly lower at 4.0%, which were comparable with Whites at 3.7% (Minnesota Dropout Trends 2003 – 2010 / 2010 Percent of Dropouts).

### **Dropout Gap**

In Minnesota a gap in high school dropout rates exists between Students of Color, American Indian, and White students. The dropout gap is calculated using the same formula that was used to determine the gap for reading, mathematics, and graduation (subtracting the percent of dropouts for a racial classification of students from the percent of dropouts for Whites).

**In 2010 the dropout gap was the lowest during this period of time,** with the Asian/Pacific Islanders at .7%, followed by Black/African Americans at 6.6%, Hispanic/Latino students at 10.7%, and with the greatest distances of 14.3% between American Indian and White students (Minnesota 4-Year Dropout Gaps 2003-2010 / Gap in 2010).

### **Minnesota 4-Year Dropout Gaps 2003-2010**

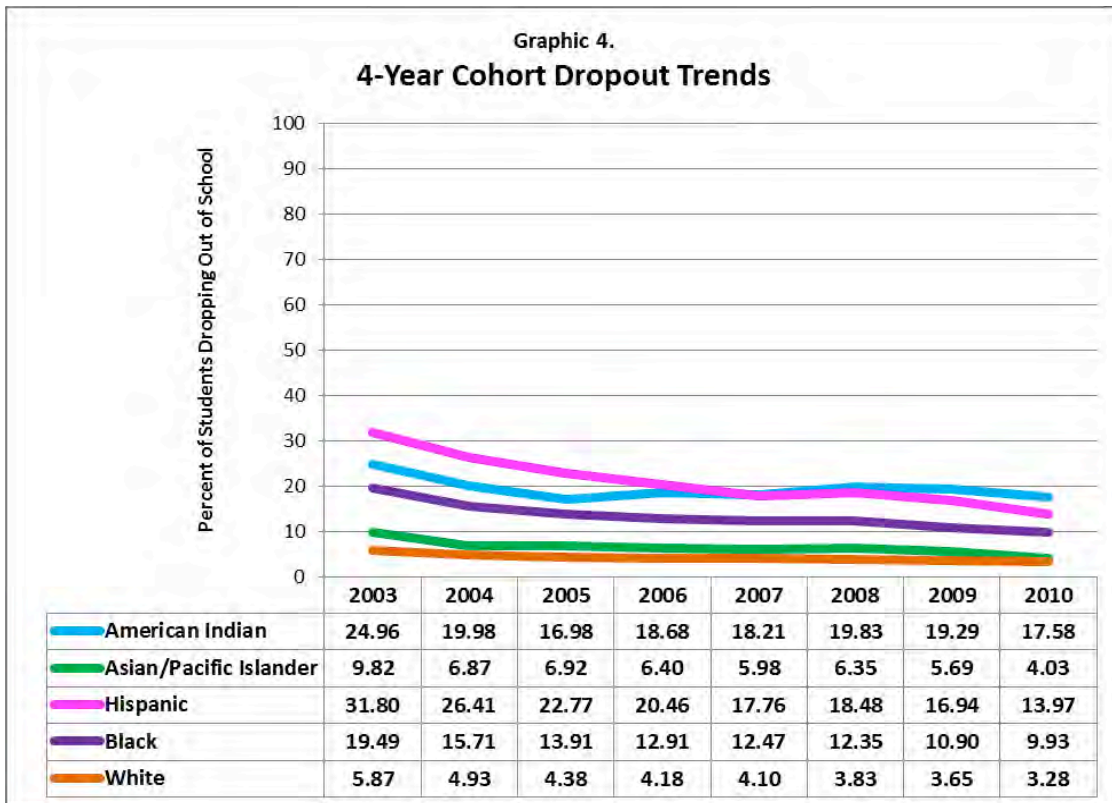
4-Year Dropout Gaps	Gap in 2003	Gap in 2010	Average Annual Percent of Change	8 –Year Rate of Change in the Gap
American Indian	19.1%	14.3%	0.6%	4.8%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.9%	0.7%	0.4%	3.2%
Hispanic/Latino	25.9%	10.7%	1.9%	15.2%
Black/African American	13.6%	6.6%	0.9%	7.0%

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

To address the question of possible change in the dropout rate gap, the analysis methods have remained consistent with other section of this report (i.e. reading, mathematics and graduation gaps).

- Using *Simple Gap Narrowing* (Rowan et. Al, 2010) over the 8-year period, Students of Color and American Indian students **have seen a closing of the dropout gap between themselves and their White counter parts** ranging from 3.2% for Asian/Pacific Islander students to a moderate 15.2% for Hispanic/Latino students (Minnesota 4-Year Dropout Gaps 2003-2010 / 8 – Year Rate of Change in the Gap).

To understand what changes are occurring in the dropout gap per year requires the data to be analyzed using the annual average rate of change. To generate this information the rate of change is divided by the number of years (eight), which provides the annual average rate of change. The annual average rate of change in dropout rates for Students of Color and American Indian students is low, ranging from .4% for Asian/Pacific Islanders to 1.9% for Hispanic/Latinos (Minnesota 4-Year Dropout Gaps 2003-2010 / Average Annual Rate of Change in the Gap).



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

- When analyzing data using *Progress for All* (Rowan et. Al, 2010), the information supports the findings produced using *Simple Gap Narrowing* (Rowan et. Al, 2010). As mentioned, ***all students realized an improvement regarding dropout rates.*** White students showed the least amount of change in dropout rates at 2.6%, followed by Asian/Pacific Islanders at 3.2%, American Indian at 4.8%, and Black/African American at 7%. A marked change in dropout rates appears to have occurred with Hispanic/Latino students indicating an overall percent of change of 15.2% (Minnesota Dropout Percentage of Progress Score Table / Percentage Point Change 2007-2010).

## Minnesota Dropout Percentage of Progress Score Table

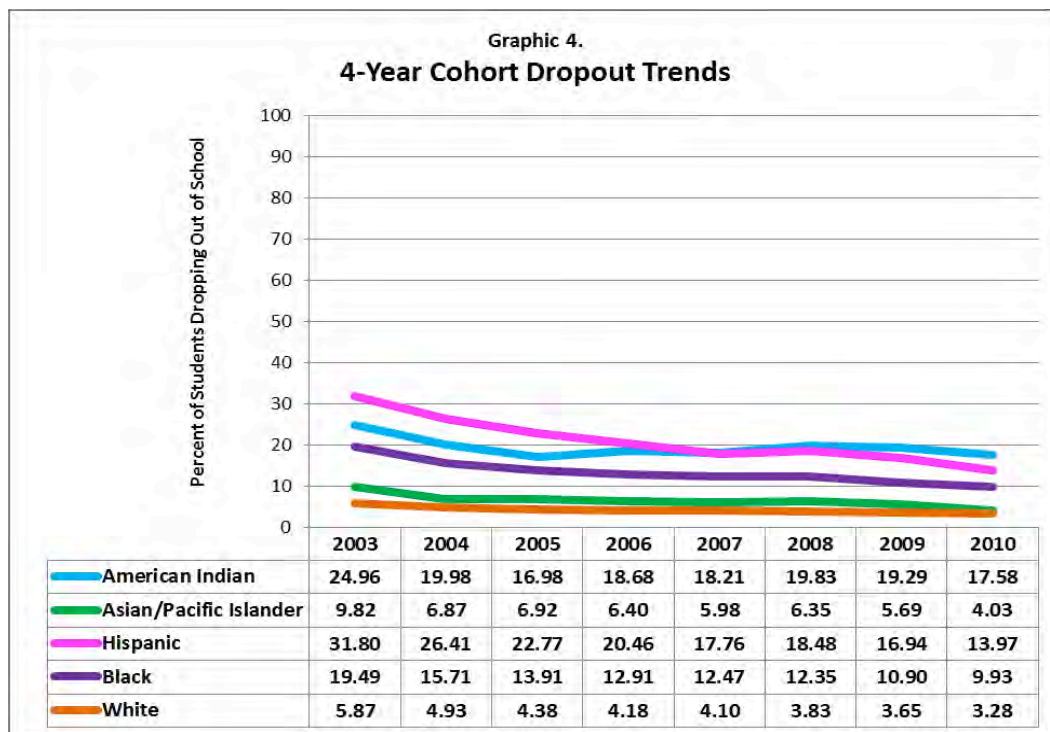
	Percentage Point Change 2003-2010	Percentage Point Difference Between Whites	Rate of Change in Dropouts	POP Score
American Indian	4.8%	2.2%	19.0%	-25.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.2%	.6%	33.0%	-11.0%
Hispanic/Latino	15.2%	12.6%	48.0%	4.0%
Black/African-American	7.0%	4.4%	36.0%	-8.0%
White	2.6%		44.0%	

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed / Hillstrom 2012

- The overall percentage of change for dropouts allows us to compare the rate of change for all students in Minnesota and use the POP method (Hillstrom, 2012) to provide an additional approach to understand the data.

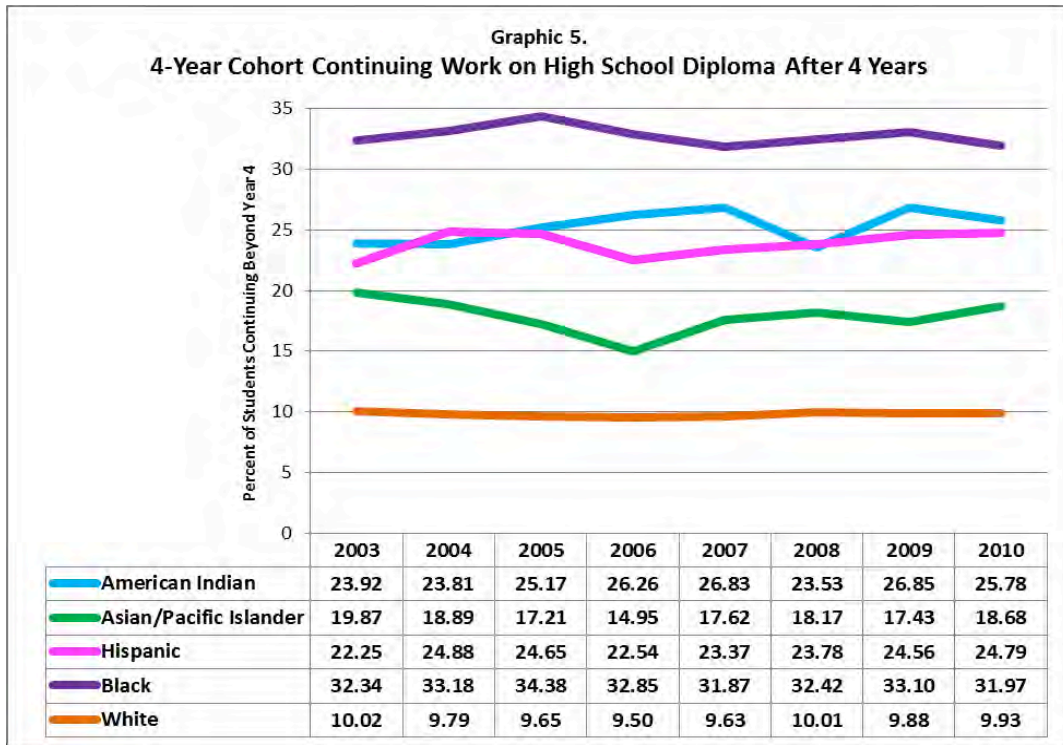
The POP method first requires subtracting the white student percentage point change from the percentage point changes of the other racial student groups. The differences range from .6 percentage points for Asian/Pacific Islanders to 12.6 percentage points for Hispanic/Latinos. The amount of percentage points indicates a large range. However, to better understand the dropout rate gap and the POP score, it is required that the overall percentage that these numbers represent for each group be determined. For the first time in this report, the relevant rate of change is larger for a racial classification other than Whites; 48.0% Hispanic/Latino, 44.0% White, 36.0% Black/African-American, 33.0% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 19.0% American Indian (Minnesota Dropout Percentage of Progress Score Table / Percentage Point Increase 2003-2010 / Rate of Change in Proficiency).

By subtracting the rate of change in dropouts for Whites (44.0%) from the rate of change in dropouts from all other racial classifications, the difference produces the POP scores. ***This method of analysis suggest that the dropout gap maybe only be closing for Hispanic/Latino students*** (Minnesota Dropout Percentage of Progress Score Table / POP Score).



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

***Based upon these analysis methods used throughout this report, the results are varied per racial classification regarding the closing of the dropout gap. It is clear however that there has been a marked improvement for Hispanic/Latino students.***



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

- To fully understand the 4-Year Adjusted Cohort calculations, there are two other reported values to analyze; the *4-Year Continuing Rate* and *Unknown Rate*. These two rates provide a different perspective regarding the effectiveness of our school systems in Minnesota.

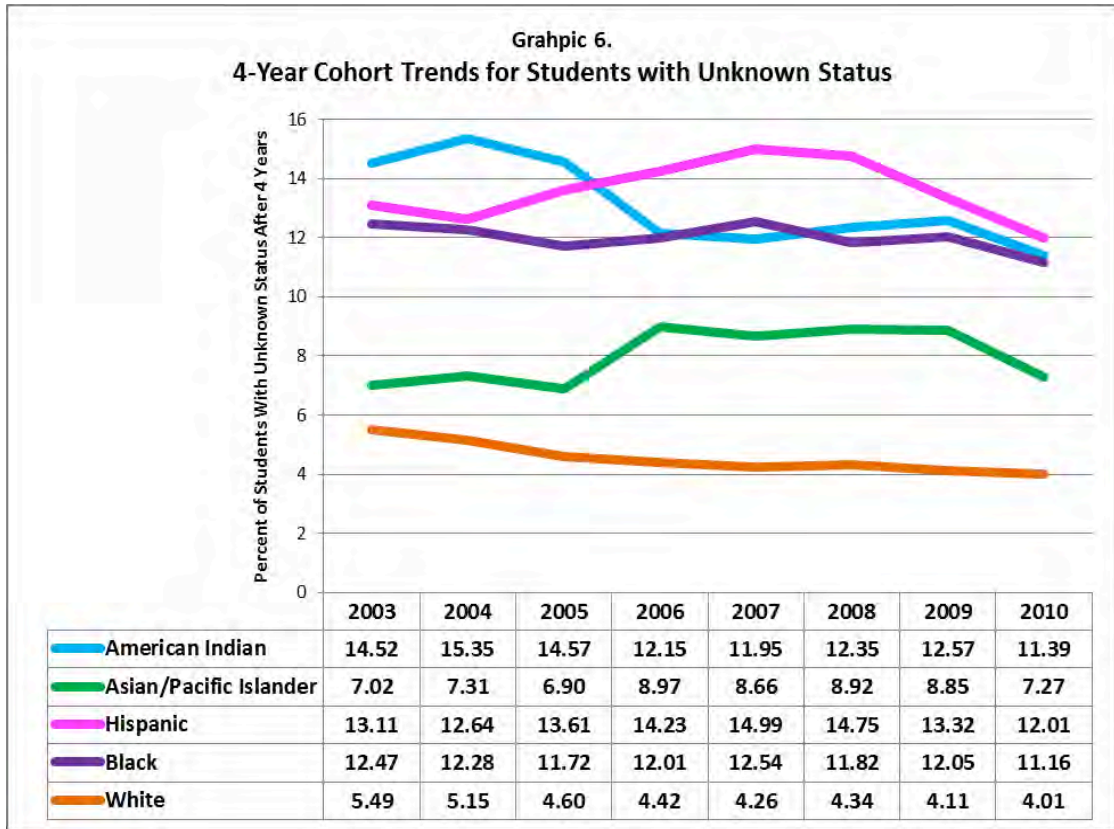
**4-Year Continuing Rate:** The data shows *little to no change in the proportion of students continuing to work on their high school diploma among any racial classification*. The Black/African Americans have the highest 4-Year Continuing Rate, over 30%, while the White 4-Year Continuing Rate is the lowest, 10%, and has the least variation over the eight years.

Hispanic/Latino and American Indian racial classifications also have significant numbers of students continuing their high school education after four years at rates more than 250% higher than White students. No matter what the reason for continuing, the proportion of students needing to continue their education should be equivalent for all racial classifications if all students have equal access to learning opportunities.

**The 4-Year Unknown Rate:** Again, Students of Color and American Indian students are disproportionately represented in this category of students in a four-year cohort who leave Minnesota schools without formally “dropping out” and with undefined future plans for completing their high school diploma. In this category, schools simply have no record with which to classify their “disappearance”. Trends suggest little change in the proportion of students in this category.

It is important to note that there were dramatic differentiations among the distinct students of color groups, perhaps indicating some divergent social factors present in each community such as undocumented immigration status or highly fluid movement between Indian reservations and public schools. In 2010, the Asian/Pacific Islander 4-Year Unknown Rate was 75% greater than the White 4-Year Unknown Rate, while the American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, and Black/African American Unknown Rates were approximately 300% greater than the White 4-Year Unknown Rate.





Source: Minnesota Department of Ed

**d. GRAD Test Rates: 2010**

To graduate from a Minnesota public high school, students who entered 8<sup>th</sup> grade or above after 2005 are required to pass the three standards based *Graduation Required Assessment for Diploma (GRAD)* tests. The GRAD is embedded in the state’s required academic standards, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA’s), which are partially driven by federal government regulations under the “No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act” and further promoted under the federal “Race to the Top” program. The MCAs are meant to be aligned to “college readiness” standards. The GRAD component is meant to demonstrate a student’s minimal proficiency in achieving the MCA standard in

order to be minimally ready for higher education coursework. Students receive both an MCA and a GRAD score.

The three GRAD tests are Writing, (administered in 9<sup>th</sup> grade), Reading, (10<sup>th</sup> grade), and Mathematics (11<sup>th</sup> grade). If a student fails any of these tests they may retake the tests at an established retest time. High school students in the classes of 2010 through 2014 who do not pass the mathematics GRAD test may still graduate if they meet all other specified remedial requirements. NCLB requires all high school students to be tested in science, however at this time students do not need to pass the science test to graduate.

Because Minnesota law requires a review and revision of state academic standards every six years, tracking trends for the GRAD test over long periods of time is challenging. In addition, the “cut score” for this test is adjusted annually making comparisons from year to year difficult to complete.

This form of testing is commonly referred to as “high-stakes” testing because the results are used to make important decisions concerning a student’s academic future, such as being held back or graduating from high school. An examination of over 30 years of research conducted by Boston College on the impact of high-stakes testing on minority students found that this type of assessment does not have a positive effect on teaching and learning for minority students and other students traditionally underserved by the American education system. The research posited that these types of assessments often do not motivate minority students to learn and are racially inequitable in assessing academic progress based upon race, culture, language or gender. There was

also a direct correlation made between this form of assessment and high dropout rates among minority students (Madaus and Marguerite 2001).

### 2010 GRAD Test Passing Rates

	Writing (9 <sup>th</sup> grade)		Reading (10 <sup>th</sup> grade)		Math (11 <sup>th</sup> grade)	
	Total Number Passing	Percent of group	Total Number Passing	Percent of group	Total Number Passing	Percent of group
American Indian	962	78%	684	61%	301	30%
Asian Pacific Islander	3097	82%	2484	67%	1975	52%
Hispanic/Latino	2648	76%	1834	57%	914	31%
Black/African-American	3961	73%	2724	51%	1091	22%
White	44061	93%	40419	85%	31496	66%

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed. (The data indicates how students performed on the initial testing opportunity in each content area.)

***Minnesota's Students of Color and American Indian students initial testing passing rates trail White students in all three content areas.*** The greatest parity among racial classification is evident in the Writing GRAD passing rates. Greater ranges of disparities are found in Mathematics with the Black/African-American passing rate being one-third that of Whites and the passing rate for American Indians and Hispanic/Latinos at about one-half of the White-passing rate. For reading, Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino student pass at about two-thirds the rate of White students.

Arguably, the primary goal of education is to prepare students to be productive citizens with the knowledge and skills required to successfully contribute to the community at large. The Minnesota Department of Education

has argued in the past that the GRAD test, with its focus on writing, reading and mathematics, is intended to ensure that Minnesota high school graduates have obtained these essential skills for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, groups such as *The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills*, say that students must also develop additional skills in order to navigate the complex life and work environments of an increasingly interconnected, multi-cultural, digitally-driven, globally competitive information age. With their multi-cultural and sometimes international experiences, students of color and American Indian students are in a strong position to develop and share such skills but such potential is not captured by the GRAD high stakes testing approach.

Unfortunately, standardized high-stakes assessments focusing only on the “3R’s” like Minnesota’s GRAD test, fail to accurately measure if students possess the necessary skill to compete in the world they will be responsible for.

#### **D. College Readiness: 2002 – 2012**

College readiness has become a focus and another measure of educational excellence for Minnesota. According to ACT (2011), college readiness is “the knowledge and skills a student needs to enroll and succeed in credit-bearing first-year courses at a postsecondary institution (such as a two- or four-year college, trade school, or technical school) without the need for remediation.”

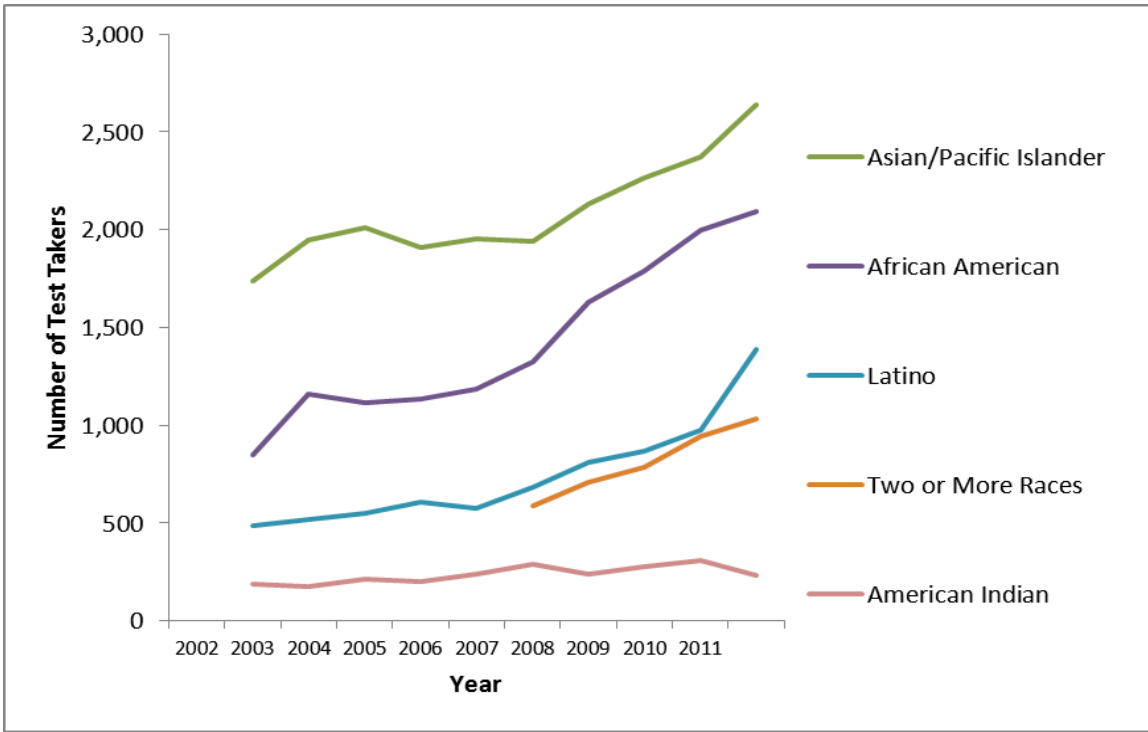
The ACT is the most commonly taken standardized college entrance exam in Minnesota. This test is actually four multiple-choice tests in the following content areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. In 2011, 72% of

Minnesota high school graduates took the assessment. From 2002-2011, the number of Students of Color and American Indian students taking the test increased from 3,260 to 7,390, a 127% increase. During this same period White students increased from 34,944 to 36,070; a 3% increase.

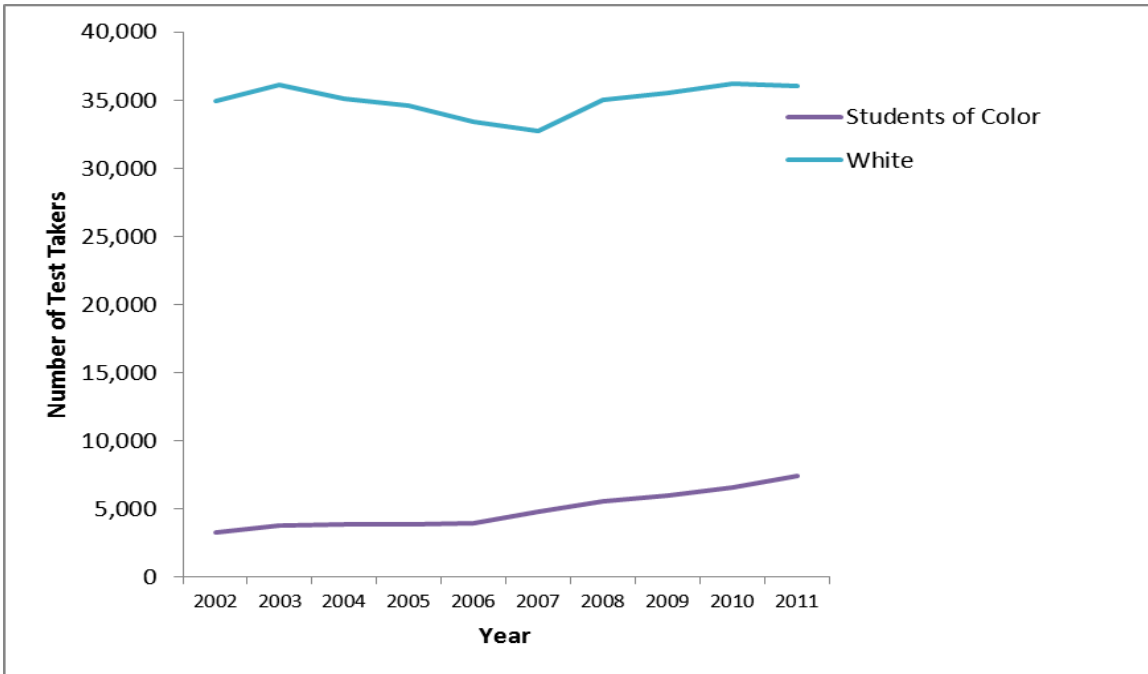
According to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, Minnesota has led the nation in average composite ACT scores for seven consecutive years. In 2011 Minnesota's average composite was 22.9 while the national composite score was 21.1. It must be noted, however, that some states require that all students take the assessment. For example, all students in Colorado take the assessment while in school in the spring of 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

In spite of the good news of the increase in test-taking by Students of Color and American Indian students, and of the state's high average composite score, the 2011 ***results indicate that the college readiness rate for Students of Color and American Indian students was substantially less overall than White students***. Forty percent of the White students who took the ACT were identified as college-ready. This compared to college readiness rates of 8% for Black/African American and 22% for Asian/Pacific Islander test-takers. White students out-performed Black/African American students at a rate greater than four to one.

## Number of ACT Test Takers by Racial Classification: 2002-2011

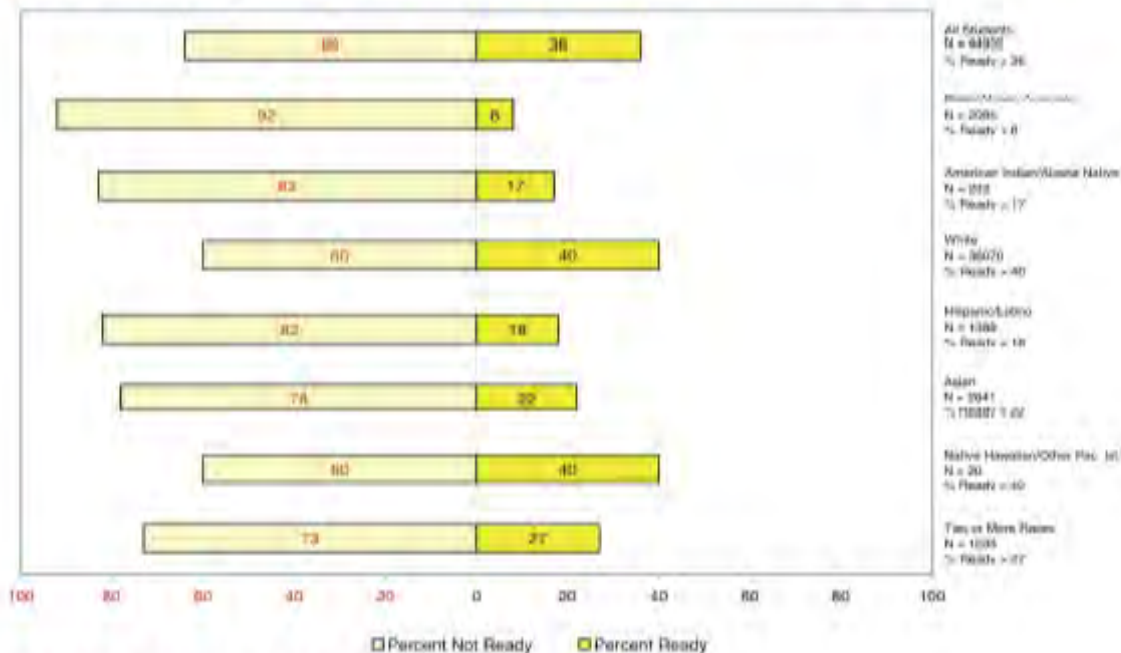


Source: Minnesota Department of Higher Education



Source: Minnesota Department of Higher Education

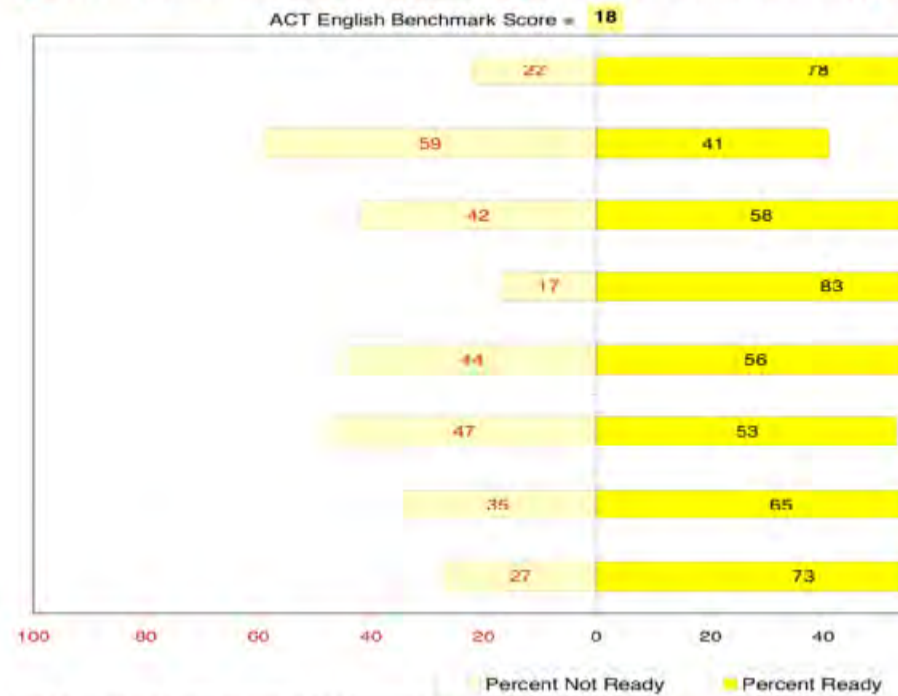
Figure 3.3. Percent of Students Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores by Race/Ethnicity<sup>1</sup>: ALL FOUR



<sup>1</sup> Refer to the section header on page 17 for a description of race/ethnicity changes.

To more fully understand college readiness differences based upon racial classification, this report includes information regarding each ACT content area. To remain consistent with the report's format and data analysis, five racial classifications are included: American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African American, and White.

Figure 3.1. Percent of Students Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores by Race

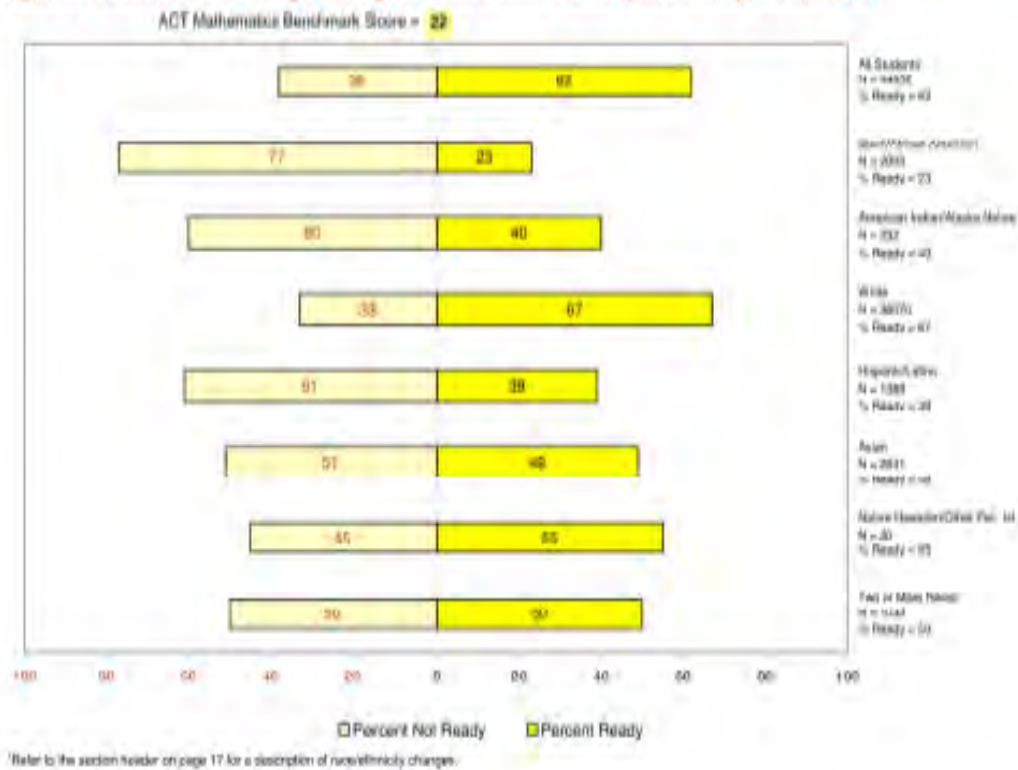


<sup>1</sup>Refer to the section header on page 17 for a description of race/ethnicity changes.

The ACT English Benchmark Scores in 2011 indicate varied levels of success across student groups on the English portion of the ACT. **While 83% of White student test takers met college readiness standards, Students of Color and American Indian students did not fair as well.** The group closest to white student scores were American Indian at 58% of students at benchmark (18), followed by Hispanic/Latino at 56%, Asian/Pacific Islander at 53% and the lowest passing rate was among Black/African Americans at 41%. The data shows that the largest gap of 42% in the English college readiness scores was between White and Black/African American students indicating that White students outperform Black/African American students by two to one.

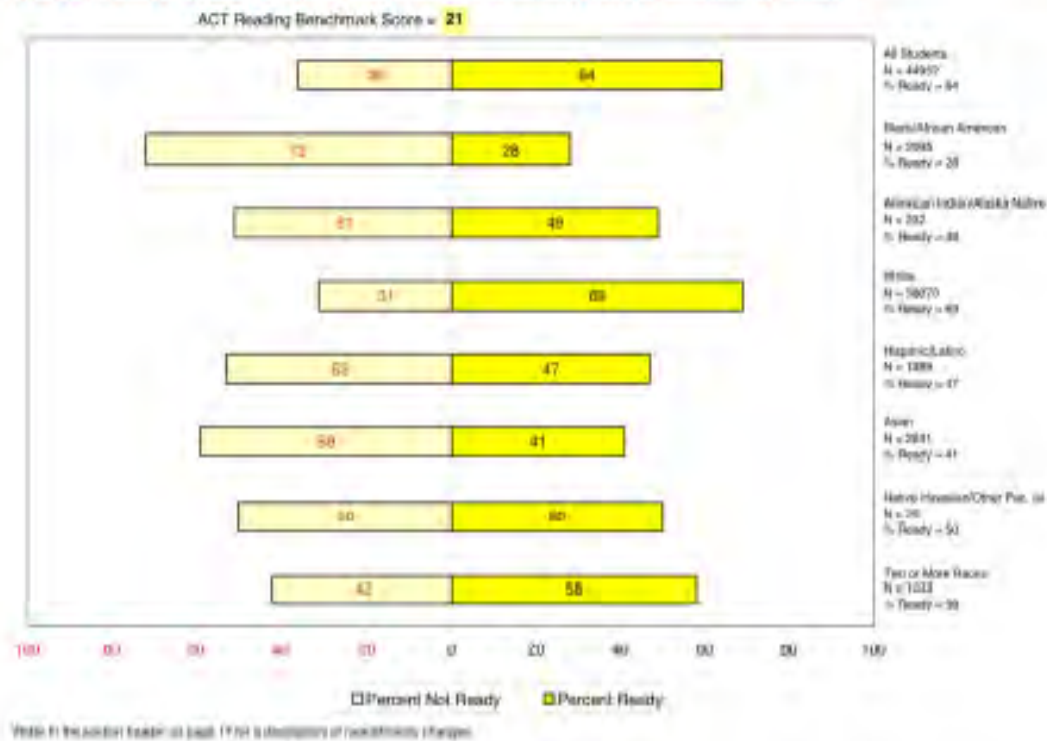


Figure 3.3. Percent of Students Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores by Race/Ethnicity<sup>1</sup>: MATHEMATICS



The ACT Mathematics Benchmark Scores in 2011 also indicate varied levels of success along racial classifications. **White students out-perform all other racial classifications** with 67% of students scoring at benchmark (22), followed by Asian/Pacific Islander at 49%, American Indian at 40%, Hispanic/Latino at 39%, and Black/African American's at 23%. The data shows the largest gap of 44% in mathematics college readiness scores between White and Black/African American students, indicating that Whites students out perform Black/African American students by almost three to one.

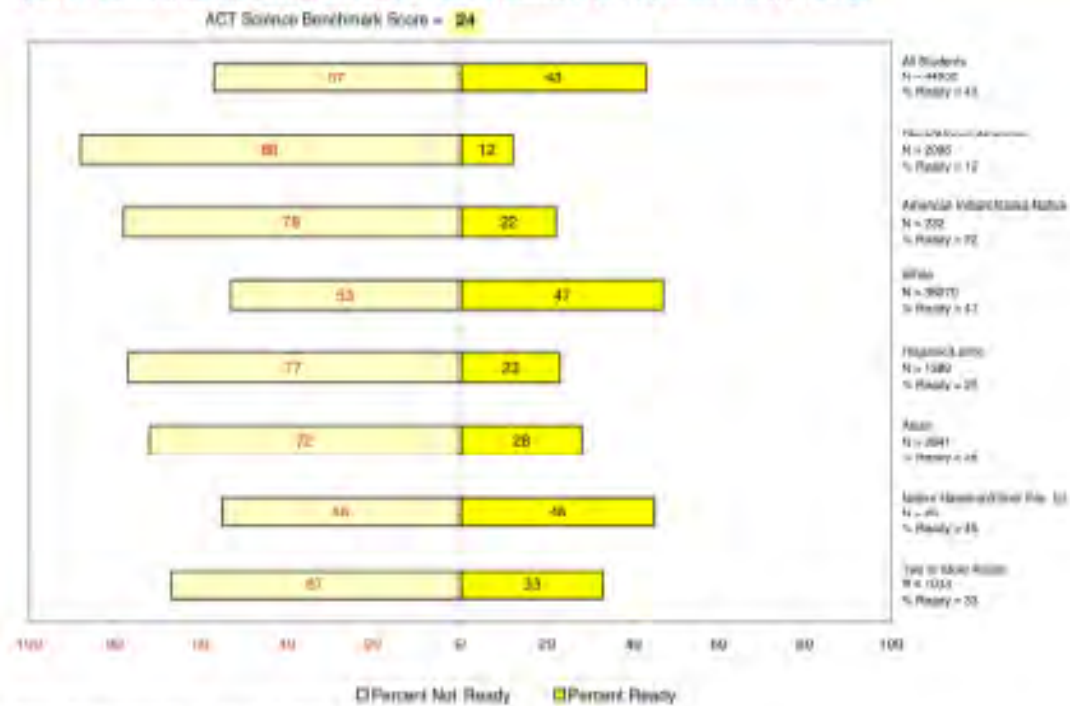
Figure 3.3. Percent of Students Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores by Race/Ethnicity<sup>1</sup> / READING



ACT Reading Benchmark Scores in 2011 follow a *similar trend to the other scores with varied levels of success following racial classifications.*

White students out-perform all other racial classifications with 69% of students scoring at benchmark (21), followed by American Indian at 49%, Hispanic/Latino at 47%, Asian/Pacific Islander at 41%, and Black/African American at 28%. The largest gap of 41% in reading college readiness scores are between White and Black/African American students, indicating that White students out-perform Black/African American students by more than two to one.

Figure 3.4. Percent of Students Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores by Race/Ethnicity<sup>1</sup>: SCIENCE



The ACT Science Benchmark Scores in 2011 also *follow the trend of all other ACT subject areas with varied levels of success following racial classifications*. Again, white students out-perform all other racial classifications with 47% of students at benchmark (24), followed by Asian/Pacific Islander at 28%, Hispanic/Latino at 23%, American Indian at 22%, and Black/African American’s at 12%. The data shows the largest gap of 35% in science college readiness scores between White and Black/African American students, indicating that Whites students out-perform Black/African American students by nearly four to one.

### Minnesota ACT Scores by Race 2002-2012

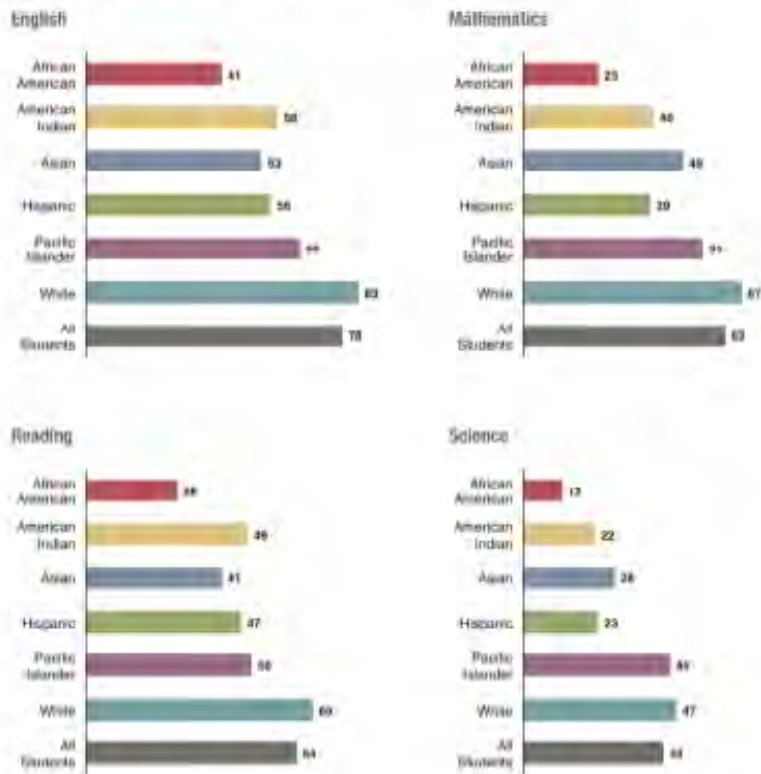
Year	All Students	American Indian	Asian Pacific Islander	Hispanic /Latino	African American / Black	Whites
2002	22.1	20.0	19.9	20.2	17.2	22.3
2003	22.0	19.7	19.9	20.1	17.0	22.3
2004	22.2	19.8	20.3	20.1	17.5	22.5
2005	22.3	20.0	20.3	20.4	17.6	22.6
2006	22.3	19.9	20.4	20.1	17.8	22.6
2007	22.5	19.7	20.4	20.5	17.4	22.9
2008	22.6	20.6	20.4	20.3	17.6	23.2
2009	22.7	20.2	20.4	20.4	17.8	23.5
2010	22.9	20.5	20.8	20.0	17.7	23.5
2011	22.9	20.2	20.6	20.1	17.9	23.5
2012	22.8	20.3	20.7	20.4	17.9	23.4

Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

In addition to looking at benchmark indicators, it is important to consider the trend data surrounding overall college readiness. Based upon the data (Minnesota ACT Scores by Race 2002-2012), there has been limited change in how prepared all of Minnesota's ACT test-takers are. According to the data, only one group has seen an increase of one point or more on their ACT composite score in the last decade (Whites, 1.1). All other groups have seen even less of a change in their overall composite score; Asian Pacific Islander .8, African American / Black .7, American Indian .3, and Hispanic /Latino .2.

## Participation and Opportunity by Subject

Percent of 2011 ACT-Tested High School Graduates Meeting College Readiness Benchmarks by Race/Ethnicity and Subject\*



Source: ACT

**College Remediation Rates in 2011** - Students who are not college-ready require some level of additional education commonly referred to as “remediation”. This remediation increases the burden on students by requiring extra coursework they must pay for without earning “college credit.” Many times students spend an entire year taking remedial courses to meet college

requirements before they are able to begin college coursework. Completing work in non-credit earning courses is demotivating, and makes it less likely for these students to persist to the completion of a post-secondary degree.

In 2010, according to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU), only 60% of Minnesota's 2008 high school graduates who enrolled in Minnesota's two-year and four-year institutions did not require remediation. The percent of Minnesota high school graduates who met three or more benchmarks identified by ACT varied by racial classification; Black/African American at 17%, American Indian at 31%, Hispanic/Latino at 32%, Asian/Pacific Islander at 34%, while 60% of White students met three or more of these benchmarks.

### **Rigorous Coursework and Dual Credit Participation Rates 2006 – 2011**

Recent research has provided some suggestions that may help prepare all students to be more college-ready. ACT itself provides data, which aligns specific courses with college readiness. The ACT data suggests that it is important to make sure students are taking the right kinds of courses. For example, only 19% of the students who took less than three years of math were found to be college-ready. In comparison, 68% of the students who took three or more years of math including Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry were assessed to be college-ready. Similarly, 19% of students who took less than three years of natural science courses were college-ready compared to 46% who took three or more years of science.

Rigorous high school courses with appropriate and aligned standards, coupled with a core curriculum, will help to more adequately prepare all of Minnesota's high school students. That is, taking the right kinds of courses matters more than taking the right number of courses. Students who take a rigorous core curriculum are more likely to be prepared for college without remediation regardless of racial classification (ACT, 2012).

In addition to the traditional high school curriculum, today's students have several other academic options that can help improve college readiness. These options are often referred to as *Dual Credit* programs. The four most common Dual-Credit programs in Minnesota are: Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), and Concurrent Enrollment.

In a recent report published by the Center for School Change (Austin-King, Lee, Little, & Nathan, 2012), participation in Dual-Credit programs can offer important benefits to all students. According to their report, ***from 2006-2011 the racial diversity of AP, Concurrent Enrollment, and PSEO programs was lower than the racial diversity of high school students in the state, while diversity in the IB program was higher than the average for the state.***

Students of Color and American Indian students' participation in these programs have increased at a greater rate than the overall high school population. During this time, overall participation increased in three of the four major Dual Credit programs; AP (62%), IB (76%), and Concurrent Enrollment (20%), while decreasing slightly in PSEO (4%).

Numbers and Percentages of 11th & 12th Grade MN Public High School Students Participating in IB, PSEO, & Concurrent Enrollment Compared to All Public High School Students in Minnesota					
	FY 11 MN Public School 11 & 12 Gr. Enrollment	FY 11 IB* Exam-takers 11 & 12 Gr.	FY 11 PSEO* Participants 11 & 12 Gr.	FY 10 MN Public School 11 & 12 Gr. Enrollment	FY 10 Concurrent Enrollment**
Total Number of Students	138,998	2,602	5,476	141,397	21,184
Free / Reduced Lunch	42,625	767	920	42,371	3,474
Percentage	31%	29%	17%	30%	16%
Students of Color	31,375	932	861	31,517	2,000
Percentage	23%	36%	16%	22%	9%
American Indian	2,707	13	42	2,846	227
Percentage	2%	0.50%	0.80%	2%	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	8,761	456	422	8,572	847
Percentage	6%	18%	8%	6%	4%
Black	13,147	240	274	13,310	513
Percentage	9%	9%	5%	9%	2%
Hispanic	7,120	141	123	6,789	413
Percentage	5%	5%	2%	5%	2%
White	107,263	1669	4,615	109,880	19,184
Percentage	77%	64%	84%	78%	91%

Source: Minnesota Department of Education Website Data Archives

\*IB & PSEO are compared with FY 11 data for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

\*\*Concurrent Enrollment is compared with FY10 for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

Source: ACT

Based upon this information, we decided<sup>37</sup> to provide additional information from recent reports produced by The Center for School Change surrounding potential benefits for Students of Color and American Indian students who chose to pursue PSEO programs.

According to a study conducted by MnSCU in 2007, students who participated in PSEO programs who had taken courses at career and or technical colleges “tend to have higher mean GPAs [Grade Point Averages] than those without the experience” (Kotamraju, 2007). This study includes findings that suggest dual credit programs like PSEO increases college readiness for



students. According to the data, “PSEO students who took a combination of career and technical classes and academic classes were more likely to earn a credential than those who took only one kind of course” (Kotamraju, 200). The research suggests that participating in Dual-Credit programs like PSEO actually give students an advantage or “head start” in completing post-secondary education. This “head start” has been directly linked with college readiness by not only strengthening the student’s academic capacity but also exposing students to the rigor and expectations of college. These positive academic experiences may also lead to the physiological and emotional strength needed for success. These programs may allow students to develop the belief and confidence in themselves and their abilities to be successful in a post-secondary setting. According to the research, “early success in college goes a long way in ensuring that all students, but especially CTE [Career and Technical Education] students, continue toward completing their college program of study and leave with a postsecondary credential” (Kotamraju, 2007, p. 51).

In addition to the MnSCU 2007 study, The Center for School Change conducted a study in 2005, which used a statewide poll to better understand what Minnesotans thought of PSEO. Results from the poll indicated clear support for PSEO by a majority of Minnesotans; 82% either strongly supported or supported PSEO (Nathan, Accomando & Fitzpatrick, 2005).

This research also provided some practical first-hand information regarding how PSEO participants felt about their experiences in the programs through surveying 357 PSEO students. According to the survey, 97% of PSEO

participants were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the experience and 86% would “definitely” do PSEO again if given an opportunity (Nathan, Accomando & Fitzpatrick, 2005). PSEO students identified significant benefits from having the opportunity to participate in a dual credit experience. Students cited benefits such as; “learning more than they would in high school courses, saving time and money, and feeling more academically prepared for some form of higher education” (Nathan, Accomando & Fitzpatrick, 2005).

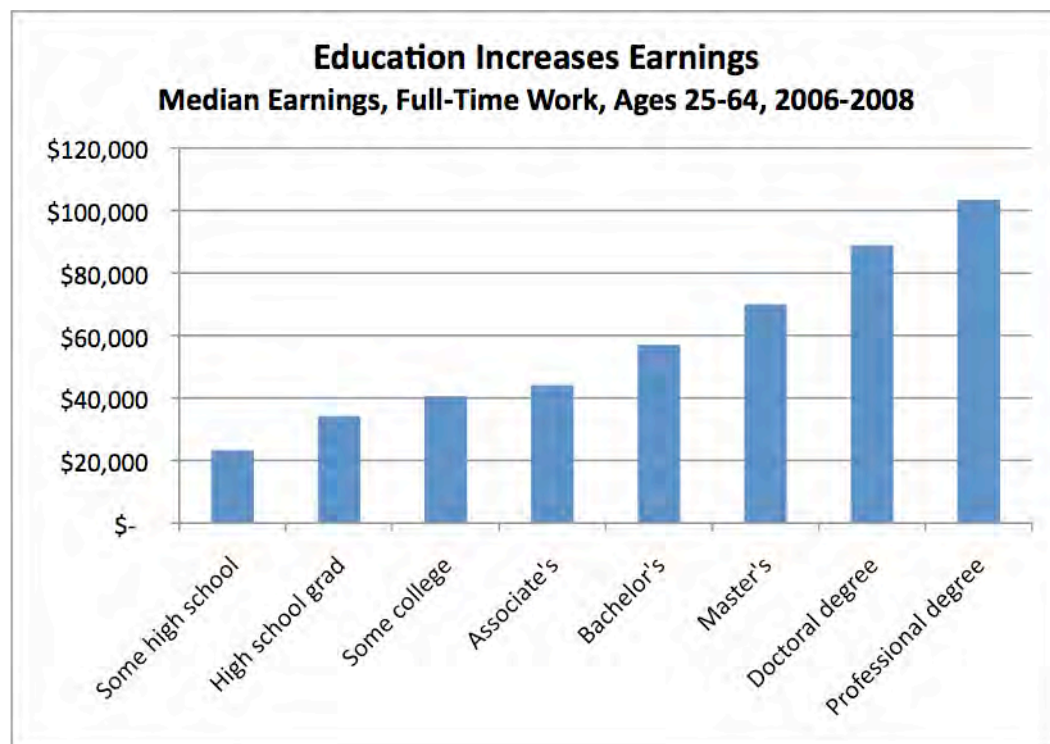
Lastly, in addition to the academic impact that PSEO may have for some students, the study also indicated some important demographic information. According to the study, “low-income students and Students of Color were significantly under-represented in PSEO programs” (Nathan, Accomando & Fitzpatrick, 2005).

***To summarize, a sizable college readiness gap between Students of Color, American Indian students and White students is present in both the combined scores and in each of the content areas, with the greatest disparity found between Black/African American students and Whites. In addition, the trend data suggests that no racial category has witnessed a large gain in their overall composite score, which may suggest only limited change in college readiness for all of Minnesota’s students over the last decade.***

## E. Higher Education Access and Success: 2002 – 2010

### 1. Importance of Higher Education to Individuals.

- Educational choices affect future earnings. To the extent finances or test scores limit educational options for Students of Color and American Indian students, they also can affect earnings. Not all post-secondary degrees have the same benefits. In the aggregate, a bachelor's degree offers more financial rewards than a two-year degree. From 2006 to 2008, the median income for an individual with an associate's degree working full time was \$44,086 a year. The median income for someone with a bachelor's degree was \$57,026, or \$13,000 more (US Census, 2011).



**Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2006-2008.**

- **The more Students of Color and American Indian students pursue higher education, the more long-standing employment disparities close.** People of color have higher unemployment rates than White people. This is true nationally and particularly true locally. A recent study found Minnesota had the highest Black/African American unemployment rate in the nation, with more than one in four blacks unemployed in the third quarter of 2011. That compared to 6% for White Minnesotans, which ranked 36<sup>th</sup> nationally (American Community Survey 2009). Employment disparities persist even after accounting for education. For example, for Minnesotans age 21-64, Black/African-Americans without a high school diploma had an unemployment rate of 28% in 2010, compared to 16% for Whites without a diploma. However, the further people move up the educational ladder, the more the unemployment gap between different racial classifications narrowed.

<b>Impact of Education on Employment Disparities by Racial Classification</b>				
<b>Racial Classification /Ethnicity</b>	<b>Less than High School</b>	<b>High School Diploma/GED</b>	<b>Some College</b>	<b>BA or Better</b>
White	16%	8%	8%	4%
Black/African-American	28%	21%	15%	6%
American Indians	44%	26%	8%	13%
Asian Pacific Islander	16%	11%	8%	6%
Hispanic/Latino	12%	9%	11%	2%

Source: Minnesota 2010 unemployment, ages 21-64, IPUMS ACS data.

## **2. Importance of Higher Education for Minnesota**

Minnesota has traditionally prided itself on high levels of educational attainment. Arguably, this has lured us into a false sense of security. In a state facing a perfect storm of changing demographics, growing workforce needs, and disinvestment in education, it is time to shift from a state with post-secondary opportunities for some to a college-going culture for all.

A worker in Minnesota with only a high school diploma faces limited job prospects. According to a recent report between 2008 and 2018, new jobs in Minnesota requiring post-secondary education and training will grow by 152,000, while jobs for high school graduates and dropouts will grow by 28,000 (Georgetown University, 2010). Global competition, technology, and other factors are creating demands for higher skilled workers with post-secondary credentials (Georgetown University, 2010). Education is strongly tied to income and employment, and that benefits individual workers and the state as a whole. A more educated workforce boosts the economic vitality of the community at large.

Minnesota's prosperity will depend on the educational preparation of all of our students, and increasingly that means the educational success of Students of Color and American Indian students. Education is of particular importance for communities of color, who currently—and historically—have less college education, higher unemployment, and lower wages. More education, however, is the surest path to increasing income. Georgetown University (2010) estimated the impact on annual earnings between a professional degree and an 8<sup>th</sup> grade

education at about \$72,000 a year, which was roughly five times greater than the impact of gender, which was \$13,000.

## Higher Education Access and Success Data: 2002 – 2010

The following findings highlight ongoing racial and ethnic disparities in higher education. They pose questions and problems that Minnesota need to address.

### 1. Minnesota’s College Participation Rates: 2001 – 2010

#### Post-Secondary Attendance by Racial Classification

	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Total Minority No.	Percent	White No.	Percent	Total No.
2001	2,580	9,033	9,384	3,627		24,624	11%	208,251	89%	232,875
2002	2,927	10,259	11,279	4,094		28,559	12%	219,749	88%	248,308
2003	3,265	11,624	15,430	4,782		35,101	13%	238,367	87%	273,468
2004	3,428	12,709	17,157	5,481		38,775	13%	253,017	87%	291,792
2005	3,720	13,800	19,632	6,330		43,482	14%	265,874	86%	309,356
2006	4,075	14,957	24,840	7,206		51,078	15%	280,148	85%	331,226
2007	4,438	16,330	30,730	7,801		59,299	17%	288,230	83%	347,529
2008	4,848	17,573	36,460	8,935		67,816	19%	296,813	81%	364,629
2009	5,147	18,182	45,567	10,485	401	81,747	21%	313,907	79%	395,654
2010	4,233	18,107	54,413	15,394	354	102,910	25%	316,445	75%	419,355

Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

Post secondary attendance in Minnesota by students of color and American Indian students has grown dramatically through the last decade. In 2001 these students comprised 11% of all enrolled students. By 2010 that number jumped to 25% of all enrollees.

However, not all of those students matriculated from Minnesota high schools. Many college students are recruited from other states. **A participation**

***gap exists between the rates of White students and Students of Color and American Indian students attending Minnesota post-secondary schools upon graduating from high school with white students attending at higher rates.***

For example, according to five-year averages (2006-2010), 43% of Hispanic/Latino students with a high school diploma attend Minnesota colleges, compared to 51% of White students. American Indian students are less likely to attend college than White students or Asian/Pacific Islander students.

Racial classifications only tell part of the story. There are differences within each racial classification and ethnic group. For instance, there are differences in college preparation between recent African immigrants and third- or fourth- generation Minnesotans, though both are classified as Black/African American.

State data only gives a partial picture. Of all 2010 Minnesota high school graduates, 51% attended Minnesota colleges in the fall, another 20% attended out-of-state colleges, and 29% did not immediately enroll in college. Available data gives demographic information for Minnesota high school graduates who attended Minnesota colleges only; racial classification and ethnicity data are not available for Minnesota high school graduates attending out-of-state colleges.

<b>Minnesota High School Graduation and College Participation Disparities</b>		
<b>Racial Classification /Ethnicity</b>	<b>Minnesota High School Graduation 2010</b>	<b>High School Grads Continuing to MN Colleges 2006-2010</b>

White	83%	51%
Asian Pacific Islander	70%	55%
Hispanic/Latino	49%	43%
Black/African-American	47%	50%
American Indian	45%	40%
<b>Source: Office of Higher Education and Minnesota Compass</b>		

This is significant based upon the fact that K-12 enrollment for the state indicates that 75% of the K-12 students are White, while 83% of our post-secondary students are White. Since students of color and American Indian students are on average younger and thus occupy a larger share of the early K-12 grades as opposed to the grades immediately preceding post-secondary, that correlation between the two student bodies may even out over time to reflect equal participation rates but it is worth tracking progress to that end.

**2. Minnesota’ Students of Color and American Indian students are more likely to attend two-year institutions rather than four-year institutions.**

More than half of college-bound Students of Color and American Indian students choose Minnesota’s two-year colleges compared to about one-third of all White students. This could reflect the financial realities of Students of Color/American Indians and their high rates of poverty. It could also reflect the need for more academic preparation within these communities.



<b>Colleges Attendance by Racial Classification</b>		
<b>Minnesota Institution</b>	<b>Choice among Students of Color</b>	<b>Choice Among White Students</b>
Two-Year Community and Technical College	51%	35%
State Universities	13%	22%
University of Minnesota	17%	20%
Private Colleges	15%	20%
Private Career Schools	4%	3%
<b>Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education</b>		

3. **Public two-year colleges with higher percentages of Students of Color and American Indian students tend to have lower overall graduation rates.** MnSCU measures success of its two-year programs by combining the three-year graduation rate and the transfer rate, recognizing that students who immediately move to a new school have not dropped out of the educational system. Some transfer students will continue and graduate from another institution, and others will drop out after transferring. (That success or failure will be counted against the last institution the student attended, not the school where the student started.) When comparing individual Minnesota two-year community and technical colleges by their percent of Students of Color and American Indian students and their combined graduation/retention rates, the data indicates that colleges with higher percentages of Students of Color and American Indian students have lower success rates.

Minneapolis Community and Technical College, with the second highest percentage of Students of Color and American Indian students (52%), had the

lowest combined graduation/retention rate (34%). Alexandria Technical and Community College and Itasca Community College had the highest success rates (68% graduation/retention rates) but low levels of Students of Color and American Indian enrollment; 4% and 10%, respectively.

**4. Students of Color and American Indian students graduate from Minnesota's four-year public, nonprofit and for-profit colleges and universities at lower rates than their White peers.** Four-year schools measure success by the percentage of students that graduate within six years of enrollment. The overall 2010 graduation rate from Minnesota's four-year institutions was 61%. White students had a 62% graduation rate; Students of Color and American Indian students were 10% lower, with a 52% graduation rate.

Among public four-year institutions, Metropolitan State University had the highest percentage of Students of Color and American Indian students (29%) and had the lowest six-year graduation rate of Students of Color and American Indian students by far; just 14%, compared to the next lowest-performing campus, University of Minnesota-Crookston, with 38%.

Minnesota's four-year, for-profit colleges and universities are relatively small in number compared to the state's non-profit colleges. The for-profit colleges have relatively higher enrollments of Students of Color and American Indian students and relatively lower overall success rates for all students. The majority of non-profit colleges had six-year graduation rates above 60% except

for American Indians (48%). The majority of for-profit colleges have much lower graduation rates.

<b>Minnesota Four-Year College Graduation Rates by Racial Classification</b>				
<b>Racial Classification/ Ethnicity</b>	<b>Private Non-profit Colleges</b>	<b>University of Minnesota</b>	<b>State Universities</b>	<b>Private For-profit Colleges</b>
White	73%	67%	50%	44%
Asian Pacific Islander	72%	60%	42%	30%
Hispanic/Latino	60%	60%	38%	35%
Black/African-American	62%	43%	29%	22%
American Indian	48%	43%	27%	30%

Source: US. Department of Education, IPEDS Completion Survey

**5. Trend data suggests overall increase in post-secondary graduation rates for All Minnesota students with the greatest increase for Students of Color and American Indian students.**

Though there are disparities in graduation rates between Students of Color, American Indian students and their White counter parts, the trend data indicates that a narrowing of the gap may be occurring.

**Post-Secondary Racial Classification Graduation Rates 2002-2010**

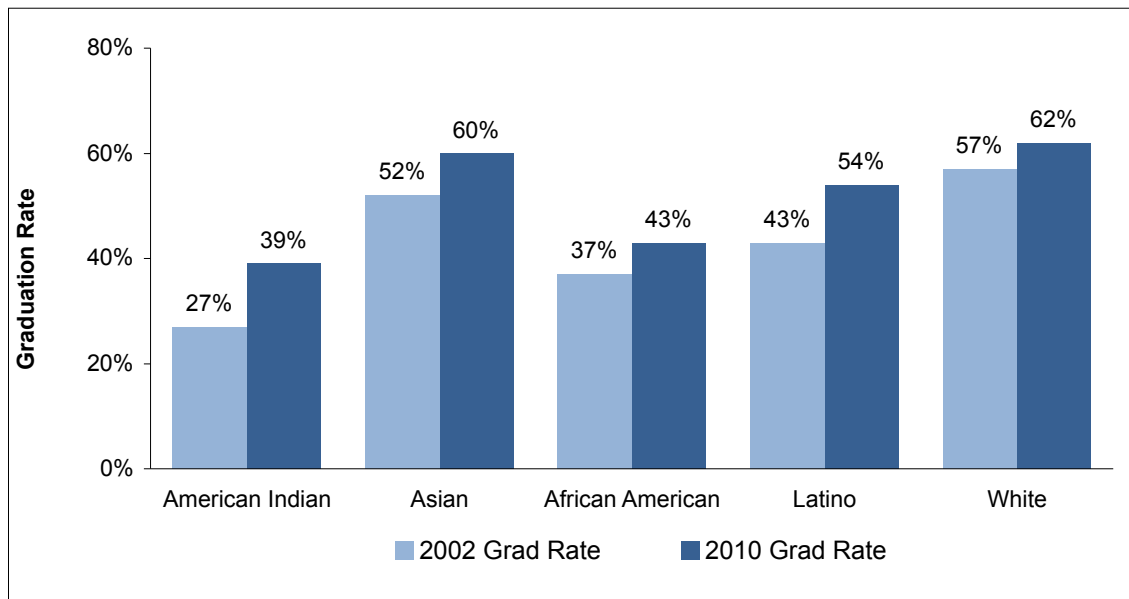
	2002	2010	10 Year % of Change	% of Increase
American Indian	27%	39%	12%	44%
Asian/Pacific Islander	52%	60%	8%	15%
Black/African American	37%	43%	6%	16%
Hispanic/Latino	43%	54%	11%	26%
White	57%	62%	6%	11%

Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

When looking at the past 10 years of post-secondary graduation data various trends are identifiable. All racial classifications of students show increased graduation rates; Black/African Americans and Whites increased by 6%, Asian/Pacific by 8%, Hispanic/Latinos by 11%, and the largest increase found with American Indian students by 12%.

While this represents an increase for all racial classifications, the percentage of growth relative to each group is even more substantial. For example, the overall 6% increase for White students represents an 11% growth in comparison to the 12% increase for American Indian students, which actually represents a 44% increase for the group. This information is encouraging as we not only see an increase for all racial classifications, but it appears that there is a beginning of closing the racially predicative post-secondary graduation gap.

### **Racial Classification Post-Secondary Graduation 2002-2010-**



Source: Minnesota Office of Higher Education

6. **Increasing numbers of Students of Color and American Indian students are receiving post-secondary certificates and degrees from Minnesota colleges and universities, though disparities remain.**

- **Certificates:** Students can get higher education certificates that give them a marketable credential in less time than it takes to get a degree. At MnSCU institutions examples include: certificates in accounting, computer support, or child care administration. The number of Students of Color and American Indian students receiving higher education certificates from Minnesota colleges has more than doubled in the past decade; from 1,243 certificates in 2001 to 2,943 certificates in 2010.
- **Associate's degrees:** Students of Color and American Indian students receiving an associate's degree from Minnesota colleges nearly tripled during the decade; from 832 in 2001 to 2,322 in 2010.
- **Bachelor's degrees:** Students of Color and American Indian students receiving a bachelor's degree from Minnesota colleges and universities doubled during the decade; from 1,684 in 2001 to 3,315 in 2010.

The growth in Students of Color and American Indian students receiving certificates and degrees needs to be put in perspective. The number of certificates and degrees received by Students of Color and American Indian students should have increased more significantly, given their growth in post-secondary enrollment numbers. For example, the 3,759 certificates and degrees conferred to minority students in 2001 occurred when 24,624 such students were enrolled representing 15.2% of that overall body of students. In 2010, the 8,580

certificates and degrees conferred is a sizable jump from 10 years earlier, but it represents only 8.3% of the now larger minority student body of 102,910.

**7. Students of Color and American Indian students are more likely to need financial aid to attend college than their White peers.**

Finances affect a student’s decisions to pursue college, and which colleges to pursue. Students of Color and American Indian students tend to have less family financial support than their White peers. White Minnesota high school graduates seeking student loans come from families with a median income of \$55,600; Students of Color and American Indian students seeking student loans come from families with a median income of \$41,000 (Minnesota Office of Higher Education). Disparities in family income between White families and families of color are historic and ongoing. Students of Color and American Indian students received on average 12% larger student loans than white students (Minnesota Office of Higher Education).

<b>Post- Secondary Financial Aid Variations</b>		
	<b>Percent with Loans</b>	<b>Median Cumulative Loan</b>
White	76%	\$22,500
Students of Color	90%	\$25,200
Source: 2008 data from U.S. Department of Education National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey		

**E. Conclusion: Minnesota continues to produce racially-predictive student academic outcomes with minimal “closing of the achievement gap” among racial groups, which negatively impacts the state’s long-term prosperity.**

The data suggests Minnesota’s educational opportunities—from pre-kindergarten through college—have large equity gaps for Students of Color and American Indian Students. These “gaps” are the by-products of systems created long ago to privilege some over others. Deploying “color blind” strategies – policies and practices that apply the same approaches and resources to all children regardless of the unique realities they face as barriers to success - locks those unearned (privileged) advantages into place for some and denies many Students of Color and American Indian the basic American principle of opportunity.

To effectively address these “gaps,” Minnesota must recognize and intentionally focus policy and practice on pursuing both educational excellence and equity reforms. Key measures used such as kindergarten readiness assessments, reading and mathematics proficiency tests, or high school graduation rates are all **racially predictive**; given existing social constructs, if you know the student’s racial classification, you can generally predict how well they will do on these measures of success. Existing data shows the size of the equity gap in broad terms, but it only tells part of the story. Gaps exist within each racial classification subgroup, and we lack the data to fully understand them. Because there is great diversity within all racial classifications, ethnicity, English

language skills, and refugee and immigration status should all be taken into account regarding how they impact student success, instruct student needs, and suggest appropriate responses.

How state leaders choose to address these challenges will have a profound effect not only on individual students and families, but Minnesota's long-term economic vitality. Every state faces a demand for higher-trained workers, but Minnesota faces exceptional needs. By 2018, 70% of Minnesota jobs will require some post-secondary training, ranking Minnesota third highest in nation, according to research from Georgetown University (2010). By 2018, Minnesota will rank 48<sup>th</sup> in jobs available to high school dropouts (Georgetown University, 2010).

Today, 40% of the Minnesota workforce has a post-secondary degree and that number is expected to decline, as highly educated Baby Boomers retire and are replaced by less-educated younger workers (Governor's Workforce Development Council). If Minnesota makes the right investments, everyone will benefit. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (2008), if the proportion of area residents with a college degree goes up by 1%, it is associated with about a 2% increase in the metropolitan area's Gross Domestic Product per capita.

Minnesota's current K-12 system appears to be working well for the large majority of White students. That success is laudable and should continue. However, the state has a lot to gain from improving the educational outcomes of Students of Color and American Indian students, who are an increasing part of



the Minnesota student body and future workforce and civic leaders. The challenge facing Minnesota starts with improvements to early childhood education, continues with the K-12 system, and ultimately depends on the state's ability to help all students reach their full potential as post-secondary skilled citizens.

## **F. Special Focus**

### **A. Language, Culture, Mobility and the Power of Role Models**

The Minnesota Minority Education Partnership began producing the State of Students of Color and American Indian Students report 10 years ago. Much of the information in the preceding section is covering traditional information. In 2001, the finding in our inaugural report included the following:

- Because of increases in K-12 enrollments among Students of Color and American Indian students, Minnesota's future will rely more than ever, on the academic achievement and college graduation of Students of Color and American Indian students.
- Test data from the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments and the Minnesota Basic Standards Test show that Students of Color and American Indian students are not meeting standards in mathematics, reading and writing at the same rates as White students.

We believe it is important to keep highlighting these messages, and to push for the improvements necessary for our children and our state to move forward. This year we have chosen to add new elements to the report; a special focus section to elaborate on key topics. For instance, we believe it is important to highlight how **language and culture** impact a child's education. ***The use of racial classifications that arguably were not designed for pedagogical purposes but nonetheless have been used by policy makers to categorize proficiency testing, hide important cultural differences within our communities that impact learning.*** Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino,

Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian communities all have incredible diversity within each community. ***A key contributor to improving educational achievement may be found in a deeper understanding of each community's knowledge, teaching and learning methods, pedagogy, and values.***

In addition, we want to give attention to the issue of **mobility** among some of our families and how that may also affect a child's ability to learn.

Addressing issues of language, culture, and mobility are not panaceas to closing the racially predictive achievement gap, but each one contributes an important piece of knowledge, and merits further attention.

## 1. Language and Culture

### Introduction

Language and culture are important elements of learning. They shape our thoughts and understanding of the world from our earliest years. Culture has a deep impact on parenting, and our parents are our first teachers. In this element of the State of Students of Color and American Indian Students Report 2012, the importance of ethnic background and the linguistic profile of students is discussed and supported through showing how a deeper disaggregation of data could be helpful in responding to the academic needs of students.

According to federal guidelines, Minnesota student data is reported by using the racial classification of the students. Racial classifications can mask possible variations occurring within groups. For example the racial classification of Black/African-American does little to recognize the wide diversity within the African diasporas in America, possibly leaving us with an incomplete understanding of the experiences of recent Somali immigrants compared to fourth or fifth-generation students.

Similarly with Asian/Pacific Islanders, racial classification data does little to offer answers to questions such as, how many Asian/Pacific Islander students are Hmong or how many of those students have arrived to the U.S. as possible refugees versus being born in the U.S.? Racial classifications provide us limited information to help support the Hispanic/Latino communities needs as well, for

example it does not indicate the portion of Hispanic/Latino students who are impacted by linguistic isolation.

Currently, schools have only some of the data needed to best understand students' ethnic or cultural identity. One currently available but limited alternative option of data to consider using is the Home Primary Language (HPL) as a proxy measure for ethnicity. According to the MARSS manual, the data element HPL is typically obtained from the Home Language Questionnaire. This questionnaire is intended to identify the language "first spoken by students, the language spoken most of the time, or the language usually spoken in the home."

Using HPL may provide ethnic data to help Minnesota address various educational needs. For example, Asian/Pacific Islander students who primarily speak "Hmong" at home can be considered as Hmong and Black/African-American students who primarily speak "Somali" can be considered to be Somali.

There are limitations in using HPL, which should be noted. For example, ethnicity cannot be determined for students who primarily speak English at home. Additional limitations are present for American Indian and Hispanic/Latino students; HPL does not reveal data to accurately determine ethnicity or other important background information. Nonetheless, as this element demonstrates, finer disaggregation of student data within ethnicity can be a powerful way to gain new insights into the realities of student achievement among Minnesota's Students of Color and American Indian students.

Minnesota's Students of Color and American Indian students are confronted with several cultural and academic barriers which can impede academic progress. Key issues such as; refugee experience, misidentified monolithic culture, language isolation, and language reacquisition are just some of the areas which a deeper understanding of cultural student data can improve educational opportunities for Students of Color and American Indian Students.

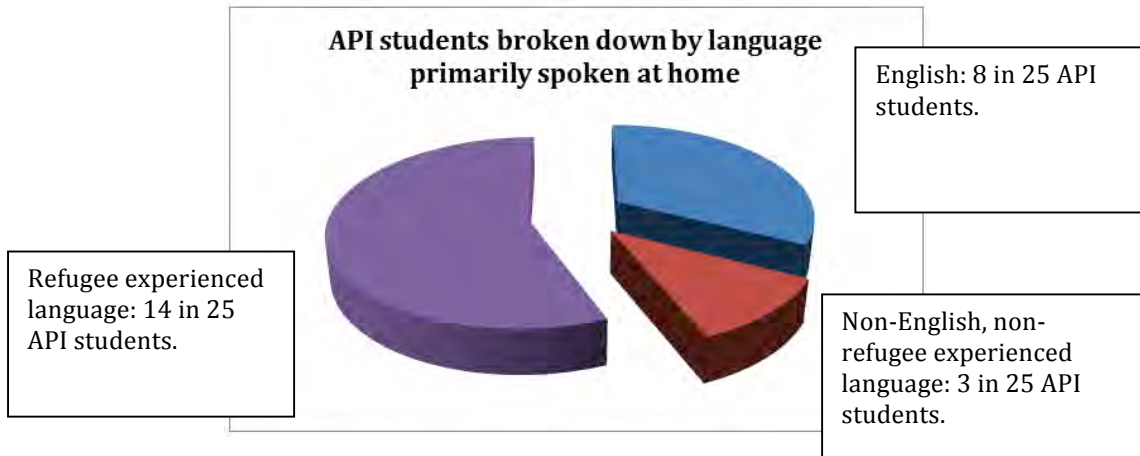
We understand that many of these cultural barriers impact multiple racial classifications and are not limited to just one group of Students of Color and American Indian Students. To avoid redundancy and provide a better understanding how disaggregating cultural data impacts access and opportunity in Minnesota's educational system for Students of Color and American Indian students, we have included specific example for all four racial classifications. The following examples are not necessarily unique to any specific racial classification and could be found potentially with all racial classifications. These examples, however, provide a deeper nuanced understanding surrounding the importance of language and culture data as it pertains to Students of Color and American Indian students.

### **Language and Culture: Asian/Pacific Islander Students**

Data on Asian/Pacific Islander students is often reported in an aggregate form that combines all Asian/Pacific Islander ethnic groups into a single racial category, resulting in an average score that may be widely different across specific ethnic communities such as Hmong, Chinese, Vietnamese, etc. The use

of aggregate data for Asian/Pacific Islander students contributes to a misleading image of Asian/Pacific Islanders populations as a monolithic minority, which emulates dominate culture educational practices. This portrayal of Asian/Pacific Islander students does not take into account the wide spectrum of historical experiences and educational attainment among Asian/Pacific Islander students. Decades of research have challenged the monolithic minority image of the Asian/Pacific Islander population and have argued for the use of disaggregated data in reporting. In response, we have provided disaggregated data on Minnesota's Asian/Pacific Islander students as best possible using HPL.

The data for the Asian/Pacific Islander (API) students was disaggregated into three groups using HPL: 1) a possible refugee experienced API group, 2) a possible non-refugee experienced API group, and 3) an English speaking HPL API group. Identification of these groups and much of the contributing analysis surrounding this section has come forth from research the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans released in their landmark report "Asian Pacific Students in Minnesota: Facts, not Fiction" (March of 2012).



Source: The Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans

- Refugee Experienced API group (abbreviated to “RE” for “refugee experienced”)

Possible refugee experienced group includes those who arrive in the U.S. as refugees or have experiences similar to refugees (political persecution, inability to return home, etc.). The RE group includes Hmong, Vietnamese, Lao, Tibetan, Cambodian, and Burmese (including Karen) populations. Most significant of the RE groups is the shared experiences of physical and mental trauma, lack of access to quality formal education, and involuntary immigration to the United States.

- Non-Refugee Experienced API group (abbreviated to “non-RE” for “non-refugee experienced”)

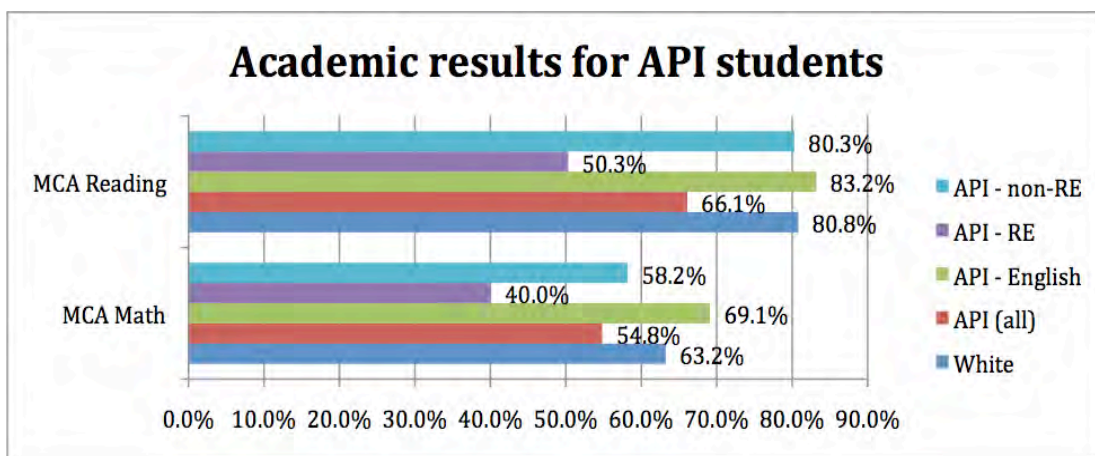
Possible non-refugee experienced groups include those who primarily come to the U.S. as voluntary immigrants and include groups such as Chinese, Korean, Filipino, etc.

- Speakers of English API Group



The ethnicity of English speaking API students cannot be determined by HPL and are grouped together.

When the data is disaggregated, wide disparities between groups among the API students and between White students are revealed. Data suggests that API who speaks English is on par or ahead of White students academically, while API students with possible refugee experience lag well behind.



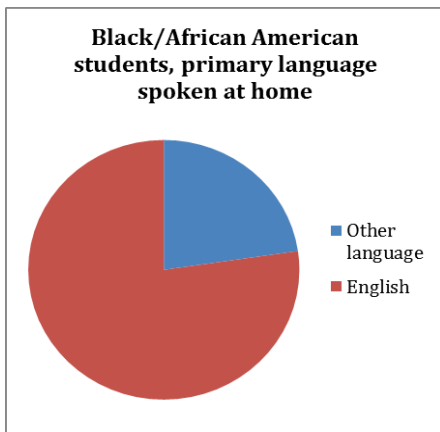
Source: The Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans

Better collection and reporting of student data by ethnicity could help dispel the monolithic racial classification myth, and focus attention on certain groups of students where deep academic disparities exist. It could better inform educational leaders, policy makers, and community members on how to address the specific needs of all students, including API students, as well being sensitive to risk factors within a specific student population.

## Language and Culture: Black /African American Students

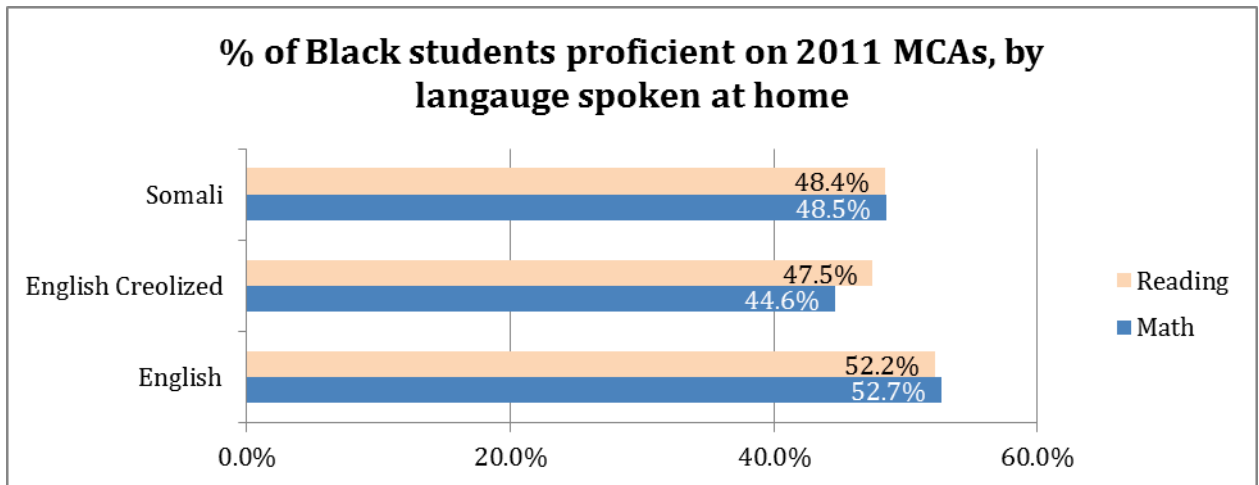
According to the Minnesota Department of Education, there were 79,756 students identified as Black or African-Americans in 2010-2011. About one in five Black/African-American students report speaking a language other than English while at home.

Black/African-American students in Minnesota speak more than 95



different languages other than English. It is estimated that Somali speakers make up nearly two-thirds of the Black/African-American student population whose home language is not English.

When comparing mathematics and reading proficiency among individuals who identify English, English (creolized), or Somali we find different outcomes; 52.2%, 47.5%, and 48.4% in reading, respectively and 52.7%, 44.6%, and 48.5% in math, respectively.



Current data on racial classification or HPL is not exhaustive enough to allow for conclusions based on the effectiveness or the potential pedagogical approaches such as English Learner Services. Several questions remain, including the effectiveness of coursework for increasing academic preparedness and decreasing the achievement gap. The data collected on racial classifications, home language, and EL eligibility provides very little concrete indicators for this group regarding ethnicity, degree of group identification, parental education, whether these individuals live in a cultural enclave, or whether they are students of subsequent generations of immigrants. Additional data surrounding ethnicity could provide meaningful information that may help direct educational efforts.

For example, how are the English, creolized group different from the English or Somali group? What factors tend to make these individuals more vulnerable or more successful? What pedagogy has the best results in areas of proficiency for Black/African-American students whose home language is other than English? These questions are highly important toward the goal of reducing the educational disparities that exist among Black/African-American students and their White counterparts.

Research suggests that there are several risk factors for student achievement beginning in kindergarten through third grade that may be further exacerbated throughout their matriculation through school (Zill & West, 2001). Rathbum, West, and Watson (2005) found that a combination of risk factors among Black/African American students negatively impacted achievement in mathematics and reading. Those risk factors included: 1) living below poverty, 2)

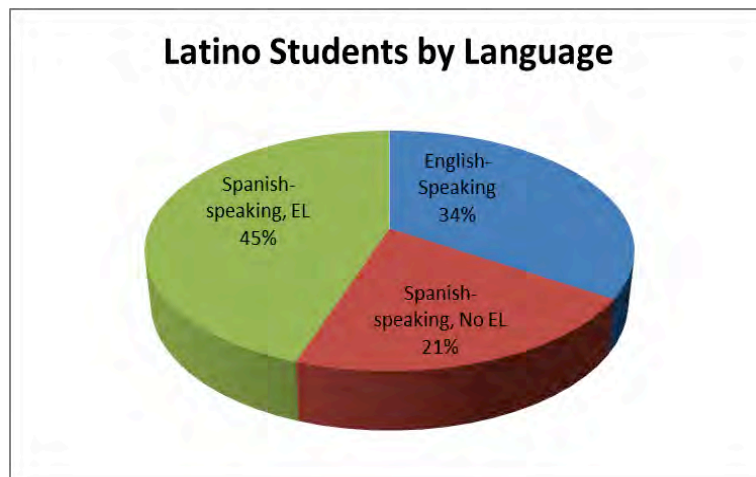
single-parent household, 3) mother who did not complete high school, and 4) having a primary home language that is not English. A combination of two or more of the above risk factors increased the risk of low academic achievement in Black/African American students.

Furthermore, Adger, Christian, & Taylor (1999), suggest that Black/African American students who indicate English as a first or home language may experience dialectical barriers to academic achievement. The authors suggest these barriers may be perpetuated because of disciplinary traditions, indifference, and racism. Other research has suggested there may be a difference in achievement outcomes among Black/African-American students, in regards to whether or not the students attend an EL reporting school.

These research examples reinforce the fact that more detailed and broad data related to HPL and ethnicity, versus simply collecting data on racial classification, needs to be pursued among all Students of Color and American Indian students. Student data should include socioeconomic status, mother's level of education, dialectic barrier assessment, cultural identity (acculturation), whether or not the individual lives in a cultural enclave, experience in a refugee camp, first or subsequent immigrant generation, and if other services were provided. These particular variables may also identify students who are both resilient and vulnerable. This will also provide further understanding of the relationship between home language and other risk factors as it relates to the achievement gap (Adger, et. all,1999).

## Language and Culture: Hispanic/Latino Students

From 2000-2010, Minnesota experienced over 75% growth in our Hispanic/Latino communities (census, 2010). The total population is 55,132. (MDE, 2010-2011). On key measurements of free or reduced lunch, EL services, and special education, Hispanic/Latino students are enrolled at higher rates than the statewide “all” rate. A deeper disaggregation of the data for the Hispanic/Latino community is necessary and important if we are to provide quality educational opportunities that meet the specific academic needs of Hispanic/Latino students.



Some conclusions can be made from the data that indicates the category “Hispanic” masks some clear differences by “language spoken at home” within the population. According to the data (MDE, 2011), 66% of Hispanic/Latino students speak Spanish. There are a significant number (45%) of Spanish-speaking Hispanic/Latino students receiving EL services. Additionally, there is a sub-population of Spanish-speaking students who are currently not receiving any

EL services (21%), which may suggest that these students are possibly bilingual. Also, we do not know if the 34% of the Hispanic/Latino students who speak English also speak Spanish or another language, therefore we cannot estimate how many Hispanic/Latino students are bilingual.

Academic achievement disparities for Hispanic/Latino students are well documented throughout this report. Unfortunately, current racial classification data provides limited ethnic or cultural information for this vast, rich, and diverse group.

One of the key academic barriers for Hispanic/Latino student success is linguistic isolation. The Census Bureau explains linguistic isolation as a phenomenon where all members of the household 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with English. The U.S. Census Bureau released state-level data from Census 2000 on the phenomenon of linguistic isolation. Based upon a sampling of Minnesota families, which was conducted by the U.S. Census (2000), we see that Hispanic/Latino families run the highest risk of linguistic isolation at 56%, followed closely by Asian/Pacific Islanders at 55%. According to Gandara and Contreras (2010), educational systems lacking cultural competency training can often create linguistic isolation where Hispanic/Latino students are not supported sufficiently for academic success.

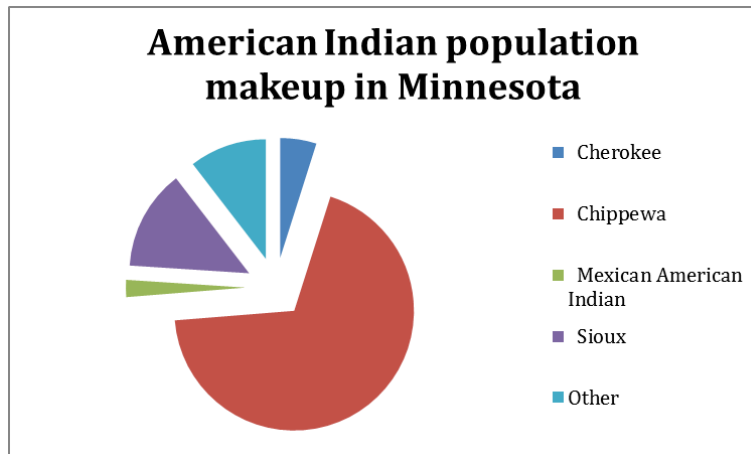
Racial Classification	Sample size of Population over 5 years old	Number from sample who Speak a language other than English	% Of Sample who Speak a language other than English	Total number from sample speaking English less than “very well”	% Of (Speak language other than English) possibly facing Linguistic Isolation
All Racial Classification	4,591,491	389,988	8%	167,511	43%
American Indian	49,433	6,693	14%	1,603	24%
Asian	125,708	103,497	82%	56,504	55%
Hispanic/Latino	123,105	82,103	67%	46,906	56%
Black/African American	150,905	27,507	18%	12,158	44%
White	4,133,793	189,071	5%	61,358	32%

Source: U.S. Census 2000

As is true with all racial classifications we see several areas in which data collection could be improved. Using HPL and other ethnic or cultural information may help us identify more effective ways to address specific academic needs of Minnesota students. For example, we have limited information on what country these students are from, or if these students are first, second, or third generation students in the U.S. While HPL can account for Spanish-speaking homes of the Hispanic/Latino students in Minnesota, the data does not specify how many years Hispanic/Latino, and other groups, including immigrant students and their families from various racial classifications, have been navigating through U.S. school systems. This type of meaningful data could be useful in determining which students’ families need a stronger orientation to U.S. school cultures and which families have more of this background to support their students as they navigate the learning pathways.

## Language and Culture: American Indian Students

According to the 2010 Census, the total population of American Indian/Alaskan Natives in Minnesota is 64,238. This overall group represents 37 distinct and individual tribes or nations. The two largest tribes are the Chippewa and Sioux, comprising about 69% and 14% of the total respectively.



MDE's Home Primary Language (HPL) code is used by the federal and state government in various reports including: Title VII Bilingual Federal Grant, Title IV Civil Rights National Origin Desegregation, Education for Limited English Proficient, Students Act, and Emergency Immigrant Education Program. According to the data, there are only three American Indian language codes identified as HPL's for families in all of the Minnesota's schools. These are: #6-Cheyenne / Winnebago, #8-Dakotah, Lakotah, Santee, and Sioux, and #35-Chippewa (AKA Ojibwe). The state assessment testing data indicate that only 66



students with an indigenous HPL code participated in the required academic assessments.

HPL and state demographic information indicate a pronounced deficit regarding indigenous language competency among Minnesota's American Indian students, suggesting indigenous languages of American Indian people in Minnesota are in danger of being lost. This begs the question of what the impact may be regarding the decline of indigenous languages for American Indian people relative to educational success.

In his testimony before the Senate Indian Affairs Committee Oversight Hearing on "In Our Way: Expanding the Success of Native Language and Culture Based Education" conducted on May 26, 2011, Dr. David Beaulieu provided significant insight on the subject. He indicated a correlation between language and cultural-based education and academic achievement for American Indian students. Dr. Beaulieu provided several examples where the data provided a clear connection between academic achievement and American Indian students learning their indigenous language and culture. For the purpose of this report, we will include a brief summary of only three of the examples he brought forth in his testimony.

Tséhootsooí Diné Bi'ólta' (The Navajo School at the Meadow between the Rocks or the Fort Defiance Navajo Immersion School) provides full-immersion for students in grades K-8. In the primary grades initial literacy instruction is provided in their Native tongue. Introduction to the English language occurs in second

grade and is increased until the sixth grade, where 50% of the instruction is in Navajo and English.

The longitudinal data indicates students who participate in the immersion experience outperformed their peers from English-only programs in English reading, writing, and mathematics based upon local and state assessments.

Rock Point provides another example of a program where both the Navajo Language and English were taught to students. These students (similarly to Tséhootsoóí Diné Bi'ólta') learned to read first in the Navajo Language and then in English. The longitudinal data from Rock Point is similar to Tséhootsoóí Diné Bi'ólta' in that students there not only outperformed comparable students in English-only programs but they also surpassed their own previous annual growth rates.

Rough Rock KEEP is an English-Navajo Language Arts Program serving students in grades K-6. Learning centers and small-group instruction in Navajo and English provide the epicenter of the classroom. The curriculum is interdisciplinary and based upon units with indigenous themes. Additional summer programming is provided through literature camps that include a cross-section of community members; students, teachers, parents, and elders. The longitudinal data shows that after four years in the program, English comprehension increases from 58% to 91%.

These are just three examples that validate the need for language reacquisition and instruction for American Indian students. International

regulations produced by NATO (resolution 61/295), Federal policies like the Indian Education Act, and Minnesota State Law (Chapter 146--H.F. No. 2245, Section 41) all provide clear support for American Indian people to be educated in such a manner that provides opportunities for them to acquire the necessary skills to be competitive in the global marketplace, while maintaining their cultural identity. In addition to these rights being legally recognized, language reacquisition and cultural training appear to be practical pedagogical solutions in educating American Indian students.

### **Language and Culture: Conclusion**

Currently, student data is reported out by the racial classifications of American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African American, Hispanic, and White students. However, data reported by racial classification provides limited opportunities for interpretation. ***Further disaggregating student achievement data by the student's Home Primary Language can provide additional student information such as ethnicity.*** This information can be meaningful in better understanding Minnesota's diverse student populations through which educational responses and services can be tailored to close the achievement gap and provide excellence for all. Data needs to be analyzed and reported beyond racial classification to allow educational leaders, professionals, and advocates the opportunity to form policies and determine appropriate pedagogical methods to better educate and engage Students of Color and American Indian students.

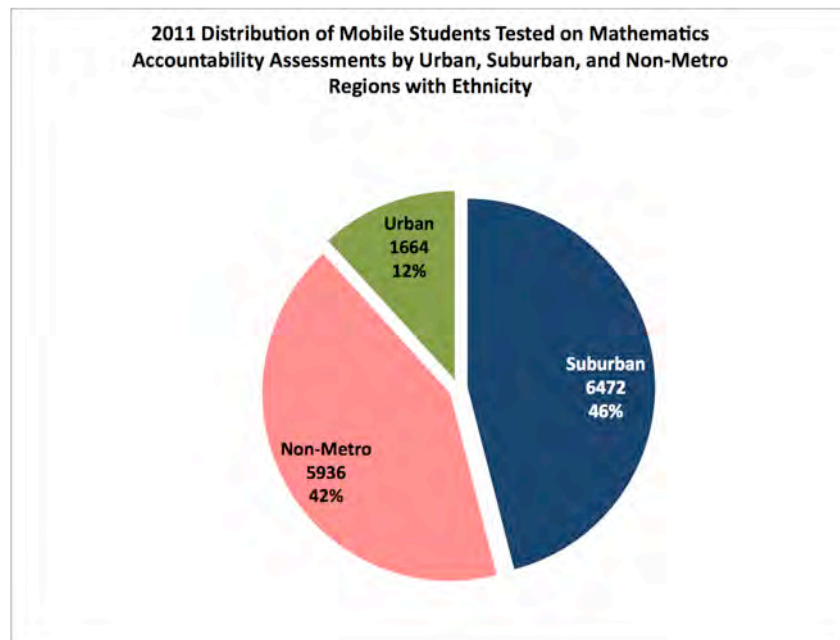
Due to the limitations of currently available data, several questions have risen out of our analysis. What factors tend to make refugee, EL, and/or low-income students more vulnerable or more successful? Based on a student's immigration history, cultural identity, language proficiency, familiarity with the U.S. educational system, or family background, what pedagogical approach yields the best results? These questions are highly important when working toward the goal of reducing the educational disparities that exist among Minnesota's American Indian students and Students of Color and their White counterparts. As such, ***the expansion of meaningful data collection and reporting is highly important to guiding appropriate education responses and policy-making in Minnesota.***

## **2. Mobility**

The majority of Minnesota's 800,000 plus K-12 students are enrolled in the same school for the entire academic year. This is not true, however, for all Minnesota students. Many students move around from one school to another during the course of an academic year and do so for a variety of reasons, although most are caused by involuntary demands related to social/economic vulnerability. When this happens, we identify these students as "mobile" for the sake of collecting and analyzing data unique to their situation.

Currently the Minnesota Department of Education does not have an exact count of the entire mobile student population, as identifying them is not always easy. Estimates for the statewide mobile population are based on the 14,072

mobile students who participated in state assessments in 2011. These estimates suggest that there may be as many as 40,000 plus students who do not have the same consistent locational academic experience as the majority of their peers. The mobile population is determined by those who are enrolled in our schools before and after October 1st of any school year indicating movement from one school to another.



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

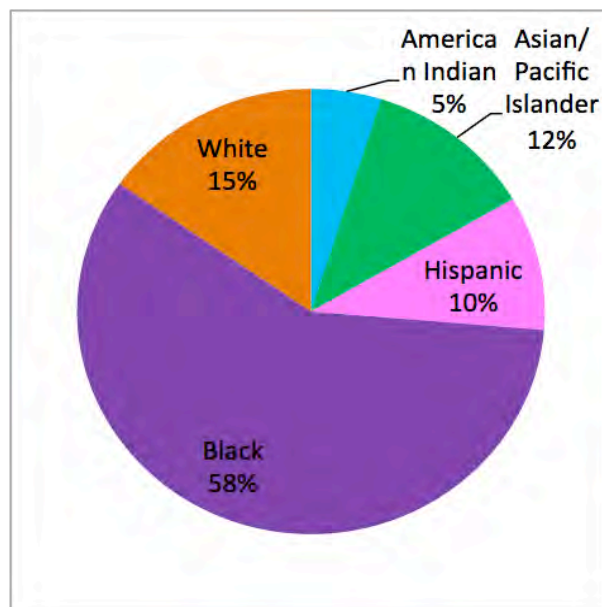
### **Mobile Student Population is a Statewide Reality**

While mobility in the urban core often gets attention, mobility is not unique to major cities. The mobile student population is dispersed throughout our state with 12% urban, 46% suburban, and 42% located in greater Minnesota. Significant to the issue of the achievement gap, mobility is a disproportionate reality among many Students of Color and American Indian students.

### **Twin Cities Urban Mobile Students testing in Mathematics**

The distribution of urban students tested in mathematics and observed to be mobile during the 2010-2011 was: 58 % Black/African-American, 12% Asian Pacific Islander, 15 % White, 10% Hispanic/Latino, and 5% were American Indian.

#### **2011 Twin Cities Urban Mobile Students Tested in Math**

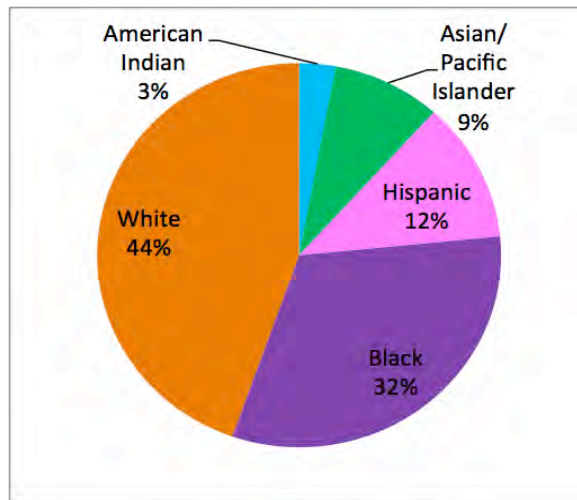


Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

### **Twin Cities Suburban Mobile Students testing in Mathematics**

In suburban areas, mobile students were 44% White, 32 % Black/African-American, 12% Hispanic/Latino, 9% Asian Pacific Islander, and 3 % American Indian.

## 2011 Twin Cities Suburban Mobile Students Tested in Math

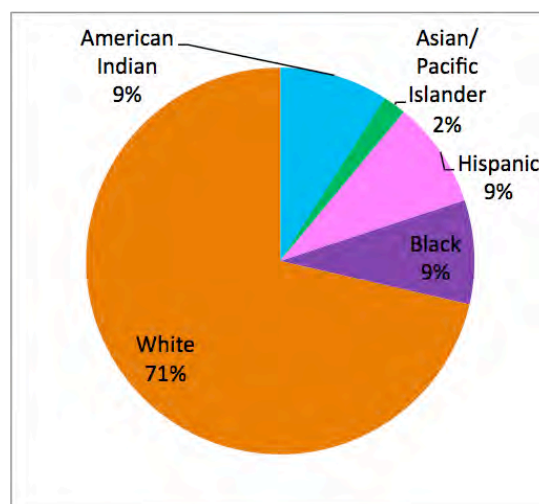


Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

## Greater MN Mobile Students testing in Mathematics

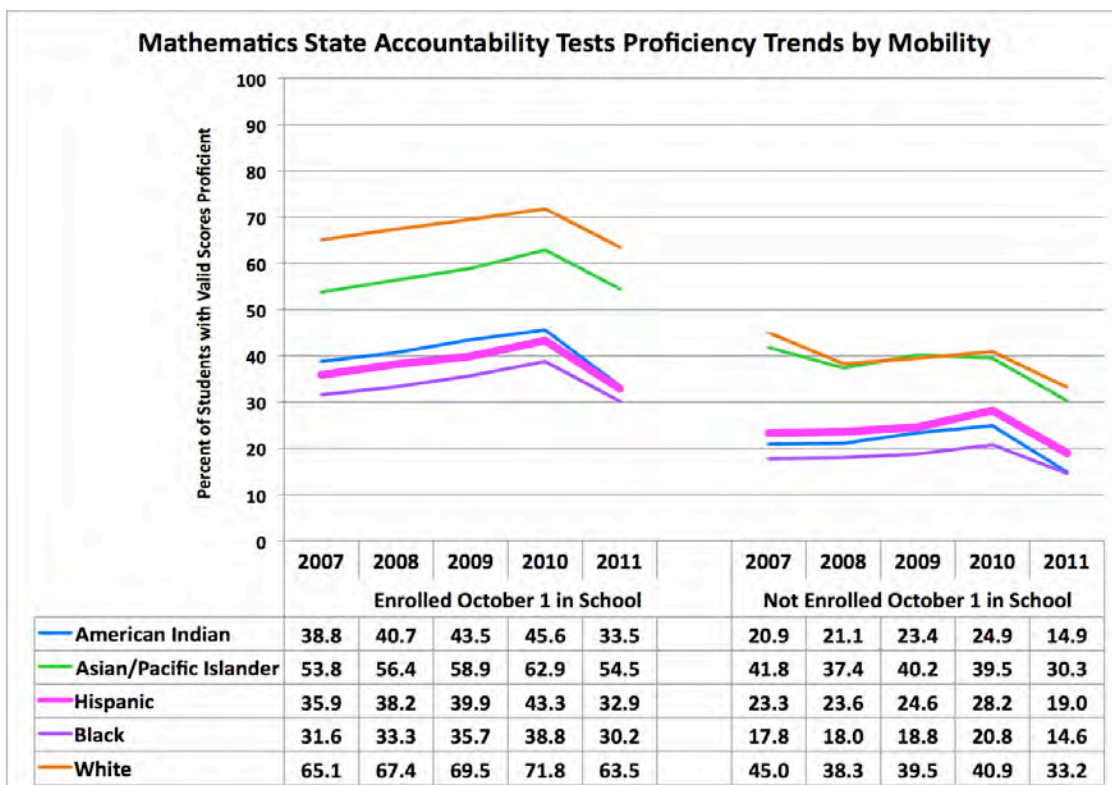
In Greater MN, mobile students were 71% White, 9% Black/African-American, 9% Hispanic/Latino, 9% American Indian, and 2% Asian Pacific Islander.

## 2011 Non-Metro Mobile Students Tested in Math



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

Students from every racial category are found to be present in the mobile group and experience the same negative academic impacts associated with being part of this mobile population. This may, however, be of greater concern for the Hispanic/Latino community. According to statistics, it is worth noting the rate of mobility among the Hispanic/Latino students is estimated to be more than 50% greater than the statewide mobility rate and that mobile Hispanic/Latino students are also eligible for free or reduced lunch at more than twice the rate for all students statewide.



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

### Mathematics Mobile Student Achievement Trends

The mathematics student achievement results by mobility suggest significant higher mathematics performance scores in all racial categories for



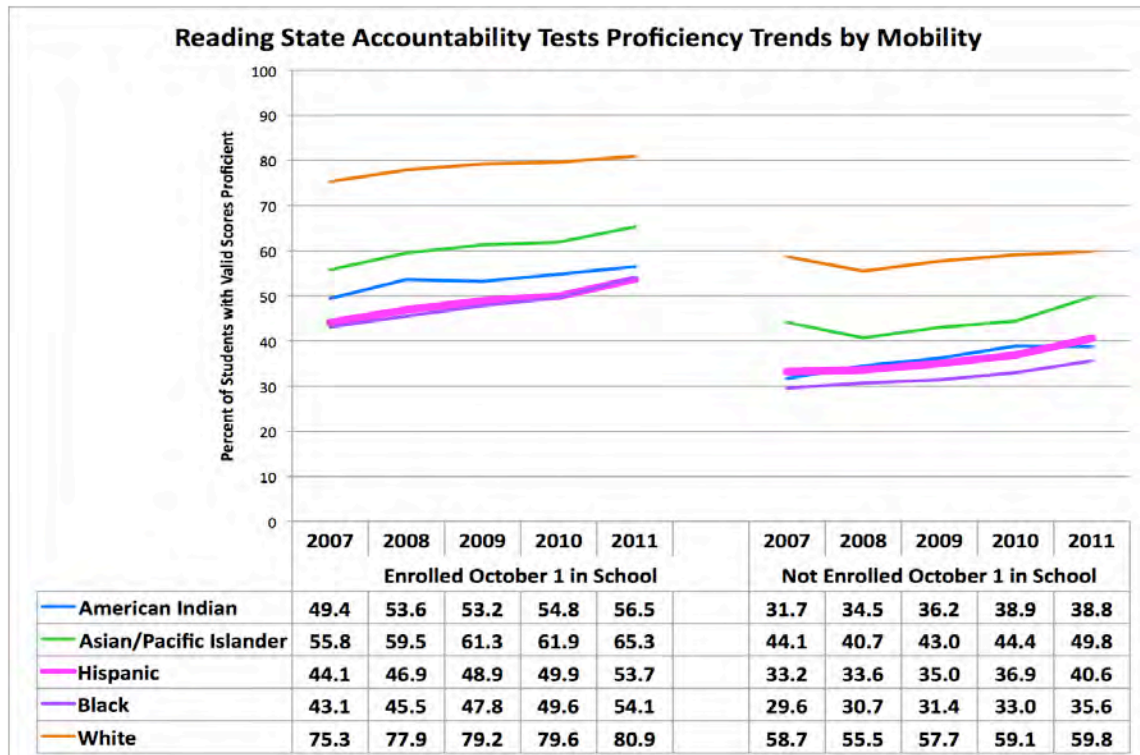
those students testing in the same school they enrolled in prior to October 1. This group represents approximately 95% of all students statewide and may be an important indicator regarding the level of Minnesota's educational system's effectiveness in educating all racial categories when students are enrolled year-round in the same school. Most students, either mobile or enrolled for the full academic year, show a parallel trend to the White population. It is important to notice that the achievement gap between racial categories is greater for the non-mobile population than the mobile population. This suggests the lack of consistent opportunities to learn in the same school environment for the entire academic year has a greater negative impact on the mathematics achievement gap for all students regardless of their racial identity.

However, before rushing to embrace the notion that disparities in educational outcomes produced by our educational system can be solely attributed to the poverty indicators suggested by disaggregated mobility data, it is important to note that racial gaps exist in both sets of data and that white mobile students seem to fare no less than some non-mobile students of color. This suggests that important racial/cultural dynamics are at play that seems to evoke better white student outcomes than students of color outcomes.

### **Reading Mobile Student Achievement Trends**

The reading results for state accountability tests suggest a similar impact on student's academic achievement. A comparable trend between mathematics and reading clearly identifies a significant difference between mobile students

and students who have had the opportunity to learn in the same academic environment for the entire year.



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

The reading achievement results suggest a significant difference in performance within each of the racial categories as well as a significant difference between those who were enrolled before and after October 1. As was the case with mathematics, most students enrolled either mobile or for the full academic year, show a parallel trend in reading proficiency to the White population in the state for both mobile learners and non-mobile learners. Again, mobile white students seem to show better outcomes than some non-mobile students of color.

## **Mobility: Conclusion**

Educators have long known that mobile students face more academic and behavioral challenges than their non-mobile peers. Children of color, those living in low-income households, and English Language learners are among the students who have the highest rates of mobility (United States Census Bureau). Indeed, English Language Learners are twice as likely to change schools as their English-speaking counterparts. The United States General Accounting Office notes that “teachers in schools with mobile students are more likely to have difficulty accurately assessing the needs of new children, determining their past educational experiences, and being able to build on the students’ knowledge and skills.”

According to Education Weekly, schools with high rates of student mobility tend to have a large population of children of migrant workers or homeless children from low-income families (Education Weekly). State figures indicate Minnesota follows these national trends.

An essay by Dr. Russell Rumberger (University of California) entitled “*Student Mobility and Academic Achievement*”, noted that many factors contribute to student success. “Although a substantial body of research suggests that students may be affected psychologically, socially, and academically from changing schools, the impact of mobility depends on such factors as the number of school changes, when they occur, the reason for the changes, and the student’s personal and family situation,” wrote Rumberger.

Yet there is hope. Education Week reported additionally that many states are developing programs to lower student mobility rates and decrease its impact on education. Those programs include outreach to parents about minimizing the negative effects of mobility, creating “buddy systems” by partnering new students with current students, implementing district-wide and statewide standardized curricula, developing efficient student record-tracking systems between schools and districts, and providing professional development to assist teachers in meeting the needs of mobile students.

Lastly, a Minneapolis based study, The Kids Mobility Project, has noted two major reasons for frequent moves; family instability and insufficient housing that are both safe and affordable. Recommendations from that study stress that a focus on attendance issues is essential for families who frequently move or who are homeless.

Other recommendations included connecting people to resources in their neighborhoods and developing an increased supply of safe, quality housing throughout the state. Based upon achievement data, Minnesota still needs to address key issues surrounding student mobility.

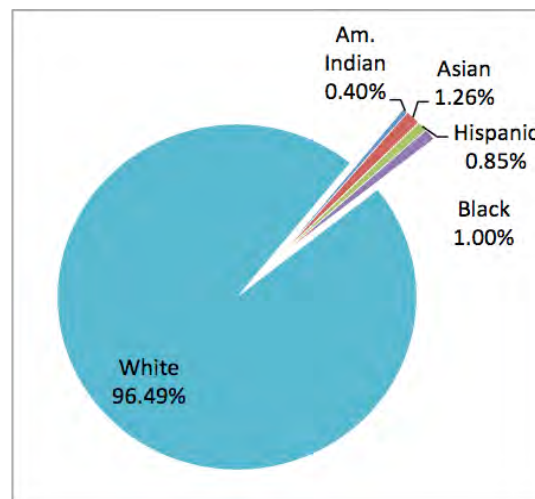
Whatever best practices are used to address the reality of mobility in student’s lives, it is important to again note the large impact that such a reality has on the overall racial achievement gap. By dissecting the many root causes, of which mobility seems to be one, we can envision more relevant ways to address racial disparities with a variety of approaches best tailored for the immediate situation at hand. These can range from the social interventions

mentioned above to the practices that bring affirmation of identity into the classroom for the different cultural experiences present in our ever diverse student population.

## **G. Teachers of Color**

### **Diversity of Minnesota's Teachers**

In spite of the growing diversity within the student population, Minnesota's P-12 teaching force is overwhelmingly White. Less than 4% of Minnesota's teachers are from communities of color and American Indian communities.



Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

The shortage of teachers of color is reflected in national trends as well. Of the nation's more than six million teachers, 80% are White, 9.6% are Black/African American, 7.4% are Hispanic/Latino, 2.3% are Asian Pacific Islander, and less than 1% are American Indian (American Community Survey, 2011). The number of Black/African American teachers has actually declined from 12% in 1970 and has not, until recent years, begun to recover. The

numbers of Asian Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian teachers has risen slightly over the last decade (Gay and Howard, 2000).

### **Impacts on teaching and learning**

The lack of racial diversity in the teacher workforce has negative impacts on teaching and learning, particularly in the context of growing racial diversity in classrooms and national economic trends toward globalization. This lack of diversity in numbers, worldviews, and pedagogical approaches among teachers promotes homogeneity, assimilation, and intolerance for differences in schools, be them cultural, linguistic, or racial. In the fields of critical and culturally relevant pedagogy, researchers suggest that the current predominantly White, female, and hetero-normative teacher force, cannot successfully meet the needs of increasingly diverse students, certainly not in the context of current school policy and structures (Gay & Howard, 2000; Milner, 2006; Sleeter, 2001). Educator Eugene Garcia describes the vital link between culture and schooling:

*“The school must allow cultural elements that are relevant to the children to enter the classroom...thereby enabling the children to move through relevant experiences from the home toward the demands of the school as representative of [a diverse] society...We must first comprehend the fact that children –all children- come to school motivated to enlarge their culture. But we must start with their culture... and look first to determine how they seek to know themselves and others and how their expertise and experience can be used as the fuel to fire their interests, knowledge, and skills...for they are rich in assets. As teachers, we enter their world in order to aid them and to build bridges between two cultures.” (Eugene Garcia, 1999, p. 82 as cited in Lindsey et. al., 2004, p. xv).*

### **Who Teachers are Matters**

The cultural, racial, linguistic, gender and class experiences that teachers bring into the classroom shape pedagogy, praxis, and connectivity to parents and communities, as well as provide opportunities for learning. Educational

researchers have found that teachers of color can have a positive influence on the achievement among Students of Color and American Indian students, especially when teachers and students share the same racial background (Irvine, 2003; Nieto, 1999; Siddle-Walker, 2000). Teachers of color can serve as role models, “cultural translators” in classrooms and communities, and counter the myth that positions of authority in schools are better filled by Whites (Cole, 1986; Milner & Howard, 2004; Villegas & Clewell, 1998).

The literature on teacher disposition indicates that there is a correlation between academic achievement and the ability of a teacher to establish rapport with students and parents (Grant & Secada, 1990; Haberman & Post, 1998). Hamre & Pianta (2005) found in their study on teacher-student relationship quality (TSRQ), that TSRQ plays a significant role in closing the achievement gap and is a predictor of a student’s academic achievement. TSRQ includes: “the degree to which teachers display empathy, support, encouragement, and optimism and to which they are perceived to be fair, genuine, and non-patronizing” (p. 70, Boykin & Noguera, 2011). High TSRQ involves communicating with students in socially proactive ways, building a constructive rapport, and a positive classroom tone.

### **Eliminating Barriers**

While providing tangible opportunities for people of color and American Indians to join the teacher workforce is critical, diversifying the teacher workforce is not the sole solution to improving learning outcomes for Students of color and American Indian students. The manner in which teacher education institutions

prepare teacher candidates is vital. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) requires that, “professional education programs prepare candidates who operationalize the belief that all students can learn; demonstrate fairness in educational settings by meeting the educational needs of all students in a caring, non-discriminatory, and equitable manner” (NCATE, 2009). Minnesota, like other states and districts around the nation, is adopting various strategies for recruiting and retaining teachers of color including alternative licensure programs, grow-your-own pipeline program partnerships between school districts and higher education institutions, and curricular and program redesign initiatives of traditional teacher education programs.

## **H. Pockets of Progress**

### **Research Hypothesis**

The basic hypothesis for this study is that it is possible to provide equitable education that effectively meets the needs of ALL students including Students of Color, American Indian students, and Caucasian students. This qualitative research project was designed to look deeper into the quantitative data and to see if there were potentially emerging patterns and themes between the various environments and locations that may produce information leading to effective teaching practices, curriculum, and/or policy.

### **Basic Methodology**

The premise behind this element of the report is to identify educational environments where Students of Color and or American Indian students are



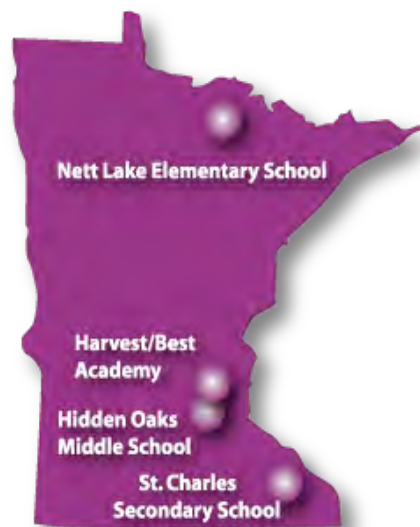
doing approximately 10% or better than the state average and/or to find environments where Students of Color or American Indian students are doing at least 10% above the state average and their White counterparts are still performing at or above the state average.

Quantitative data was used to identify environments where these situations were true. Once educational environments had been identified throughout the state that met the criteria and demonstrated marked improvements with various NCLB racial classifications and subject categories, they were selected to conduct further qualitative research. The environments were chosen based upon their uniqueness and success towards equitable education.

School Name	School Type	High Performing Racial Classification/ Ethnicity Subgroup	Subject Showing High Performance	Grades Served	School Proficiency Rate	Subgroup State Proficiency Rate
Harvest Prep School - Seed Academy	Charter	Black/African-American	Mathematics	K - 8	83.3%	31.8%
			Reading		77.7%	54.5%
Best Academy	Charter	Black/African-American	Mathematics		60.6%	31.8%
			Reading		74.1%	54.5%
Hidden Oaks Middle School, Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools	Public	Asian/Pacific Islander	Mathematics	6 - 8	74.1%	50.4%
			Reading		71.4%	62.2%
		Hispanic/Latino	Mathematics		77.8%	25.9%
			Reading		66.7%	49.4%
Nett Lake Elementary School, Nett Lake Public Schools	Public	American Indian	Reading	K - 6	72.7%	59.4%
St. Charles Secondary School, St. Charles Public Schools	Public	Asian/Pacific Islander	Mathematics	7 - 12	75.0%	49.2%
			Reading		66.7%	61.5%
		Hispanic/Latino	Mathematics		68.4%	25.9%
			Reading		85.0%	49.5%

Source: Minnesota Department of Ed.

Each research location received an interview questionnaire consisting of nine compound research questions. Each location provided a minimum of three completed questionnaires filled out by an administrator, classroom teacher, and a support staff person. Additional data was collected through personal interviews and observation. Prior to school visits, an observation checklist was developed as well as set of questions to help provide stability in the data collection process.



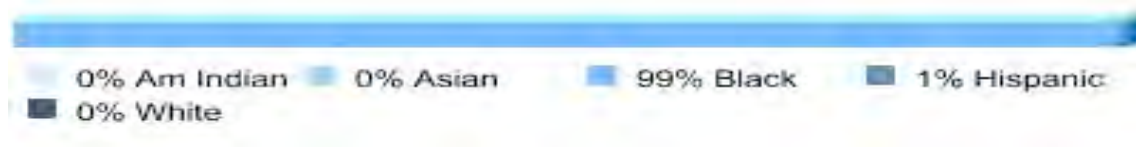
The four educational systems were chosen based upon location, proficiency success with various subjects and grade levels as well as various racial classifications:

- Harvest/Best Academy
- Hidden Oaks Middle School
- Nett Lake Elementary School
- St. Charles Secondary School

## **Participant Vignettes**

Prior to reporting the patterns and themes that emerged from this study, we have included specific information regarding each of the research locations. Each of these locations is faced with unique challenges and it is through their response to these obstacles that they have created “pockets of progress”.

## Harvest / Best School Report Card Information



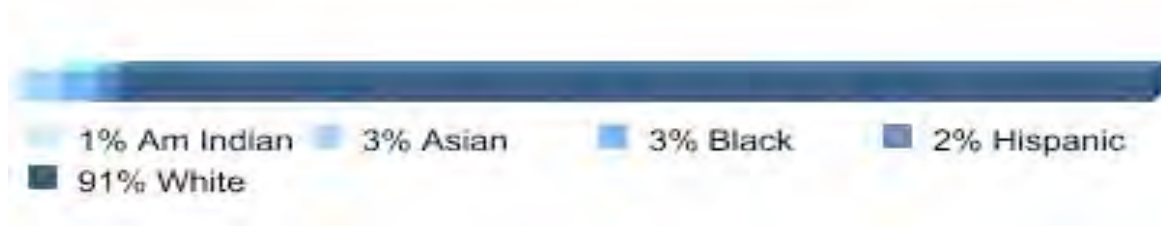
Student Population	343
Limited English Proficient	0%
Special Education	4%
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	92%
AYP Attendance Rate	92%

A key theme that appears throughout the data collected from the Harvest / Best schools is the systematic use of formative and summative assessments. Weekly assessments are administered to students every Friday and the teacher adjusts lesson plans based on the data gathered from the assessments. Close monitoring is done annually to correlate common local grade-level assessments and the standardized MCA and NWEA annual assessments. There also appears to be a secondary focus to use the data to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum and instructional practices throughout the system.

Another key element of the Harvest / Best school system is the additional time for instruction that is embedded into the school year as a norm instead of as a special program. The Harvest / Best school system also schedules in the school day a 50 minute intervention block where all students receive instruction based on their personalized learning needs.

The Harvest / Best school system provides a focus on African and African American culture daily which instills a sense of pride and responsibility into the students; fondly referred to by all staff as “scholars”.

### Hidden Oaks Middle School Report Card Information



Student Population	912
Limited English Proficient	1%
Special Education	11%
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	11%
AYP Attendance Rate	96%

After-school tutoring and homework programs are two initiatives that appear to be key elements in contributing to the success of the Hidden Oaks Middle School. The focus on increasing the number of students enrolled in Advanced Placement classes is also a contributing factor to the systems overall success. In addition to rigorous academic opportunities, there has been an intentional focus that allows students to explore world cultures through the use of the arts.

Throughout the building, students see images of school students and staff promoting the school’s literacy efforts. The school provides a focused effort intentionally addressing integration and equity through displaying positive images

of people of color and American Indians throughout the building. These posters provide information regarding people of color and American Indians' significant contributions to society. In addition, there are several posters promoting coexistence, integration, and diversity. It is obvious through the propaganda and media display throughout the building that there is a focus on eliminating negative stereotypes and "bullying". This campaign is an example of just one of the intentional efforts the school has made to facilitate integration and build a welcoming community for all students.

### **Nett Lake Elementary School Report Card Information**



Student Population	74
Limited English Proficient	0%
Special Education	19%
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	65%
AYP Attendance Rate	94%

This school appears to be a cultural icon of the Nett Lake community. The school has a focus on American Indian culture embedded in students' everyday experience that instills a sense of pride and responsibility into the children. The cultural component involves language requisitioned and training for all students. Throughout the building students see images of peers and community members

posted on the walls. These images create a sense of belonging and possibility. The use of community images provides relevant examples to students of their own people being successful and makes a direct link between education and success.

There is a Head Start program in place offering early childhood experiences for the children in the community as well as a Boys and Girls Club that supports academic achievement through after-school tutoring initiatives.

Nett Lake has high standards and expectations for students. This is exemplified through an extended instructional day, which is 7.5 hours long. Curriculum development and selection have been a focal point that the system has addressed. They have chosen the “Success For All” reading curriculum and “Cognitively Guided Instruction” for math. The “Response to Intervention” (RtI) model is used that supports students by placing them in small groups based on their needs and providing the additional academic support necessary for success.

The use of formative and summative assessments also appears to be a foundational component within the Nett Lake system. Weekly assessments are administered to students through Leveled Literacy Interventions and quarterly for Scholastic Reading Inventory and Scholastic Math Inventory. Students are also assessed in the fall, winter, and spring using AIMS web.

## Saint Charles Secondary School Report Card Information



Student Population	451
Limited English Proficient	0%
Special Education	8%
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	26%
AYP Attendance Rate	95%

This school prides itself on creating an environment where all students are welcomed and valued. A community partnership exists with a regional service provider, Project Fine, which is committed to helping newcomers integrate into the community through providing services designed to help empower local immigrants and refugees.

St. Charles faces many of the same struggles that other rural communities face in the ability to offer students limited curriculum choices. In spite of these challenges, St. Charles has made a clear and present decision to validate the Hispanic/Latino community through offering Spanish as its only foreign language for all students. This decision is based upon identifying the growing population of the Hispanic/Latino community and the belief that it is “best practice” for all students to be presented with the option of learning Spanish. A byproduct of this decision is that Spanish-speaking Hispanic/Latino students in the St. Charles

Secondary School see themselves represented within the curriculum and academic content offered daily by the system. In addition, the Spanish teacher, who is an alumnus of the school and a community member of over 18 years, functions as a natural liaison between the community and school.

The use of formative and summative assessments is also evident within the St. Charles system. Academic support tools such as Yes, Study Island, Hotmath, and AIMS Web contribute to the assessment, evaluation and instructional process.

Additional academic support is provided for students through various outlets including; elective courses (for credit) where students can receive individual guided instruction designed to address their specific academic needs, peer tutoring, and guided study halls.

### **Universal Patterns and Themes:**

- ✚ Based solely upon quantitative data collected from the school report cards available through the Minnesota Department of Education there are three foundational patterns that appear to be replicated in each environment. AYP attendance is extremely high in all locations ranging between 92% and 96%. Generally speaking in all four environments the percentage of students receiving special education services is low with the average being 10.5%. Lastly, based upon the school report card information the indicator of limited English proficiency is extremely low with three out of the four environments indicating 0%, and the fourth indicating 1%. This



only reinforces the importance surrounding language issues raised earlier in our report.

- ✚ The purposeful use of summative and formative assessment is present in all of these environments on some level. Data-driven decision making appears to be foundational in guiding educational opportunities for students. Each environment provided individual and/or small group academic support based upon assessment data.
- ✚ A commitment to cultural competency was displayed in each environment; each school uniquely and individually addressed issues of cultural competency within its own context to meet the needs of the student population.
- ✚ Based upon the Pockets of Progress Observation Checks Sheet, there were five categories which received the highest mark possible for all locations. These categories addressed concerns regarding how welcome students felt, interactions between administration and staff, interactions between staff and students, interactions between students, and the general overall lighting of the school building.
- ✚ Each environment stressed a commitment to rigorous coursework and high personal and academic expectations for students. Traditional curriculum (pre-packaged) was used for general classroom instruction in math and reading. All students participated in large group instruction, and additional academic support was provided for those who needed it

after group instruction was completed. Student engagement in the learning process was over 95%.

- ✚ Each location is mindful of the responsibility to provide comprehensive quality academic opportunities for their student population regardless of their racial classification or ethnicity.

### **Common Patterns and Themes:**

For the purpose of this report common patterns or themes are identified as occurring in three out of the four research environments. These patterns and themes are still believed to be significant and relevant as they relate to the individual research locations “pockets of progress”.

- ✚ Breakfast was served officially to students in three of the four environments. In the fourth environment students in need were allowed access to a continental breakfast (i.e. milk or juice and either a bagel or muffin).
- ✚ Class sizes of 25 or less and a student to adult ratio of less than 20 to 1 provided time and attention for the staff to address student needs both academically and personally. Administrators and staff appear to be deeply passionate about their students’ success both academically and personally.
- ✚ Modern technology such as Smart Boards or Air Boards was found in nearly every classroom in three of the four environments and in 50% of

the classrooms in the fourth environment. Each school had additional computer labs for class activities.

In an educational atmosphere that is often filled with pessimism and doubt regarding the clear and present academic achievement gap in the state of Minnesota, it is refreshing to see four unique and distinct environments in which “pockets of progress” can be identified.

It is our hope that through identifying common patterns and themes that have helped contribute to these individual “pockets of progress” those responsible for educating our students will embrace these common patterns and themes and make a commitment to ensure these patterns and themes are present in all academic environments. Our hope is that we may be able to provide encouragement in spite of doubt. The academic achievement gap can be closed and educational excellence is obtainable for all Minnesota students!

## **J. Ongoing Efforts to Reform Minnesota’s Educational System**

It is easy to look at the various macro student data outcomes and become discouraged, particularly when one sees minimal progress over time. However, Minnesota is a place where strong efforts are being designed and implemented in variety of areas where student progress and excellence can be promoted. These range from: 1) re-designing our assessment and accountability system for holding schools accountable for change to, 2) enhancing the professional skills of educators to, 3) drawing the collective resources of whole communities to more effectively impact the ability of students to, 4) enhancing the leadership skills of

our educational and policy making institutional leaders. While not comprehensive, we offer some examples of exciting efforts underway in Minnesota to drive greater educational outcomes for all students.

**1. MN Multiple Measures Rating System (MMR): Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) federal NCLB School Accountability Waiver**

The federal “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) legislation was designed to close gaps between various student groups while increasing proficiency of all groups until “no student was left behind.” In doing so, each state was required to develop state assessments to measure the proficiency of all students in the state. NCLB requires all students reach 100% proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2014 or face penalties assessed by the state through a school improvement process. While this goal is admirable, the state system of support was not bringing about the desired results for Minnesota schools to meet the requirement of NCLB. MDE requested and obtained a waiver from the law and implemented a new system of school accountability that combines the standards-based proficiency of the old model with a growth element that rewards improving and model schools. The resulting Multiple Measures Rating system (MMR) aims to provide a more accurate way to not only hold schools accountable for student proficiency against state academic standards, but also measures progress in closing achievement gaps among student groups, improving graduation rates, and accelerating individual student performance.

MDE will continue to rate schools but will do so against a new goal of “closing the achievement gap” by 50% over six years as opposed to using the old NCLB “failure to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) towards 100% proficiency by 2014” objective. Instead, two new categories for schools not on track to meet the new overall goal of closing the achievement gap have been created. “Priority Schools” are those persistently low performing against the goal and “Focus Schools” are those with the biggest achievement gaps and low growth measures. MDE argues that this allows the state to strategically target resources to those schools most in need, whereas the old AYP system made that impossible given that its assessment metrics led eventually to every school becoming a failure. The shift in emphasis is one towards assisting schools as opposed to an “all stick, no carrot” approach to driving school change.

This approach of measuring and valuing progress allows for a stronger identification of effective efforts in teaching and school management that can then be shared across schools and classrooms. In order to do that, MDE has created “Regional Centers of Excellence” to provide support and assistance to “Priority” and “Focus” schools.

There is much left to be sorted out under this new school accountability approach, including whether the addition of “progress against 50% gap closing in 6 years” will create excuses for schools to not expect 100% success with all students and whether “closing gaps” interferes with raising rigor for all students. In addition, the state will be under renewed pressure to properly fund the

Regional Centers of Excellence, particularly since they will arguably most benefit schools with greater racial diversity of students. Many educators will argue however, that the enhanced use of formative assessments – as opposed to the single focus on summative and comprehensive testing – will be a welcome dynamic to classroom teaching. Strong vigilance on the part of all will remain important to ensure that the MMR system will continue the movement towards race equity and educational excellence.

## **2. Minnesota’s “Promise Neighborhood” Movement**

In 2010 the United States Department of Education established a “Promise Neighborhoods” funding program based on the experience of the Harlem Children's Zone – a “place-based” comprehensive “cradle-to-career” human capacity development effort. The principle behind the Harlem Children’s Zone is a neighborhood approach that focuses on highly collaborative relationships between a K-12 school and the larger human services community. This effort “breaks through silos” of jurisdictions; creating aligned objectives and sharing resources in order to positively increase academic outcomes for all students. The program is intended to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of all children in our most economically and socially distressed communities, including inner city, rural and tribal communities.

Under the program, non-profit organizations (including faith-based non-profits) and institutions of higher education are eligible for grants. The programs must build services for students in those schools, from birth through college and

career, while having the specific goal of preparing students for success in college and careers.

The intent is to promote a local dominant culture of practice where leaders and members of the community:

- identify, communicate and analyze positive child outcomes on an ongoing basis
- promote a college-going culture, with a continuum of academic programs and family and community supports from the cradle through college to career, with a strong school or schools at the center,
- integrate programs and agencies so "silos" are broken down and solutions are implemented effectively and efficiently across agencies, and
- build an infrastructure of policies, practices, systems, and resources needed to sustain and "scale up" proven effective solutions.

The Promise Neighborhoods Institute was established by PolicyLink to assist communities interested in participating in the Promise Neighborhoods program.

### **St Paul's Promise Neighborhood**

In 2010 the Wilder Foundation was awarded a grant to implement a program in St Paul's Frogtown and Summit/University area, a historic African American neighborhood with great racial/ethnic diversity including Hmong, African immigrants, and Latino students. Five target schools serve the majority of these students – Jackson Preparatory Magnet, Maxfield Magnet School, Ramsey Jr. High School, Washington Technology Magnet, and Central High School. Nine partners, plus more than 70 additional agencies are collaborating in the effort to eliminate educational disparities, improve academic outcomes, and ensure

student success. The nine partners are: The City of Saint Paul, The Cultural Wellness Center, Hmong American Partnership, Network for the Development of Children of African Descent, Ramsey County, Saint Paul College, The Saint Paul Public Schools, the YWCA of Saint Paul, and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

### **Minneapolis' Promise Neighborhood**

In 2011, the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) received a grant for a program effort in Minneapolis' North Side neighborhood, the largest African American populated community in Minnesota. NAZ arose from the efforts of the PEACE Foundation, which since 2003 had been creating a grassroots movement across race, class, and geographic lines towards the common goal of significantly reducing violence in North Minneapolis. They partnered with NorthWay Community Trust to plan for NAZ. This Promise Neighborhood is now a collaboration of over 50 organizations and schools from North Minneapolis working together to build a culture of achievement so that all youth graduate college-ready. The plan is to move families and children through a "cradle-to-career" pipeline that provides comprehensive support from pre-natal through age 18, through three processes of impact:

1. Opportunity alignment – This is the process of convening organizational partners, coordinating their efforts in the Zone, and connecting families to the resources and opportunities provided by the partners. The key tool for this strategy is "NAZ Connect", an online web-tool that acts as an opportunity database and shared achievement planning system.



2. Creating an Education Pipeline – Strategies are implemented that encourage families to be enrolled in early learning programs supporting kindergarten readiness, academic-focused extended day programs (out-of-school time), and matching NAZ youth with mentors – all focused on college readiness and lifelong success.

3. Whole Family Support – This process focuses on connecting families with the right resources from partner organizations based on their needs and goals. Coordinating these services helps stabilize housing, establish and support a career path for parents, and addresses health and behavioral health challenges. Progress in these critical areas will help the whole family succeed, and allow the children to focus on learning.

NAZ has identified three benchmarks to measure their success: the percentage of NAZ children who enter kindergarten ready to learn, the percentage of NAZ children who are at grade level in reading and math, and the percentage of NAZ children who graduate from high school ready for college.

### **3. Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Literacy Efforts**

MDE has adopted state literacy goals to develop a cohesive state Birth to Grade 12 (B-12) literacy plan. These goals are aimed at increased teacher and leader effectiveness and aligned literacy policies and practices within various divisions, other state agencies, and external partners. MDE has identified three priority areas that will support the on-going development and implementation of

state literacy goals: (1) developing an infrastructure that can be used to implement and sustain high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction statewide, (2) providing a high quality State Professional Development Plan to support the Birth to12 State Literacy Plan and the development of a B-12 delivery system that integrates technology and evidence-based practices into teaching and learning and (3) enhancing the use of the State's Longitudinal Data System to ensure data is used for decision-making at all levels.

As part of this Literacy Plan, MDE has identified three goals for improving literacy outcomes throughout the state for all students that in turn are meant to support the target of reading well by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

**Goal #1:** Improve literacy outcomes for our state's most disadvantaged learners by developing a cohesive state literacy plan that highlights instructional practices for reading, writing, and oral language that are grounded in evidence and scientifically-based research.

**Goal #2:** Increase teacher effectiveness and instructional leadership for all Birth-Grade 12 Educators by using evidence and scientifically-based reading and writing research to improve instructional literacy practices at all levels.

**Goal #3:** Build capacity at the state level to implement the Minnesota Comprehensive Birth-Grade 12 Literacy Plan by aligning the policies and procedures related to the literacy work of Minnesota Department of Education and its various divisions as well as other state agencies and external partners.

It should be noted that the MDE has adopted the 2010 Common Core English Language Arts standards for Minnesota's base standards in that area.

#### **4. Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Mathematics and Science Efforts**

The Minnesota Department of Education also supports efforts specifically targeted at increasing students' abilities in the area of mathematics and science.

Among these are:

- The *Minnesota Mathematics and Science Frameworks* are an online resource that provides instructional material for each of the Minnesota Mathematics and Science standards. These materials were developed through the efforts of over 170 Minnesota educators and content experts.

#### **5. Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership**

The Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership began as a voluntary organization made up of the statewide education groups in Minnesota, plus others from government, business, and other private sectors including MMEP. It is now mandated by state statute and is co-led by the Chancellor of MnSCU, the President of the University of Minnesota, and the Commissioner of the MN Department of Education.

- The Minnesota P-20 Education Partnership works collaboratively to maximize achievements for all students, from preschool through elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, while promoting the efficient use of financial and human resources.

- It provides a forum where critical policy issues can be collectively identified and addressed, and where data-driven decision-making structures can be developed and implemented statewide.

The P-20 Partnership has focused its efforts in four major areas:

### **1. Colleges and Career Readiness Communications Campaign**

...Ensure that students and their families, especially low income and first generation college students, understand the following: academic and workplace skills, personal and social skills, and college and career knowledge that constitute “readiness”; importance of completing rigorous courses in middle and high school; options for getting a “jump start” on postsecondary study and workforce preparation (e.g., PSEO, Tech Prep); how to develop a college and career plan based on assessment information; various pathways to college and careers including those outside of formal course taking; and how to access financial aid.

### **2. STEM Achievement Gap Strategic Plan**

...Establish a statewide plan to close achievement gaps among elementary student groups in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) disciplines. The plan addresses the following: analyzing achievement patterns by gender, racial/ethnic and socio-economic demographics; planning for a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) data analysis and display system for tracking progress of student

subpopulations on STEM goals and benchmarks; and planning a statewide strategy for closing the gaps in achievement among student subpopulations.

### **3. Rigorous Course Taking Strategic Plan**

...Ensure that all middle school and high school students take rigorous courses that prepare them for college and careers. The plan should suggest strategies for ensuring that the following occur: educators, policy makers, business leaders and families understand the role of high expectations and support the achievement of all students; all students are enrolled in and successfully complete rigorous courses; Students of Color and American Indian students and those from low-income families have access to a rigorous college-prep curriculum; and all students have opportunities to build the skills necessary for success in rigorous coursework throughout their K-12 experience.

### **4. Postsecondary Completion Strategic Plan**

...Ensure that all students who aspire to a four-year degree can be successful in that journey. The plan should suggest strategies for ensuring that the following occur: develop a plan to increase the graduation rates at all levels of postsecondary education in Minnesota, especially those at the public two- and four-year colleges and universities; for two-year institutions, analyze the three-year graduation rates of Minnesota's students by gender, racial classification, ethnicity, and socio-economic status; for four-year institutions, analyze the four- and six-year graduation rates and number of bachelor's degrees awarded to Minnesota's students by gender, racial classification, ethnicity, and socio-economic status; propose goals and benchmarks for tracking the postsecondary

graduation progress of student subpopulations and students overall; and suggest a statewide strategy for increasing the postsecondary graduation rates for all students at all levels (two-year, four-year and graduate levels), and closing the gaps in postsecondary graduation rates among student subpopulations.

#### ***H. Conclusion by MMEP Executive Director: “Getting to a New Systemic Vision: Race Equity and Educational Excellence in Minnesota”***

This report should leave no doubt that Minnesota continues to fail when it comes to educating Students of Color and American Indian students at the same level that it does with White students. As it has been said many times before, this not only poses a moral challenge to us all but also poses a serious threat to the prosperity of our state where all communities, regardless of race and geography, will bear the negative outcomes of a large undereducated population.

Angela Glover Blackwell, CEO and founder of PolicyLink, captures this mutual challenge concisely when she says, “the idea that equity is not only a moral imperative but also an economic one is catching on, and it's about time. Connecting those most left behind....to good jobs that lead to careers is not only the right thing to do, it's what we need to do to build a strong, sustainable 21st century American economy--one in which everyone can participate and prosper. Our nation's changing demographics make the economic imperative of equity and inclusion even clearer. We are undergoing a dramatic demographic transformation in which the very same racial and ethnic groups that have been

most excluded are now driving our population growth, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.”

The data in this this report also points to some progress and to some practices that hold out the promise that we might avoid a negative future. Still, given the slowness of progress as captured in trend analysis, our prospects come down to a question not just of whether we know what to do, but whether we are willing to be dramatic in the doing. Our challenge is to bring a sense of real urgency to the education of all of our students. Our further challenge is to do that with intelligence and not just out of desperate attempts to “try anything.” Urgency must be measured against thoughtfulness. Deliberate urgency requires the courage to engage with one another in changing the current systemic dynamics of our dominant education efforts and to do so inclusive of not just what schools can do but what whole communities can do to roll back all of the impediments to learning – from the school itself, to what teachers do, to the impact of limited income and social access – that confront many of our students of color and American Indian students in Minnesota.

I am hopeful that we can indeed bring intelligent urgency to our systems of education in Minnesota. Hope stems from an emergent strong body of research that ranges from early cognitive development to organizational structure to identity development that promotes cultural relevancy and competency. All of these speak to the importance of empowering people: students, families, teachers, administrators, civic and political leaders to not just “learn” how to be

successful in a system, but how to actively shape what systems can do to best meet their particular needs.

Hope also stems from new leadership in our state. Most of our educational institutions are now headed by leaders who were not commanding these structures a mere two years ago when we last issued this report. These include: our state department of education, our higher education systems, many of our largest school districts, our political leaders, our philanthropic leaders, and many of our individual schools. Also included are new activists hailing from alternative teacher programs, innovative schools, grassroots people of color, and a new crop of teachers emerging from our traditional college programs. Not all of these agree on the same agenda, but they all bring a new vibe, new energy, and freshness to Minnesota's honest efforts to do better.

From all of this emerges a new vision shaped by "closing gaps" but pushing beyond, towards achieving both **race equity** and **excellence** in our systemic education reform efforts.

Approaching this work "systemically" is an acknowledgement that to achieve a goal of preparing Minnesota's students to function effectively in a new era of globalization and powerful communication technology - where new levels of interdependence and transmittal of knowledge across the planet have a direct impact on what we do here at home - means that simply working harder to get students to fit into the present constructs of our schools and colleges is doomed for failure. Those older "blueprints" that built and informed our education systems



were designed for a different era that no longer exists as evidenced by our new economic activities, new social media instruments, and new and expanded racial and cultural diversity from which new leaders will need to be developed. So now, achieving better results from students is not primarily about “fixing students” so much as it is about redesigning how our schools and colleges develop new academic and social skills.

In redesigning our education systems, instruction will become culturally responsive and engaging for students; grounded in research-based practices, informed by ongoing formative assessment, and provided by highly qualified and effective educators. The content and level of academic knowledge will be tied at all grade levels to advanced science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) competencies, but also to “21<sup>st</sup> century skills of multi-cultural, multi-dimensional thinking, communication and relationship building, and will also reinforce the dynamism of the arts and humanities. And because we are the inheritors of a free society all of these skills will also be expected to strengthen democracy and civic engagement.

The re-design must happen within an approach that promotes race equity and educational excellence.

“Race equity” means eliminating the “racially predictive” outcomes of student assessments. This means that being part of a racially identifiable community no longer can serve as a statistically predictable indicator of how a student will perform. This goal means that we will re-deploy our resources not

simply based on sustaining old practices but rather, on how to best drive success in any given situation. That may mean doing things differently (e.g. differentiated instruction) or expending different levels of resources (e.g. two instructors per classroom to work with English Language learners) in order to arrive at equity.

“Excellence” means that the desired academic outcomes are highly rigorous for all students and that simply achieving a similar outcome across all student racial groups of anything less than rigor - while expressing equality - is not a desired outcome. This includes expecting academic growth from students already demonstrating academic proficiency.

To make this a reality, educators from pre-K to grade 12 will be provided with high quality professional development that among other things assists them to understand and implement the Minnesota academic standards and to do so through instruction that is research-based. Post-secondary instructors will also be provided with high quality professional development that includes, but goes beyond, the credentials of publishing and strives for applied research interactions with the communities within which they live and from which their students arrive.

None of this will be possible without the active engagement of families and communities of color. Our new system of education will have a deeply embedded dynamic of people of color participating closely with schools, colleges, and universities to inform, shape, and support instructional efforts.

We know what to do. We have the knowledge. We have the leaders. We have the communities. We have the resources. We have the students. What we don't have is a lot of time. We need to act - right now.

Carlos Mariani Rosa - December 2012

## **Appendix**

### **Research Postscript: Rational and Influences**

According to the 112-Opened Congress “Educational Equity”:

*Is the assurance that all students are to receive impartial treatment and access to all programs, resources, and curriculum? In addition, the atmosphere in which students are learning must encourage a positive outlook and self-esteem in order to allow each student to achieve the most they can while making dynamic contributions to their school and society ([www.opencongress.org](http://www.opencongress.org)).*

As the primary researcher and project manager for the State of Students of Color and American Indian Students report, my intent was to provide quality data and analysis surrounding educational equity and excellence as it relates to the state of Minnesota.

According to Peter Senge, there is only one problem in the world, and that is that we create an amazing web of interdependence. However, we don't understand it. For Senge, learning is the result of understanding our growing interdependence and it is this theme that is present throughout this report (<http://www.infed.org/thinkers/senge.htm>).

Several philosophies and scholars have informed my approach in the construction of this report. Romantic Naturalists like Rousseau taught that learning for a child began at birth, even before they could speak (Guldbransen, 2009), and educators like Montessori believed that education was a natural process spontaneously carried out by the individual ([www.montessori.edu/maria.html](http://www.montessori.edu/maria.html)).

The philosophy of progressivism is clear and apparent in this report as it supports a child-centered learning environment in a democratic educational system. Progressivism mandates that student's values and interest belong in curriculum and policy. Kilpatrick believed that it was important for the teacher to understand children. He believes that a teacher should conduct class in such a

way that every child had an opportunity to show off those good things they possessed (Beyer, 1997). Progressivism supports the belief that through science and the arts enlightened citizens can use knowledge to support a democratic form of living (Guldbrandsen, 2009).

The impacts of existentialism can be identified in this report in the belief that independent thinking engages individuals in the central questions of education and that the values and interests of the learner as an individual must be present.

Reconstructivism's influences can be seen in the emphasis on social questions to create a better society and support for worldwide democracy. Individuals like George S. Counts believed that education should strive to promote the fullest and most thorough understanding of the world. He also believed that facts should not be suppressed or distorted and that education contains a large element of imposition, which is inevitable (<http://www.selu.edu>).

Reconstructivism has given way to postmodern, liberation, and critical philosophies and theories. Scholars such as Freire believed that through proper education individuals transformed themselves as learners, which provided themselves with the necessary tools to bring about radical structural changes that supported a democratic lifestyle and equitable solutions for those engaged in the process of learning (Freire, 2003).

Systems thinking perspectives have also played a significant role in helping guide the collaborative efforts of this report. David Bohm, a theoretical physicist, suggested that appearance provided the perspective of one's reality

and yet that appearance is only one perspective and therefore producing a limited reality. Bohm subscribed to the thought that we must have multiple appearances / perspectives if we will be able to produce a coherent deep understanding of truth or issues (<http://www.david-bohm.net>).

Bohm's theory provided the rationale to create an environment of interconnectedness and multiple perspectives to our work. Our Research Collaborative Table, which included individuals from over 20 various organizations, embraced the challenge of developing and maintaining working relationships with a significant diverse audience of colleagues, partners and stakeholders. Our Research Collaborative Table's ability to engage and support productive work teams allowed for multiple perspectives, which was transformative to our collaborative efforts. This, however, only worked through shared meaning and importance. The shared meaning required coherent thought, suspended judgments or assumptions, and a focus on our common agenda.

It is important to understand from a systems ideology, society is a link or a web of relationships between people and institutions or their environment. These relationships are present and needed so that "ALL" parties can survive (<http://www.david-bohm.net>).

It was from these foundations that this report emerged. Data sets for this report were gathered from sources such as the Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota Office of Higher Education, and Minnesota State Demographer's office between August 2011 through December 2011. MMEP

consultants and staff facilitated an eight month process with researchers; policy analysts and community leaders from various cultural communities reviewed the data and developed an outline around key themes. These outlines then were presented to the Research Collaborative Table. Once outlines were established, various member of the Research Collaborative Table volunteered to participate in bringing forth what were termed “Elements” of this report, thus providing the strength of multiple perspectives which have led to the production of a deep coherent understanding of the issues surrounding Minnesota’s Students of Color and American Indian students.

Several editorial decisions were made in presenting the data and analyses to best represent the information included in the report, while respecting the true diversity that exists within each community. Tables and graphs provided from primary research sources will use the source titles. For example, if a graph uses the term Black or Asian as a racial classification, the corresponding table or graph in the report will use that title. In the report’s narrative, consistent terms are used throughout the report, regardless of the data set being discussed. The primary racial classifications and or ethnic terms agreed upon by the RCT to be used in the narrative of this report are: American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, and White.

This report is unique in that it does not rely on the limitation of “one” voice but rather it is strengthened through the “multiple” voices of the Minnesota Minority Education Partnerships Research Collaborative Table.



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