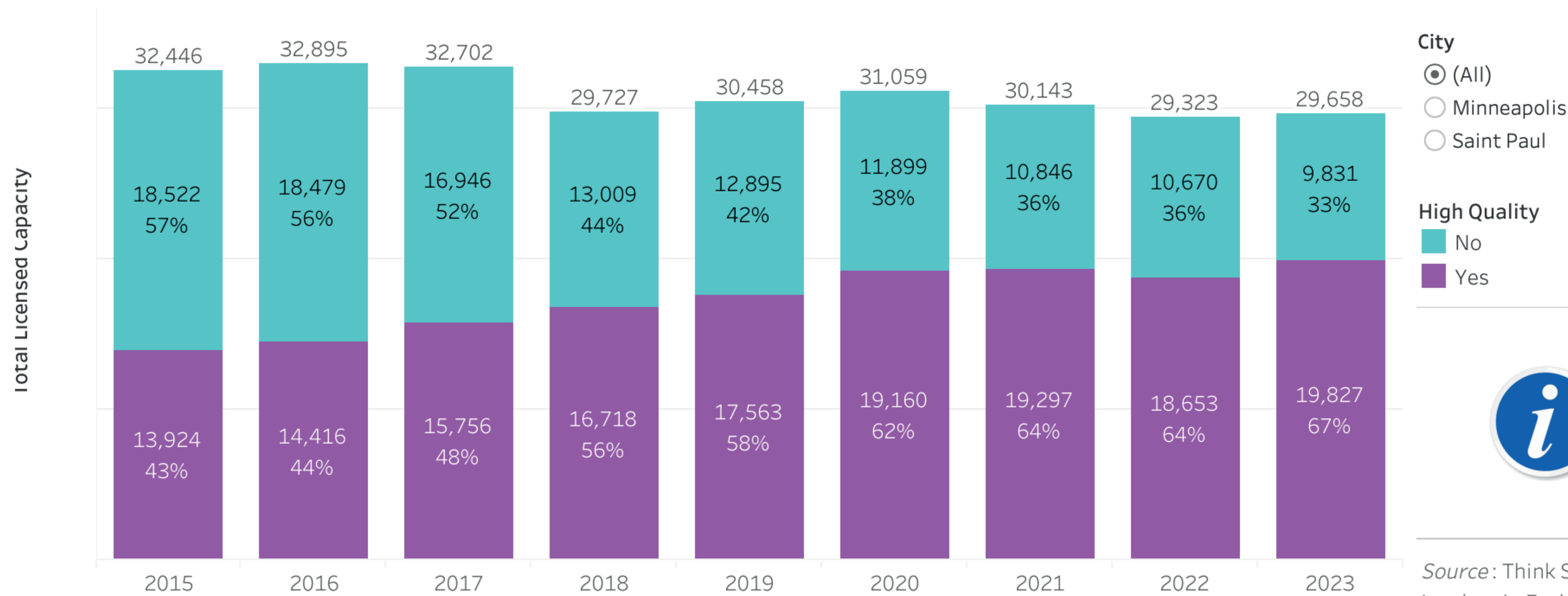




EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE) CAPACITY IN MINNEAPOLIS & ST. PAUL

EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY & ACCESS

Goal 1: High Quality ECE Slots



Type of Care
All

City
● (All)
○ Minneapolis
○ Saint Paul

High Quality
■ No
■ Yes

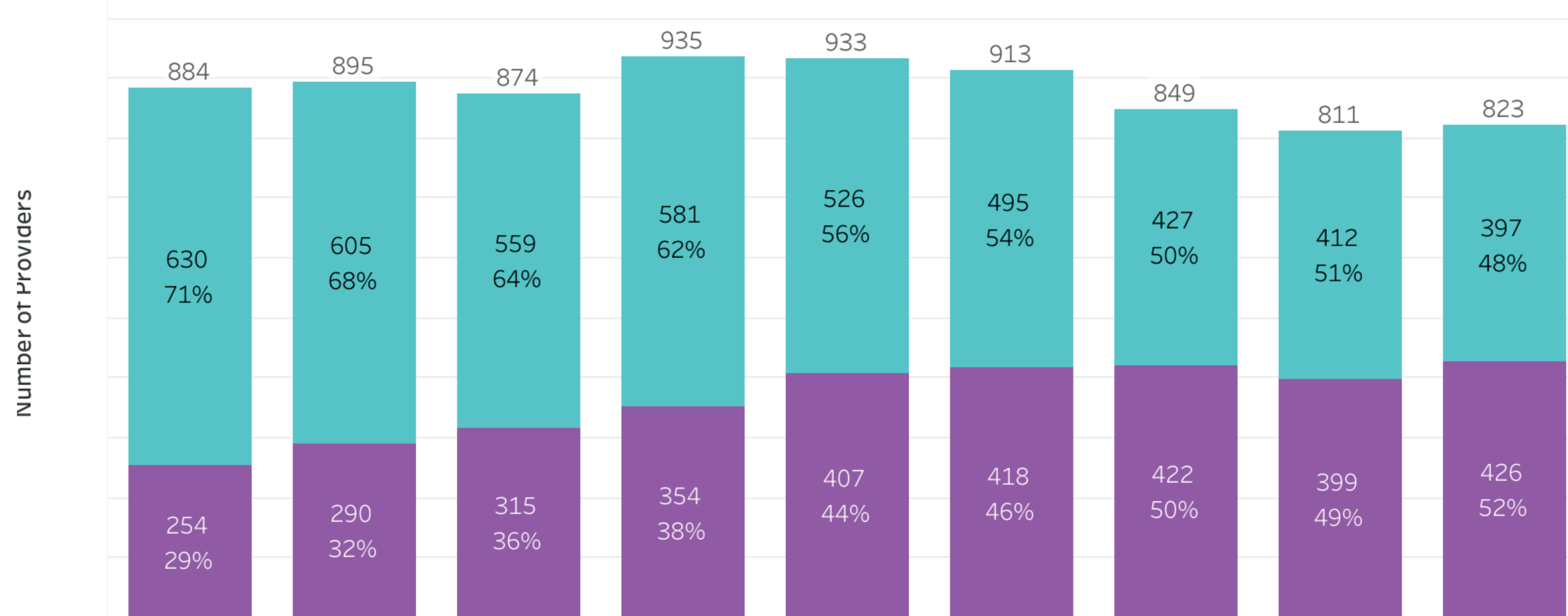


Source: Think Small, Leaders in Early Learning with Data from Minnesota Department Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).



The numbers of high-quality slots and providers are largely flat over time. While we have seen small increases, the numbers are not increasing at the rate needed to be able to provide access to high-quality early education for all young learners in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and this reality is true in all regions of the state.

Goal 1: High Quality ECE Providers



Even if supply were adequate, we have no data to tell us how our early childhood system is working as a whole to prepare children for kindergarten because there is currently no statewide school readiness data publicly available. The upcoming Kindergarten Fall Assessment, which the legislature has directed to begin in the 25-26 school year, will give us valuable information about how the system is doing and what needs to change.



WHAT WE'VE LEARNED FROM PAST POLICY

EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY & ACCESS

Insights were gathered from two focus group sessions involving program administrators and stakeholders from the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation (MELF) and Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) pilots, along with evaluation reports from SRI International. Key lessons apply to both geographic pilots and statewide expansion focused on family income.

1

ESTABLISHED INFRASTRUCTURE

Fifteen years after the MELF scholarship pilot, infrastructure for Early Learning Scholarships (ELS) is in place; therefore, a future pilot won't need the same level of start-up help from partners.

2

PROGRAM INTERACTION

In designing a pilot, consider how it interacts with current program types, such as those that receive a mix of private and public funding (child care) and public-funded programs (Head Start and Voluntary Pre-K in public schools).

3

INNOVATION OPPORTUNITIES

A pilot can be an opportunity to try out innovations or address system-level elements, such as a coordinated enrollment system or data tracking system. A pilot can also be an opportunity to put resources in place to help boost provider quality.

4

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Work with regional ELS administrators and cultural community leaders to make community connections and conduct outreach.

5

FEEDBACK FROM PROVIDERS

Connect with leaders within formal and informal networks of early care and education providers to solicit feedback on pilot design and regularly communicate about pilot elements and timing.

6

CLARITY IN ELIGIBILITY

Use simple and clear family eligibility requirements and income verification processes.



INCREASING ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY & ACCESS



High-quality early care and education (ECE) benefits children, families, and businesses and produces a high return on investment to society. For the past decade, Minnesota has made strides in ECE availability, particularly for children living in low-income families. Since 2013, total investments in Early Learning Scholarships (ELS), Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), Voluntary Pre-K (VPK), and Head Start have increased by \$500 million annually. This benefits approximately 50,000 of our youngest learners. Much of this funding is one-time, so it will not be available to families in future years once it has been expended.

The Great Start Scholarships (GSS) framework aims to create an effective and sustainable ECE system that supports the holistic development of young children and facilitates parent/caregiver involvement in the workforce and education.

What is High Quality?

In Minnesota, high quality is determined and developed through the Parent Aware Quality Rating System.

Where does 7% come from?

This guideline was initially recommended by a task force of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in 2016 and endorsed by the Minnesota Great Start Task Force in 2022.



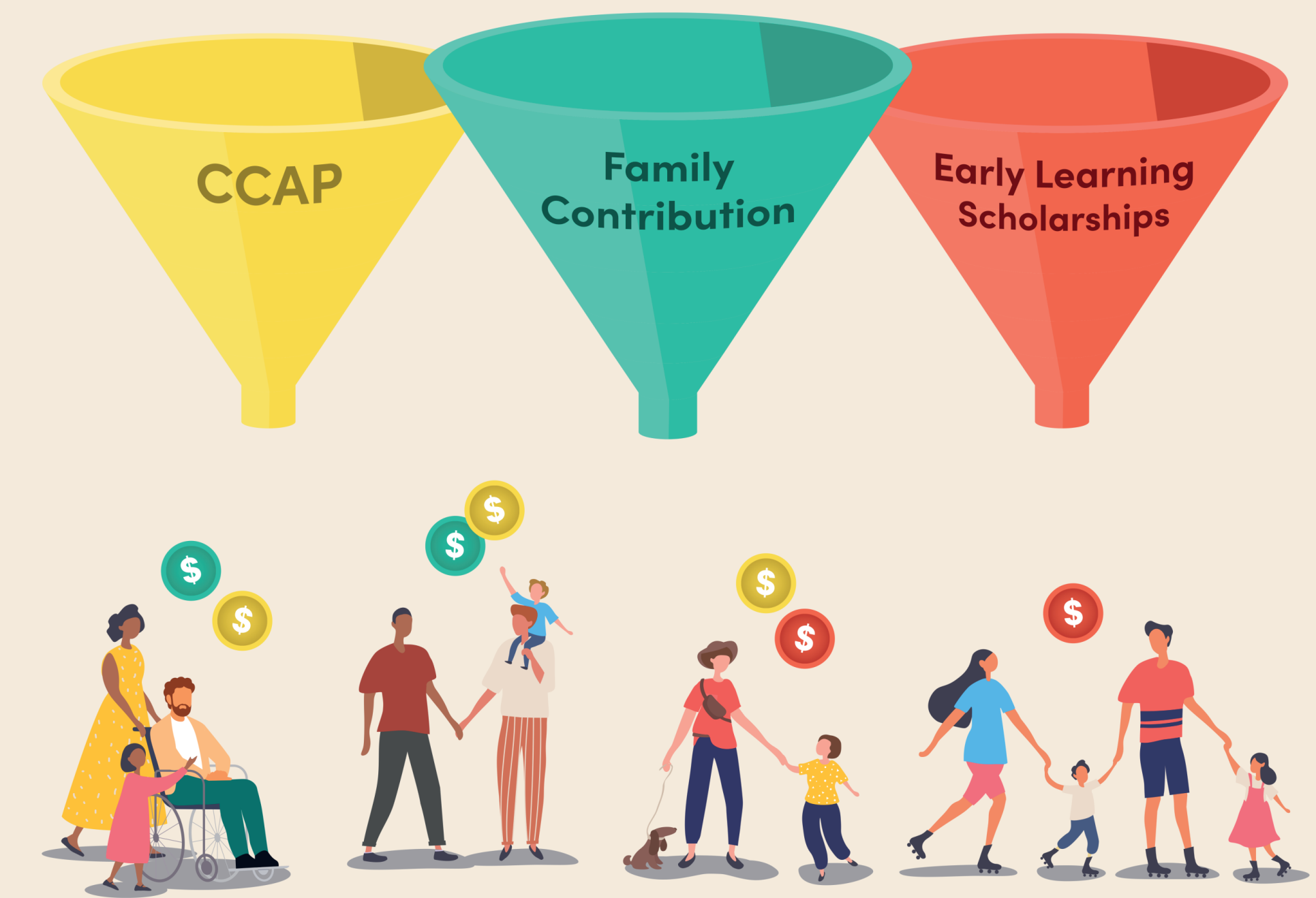
Many Minnesota families find high-quality ECE out of their reach, due to:

High Costs: A University of Minnesota study estimated that 94% of Minnesota families with young children spend more than 7% of their income on early care and education. This estimate comes from the Health and Human Services Department, Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Program.

Low Access to Care: Revenue limitations mean that educators and other staff who lead ECE programs receive limited compensation and these programs (the majority of which are small businesses) operate on slim or non-existent profit margins. This leads to shortages of programs and educators.

The Current System

Funding and family contributions do not cover the total cost of quality early care and education.

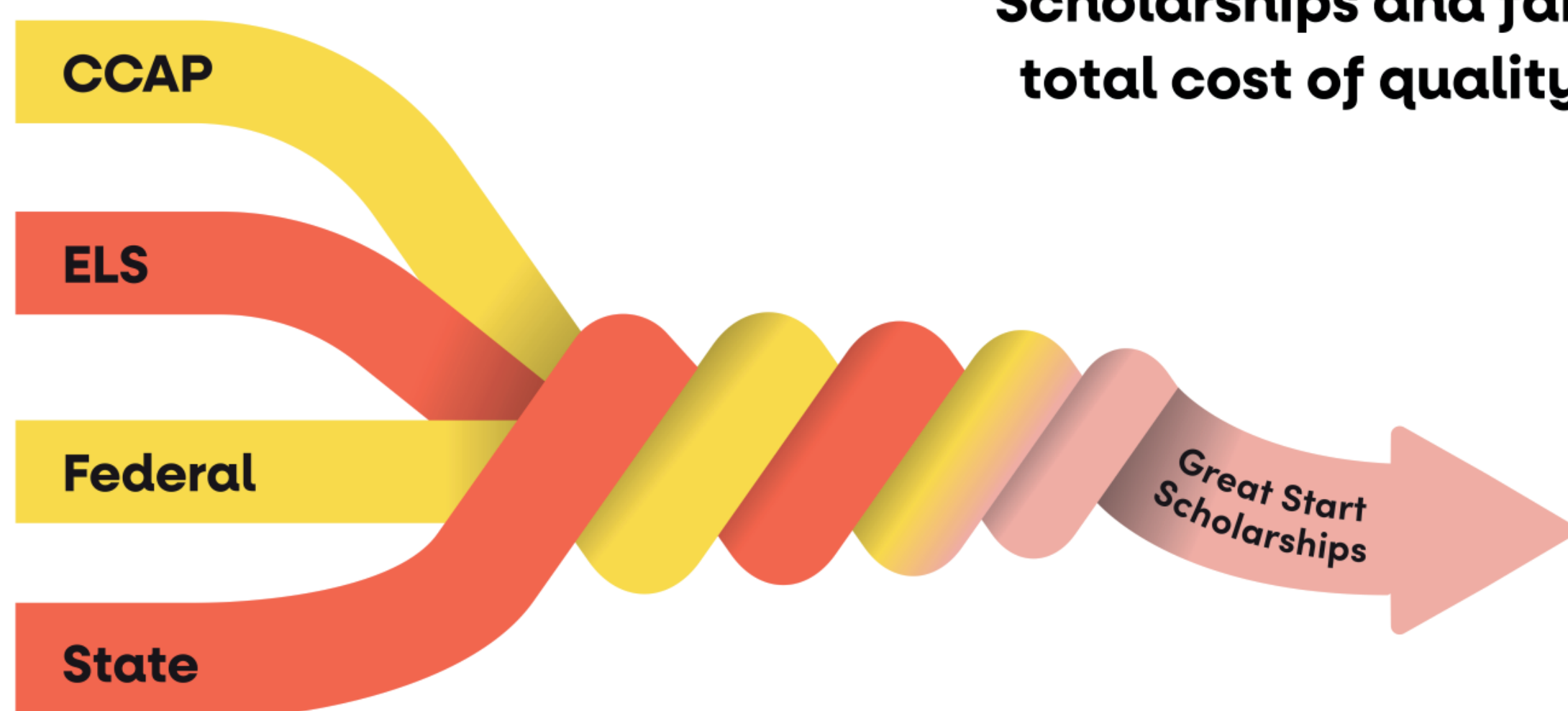


High-quality childcare and early education is expensive to provide, just like high-quality K-12 education. Unlike K-12, however, families shoulder the burden of paying for it. Infant care in Minnesota costs more than tuition at the University of Minnesota.

- Great Start MN

After Great Start Scholarships

Scholarships and family contributions cover the total cost of quality early care and education.



Graphics provided by:



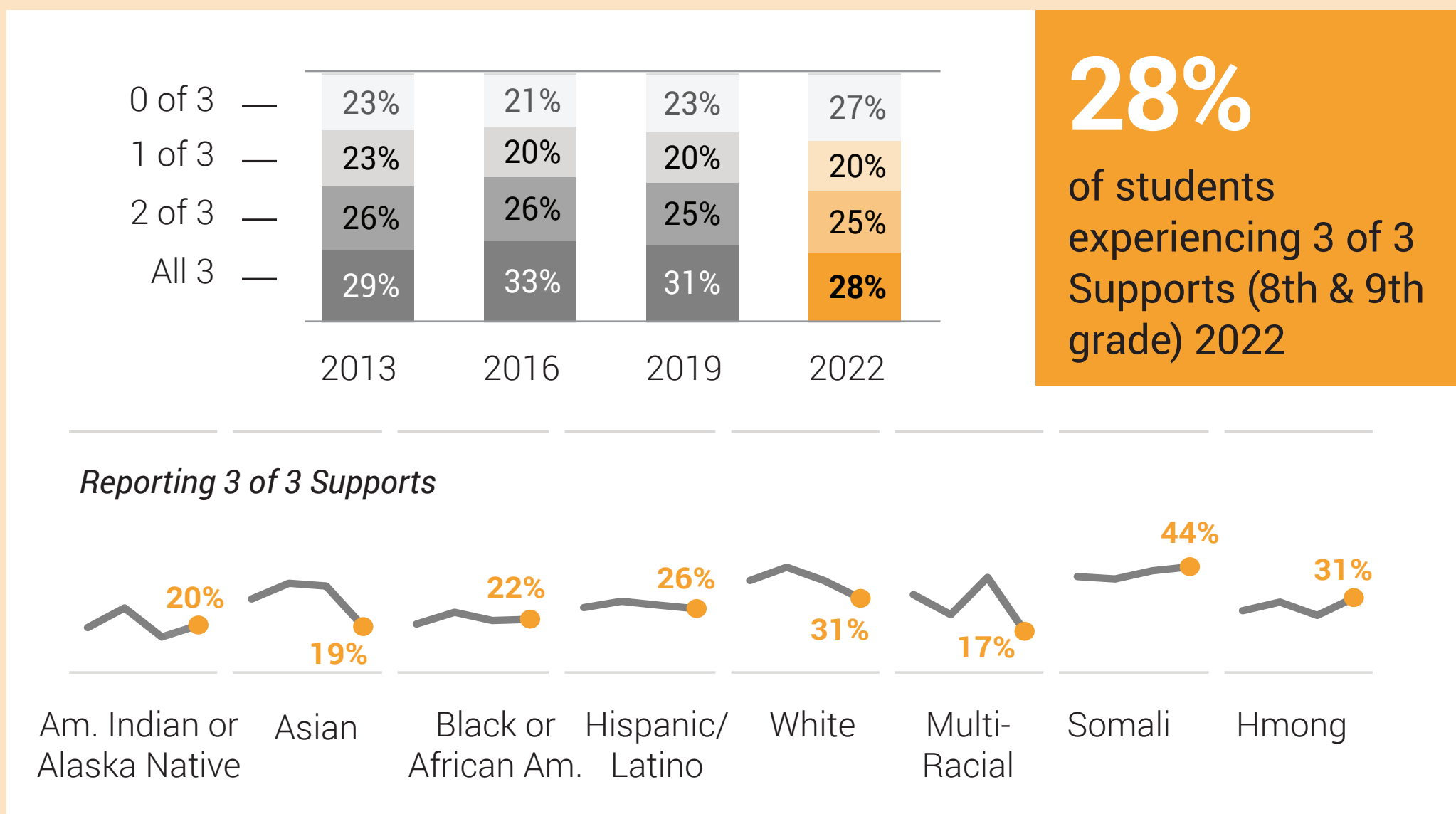


SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Generation Next strongly believes in measuring progress in academic outcomes like reading and mathematics, but we also recognize the growing body of research showing the importance of social and emotional learning (SEL) as both a means to academic success and a critical indicator in its own right. In 2015, the Leadership Council added an SEL goal: *By the end of 8th grade, every child is socially and emotionally equipped to learn.* Since then, we have used results from the Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) to better understand Minneapolis and Saint Paul youth's experience and what we will do to support their development.

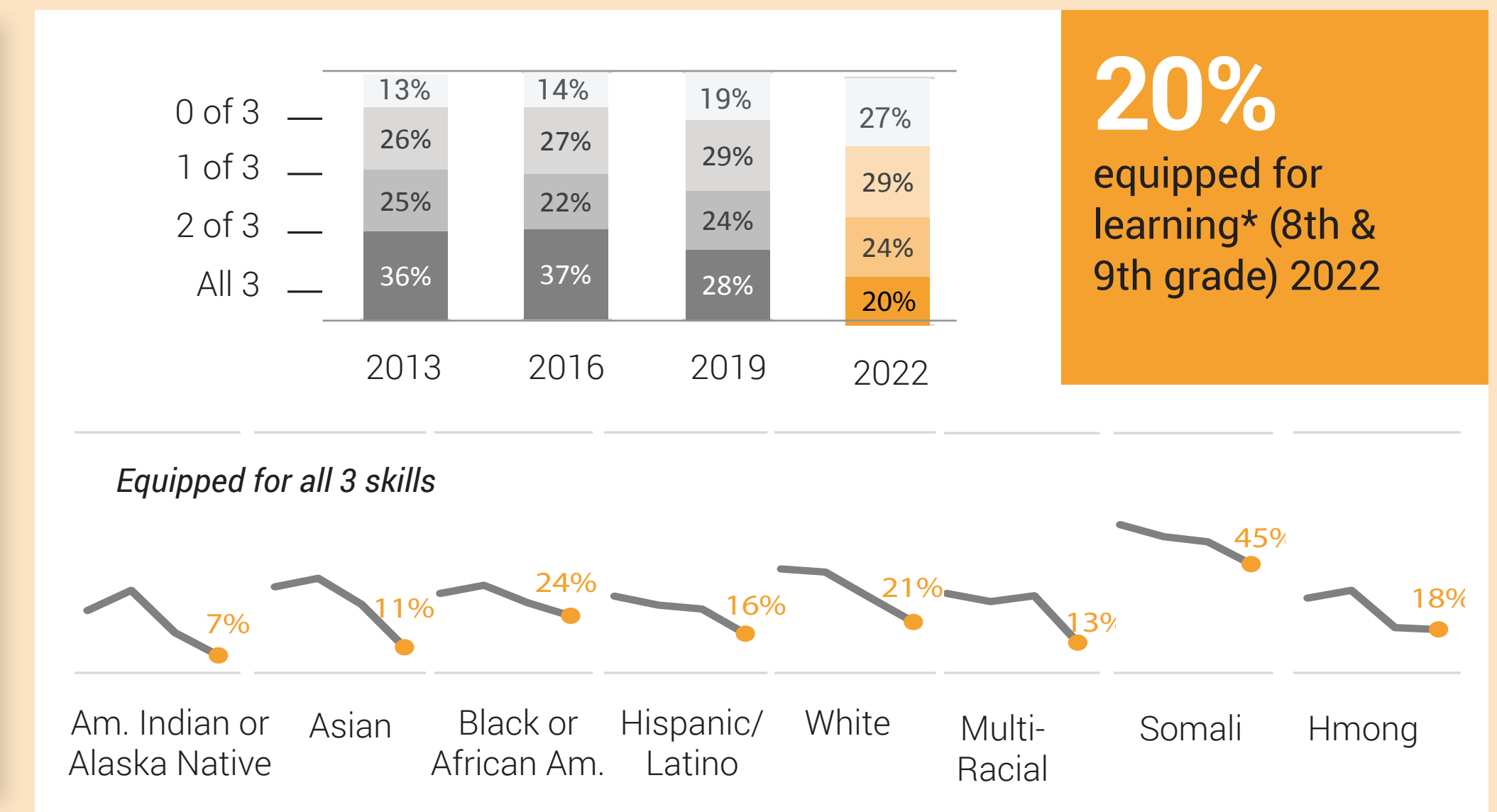
Supports reflect what adults provide for young people, emphasizing relationship-based factors: School-Community Support, Teacher-Staff Support, and Empowerment.

Students overall reported similar levels of Social Emotional Supports in 2022 compared to previous years, though levels were much lower for Asian, Hispanic/Latino, and White students than in the past.



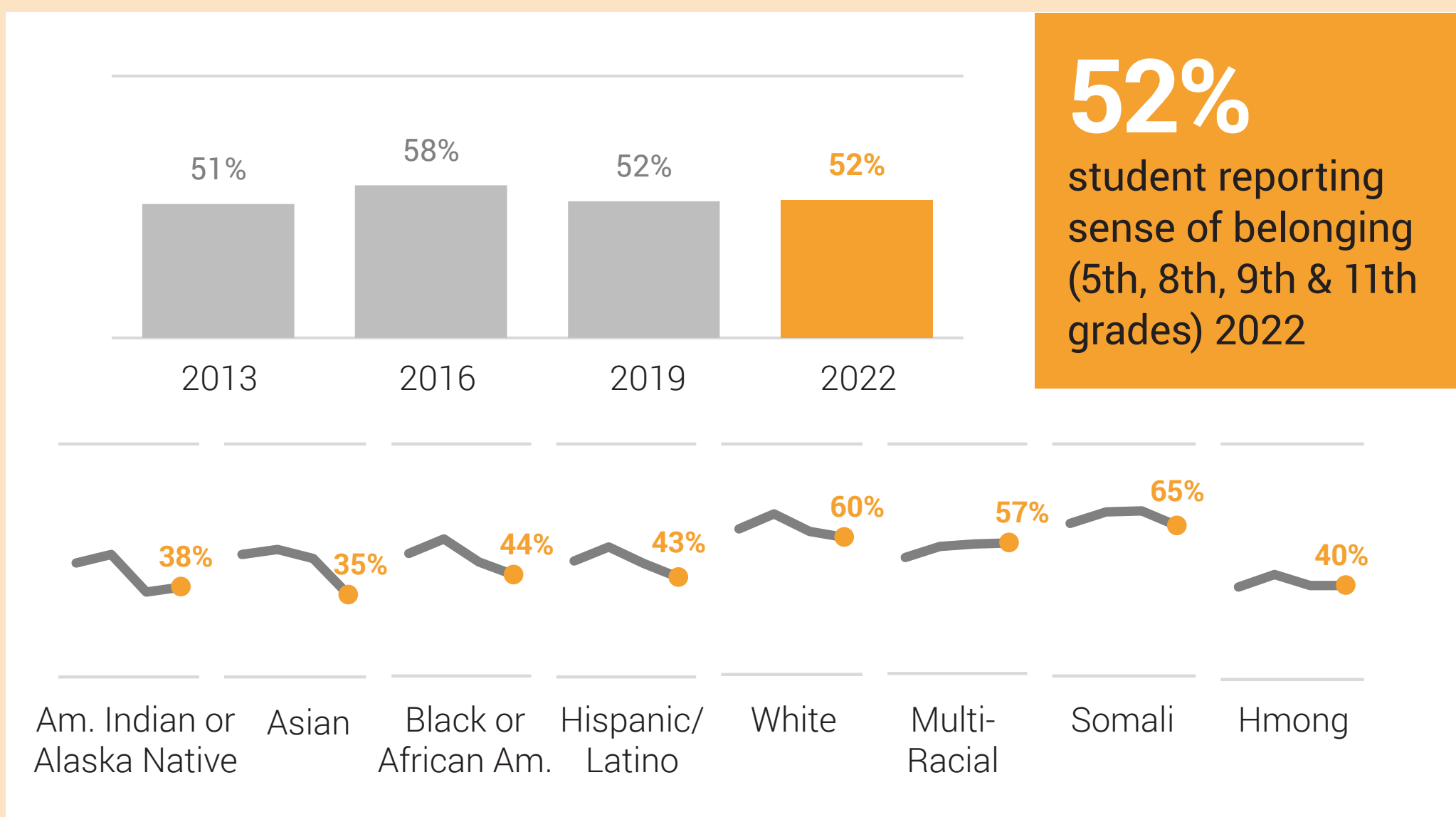
Skills, which are developed in conditions of varying Supports and Sense of Belonging, include: Commitment to Learning, Positive Identity & Outlook, and Social Competence.

Responses from the 2022 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) indicate the lowest levels of social-emotional skills since these measures were added to MSS in 2013. These results continue trends that first showed up in 2019.



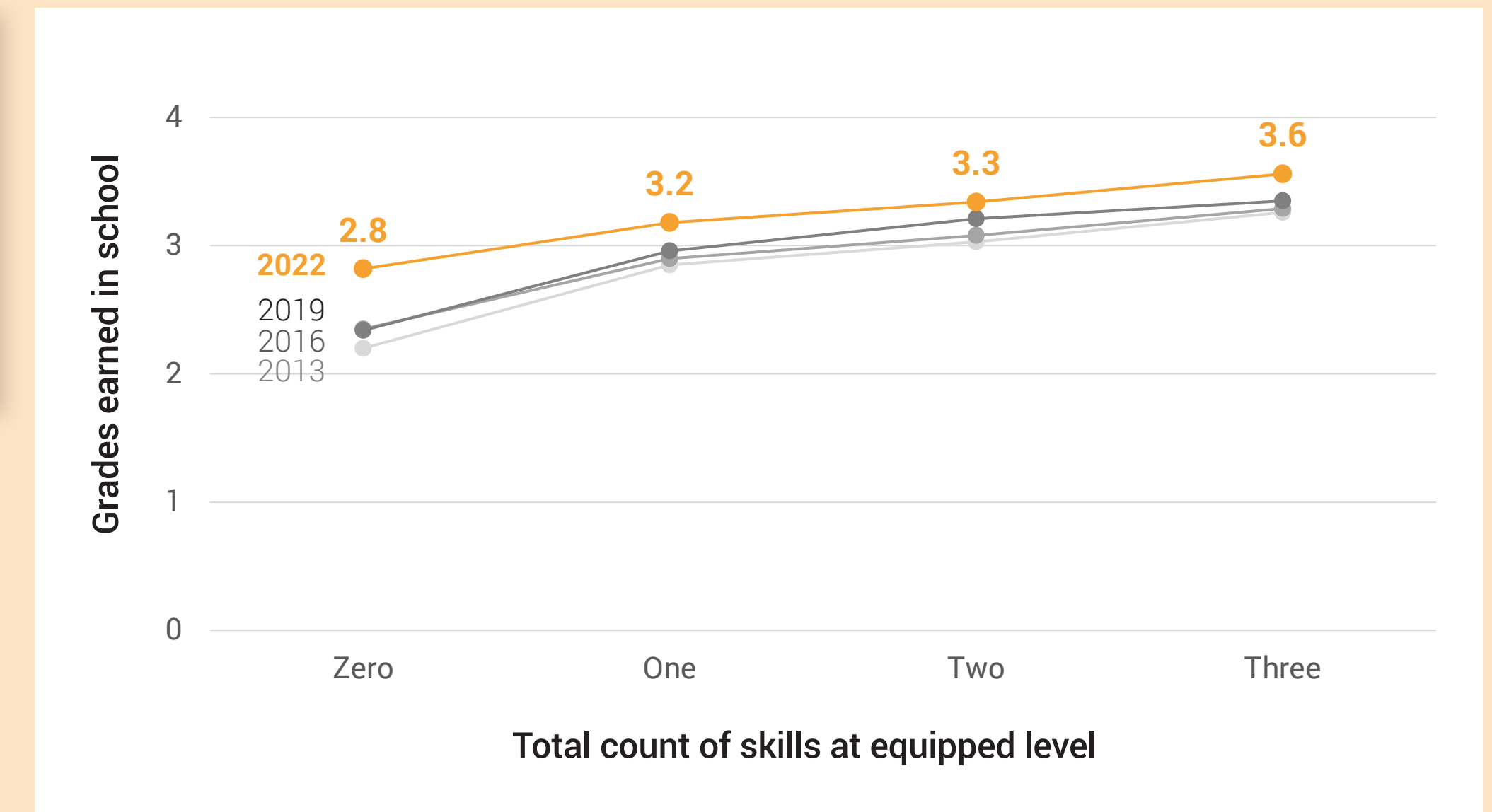
Sense of Belonging is known to facilitate engagement and academic success. It is a condition of being accepted, respected, included, and supported through positive stable relationships.

Our community of students experienced an increase in 2016, with some decline in 2019, yet stable since. There is some variation in how students in different racial/ethnic groups experience belonging, but not as great as the differences in academic outcomes.

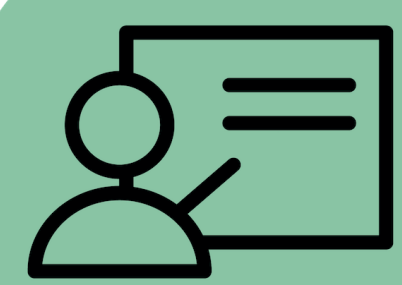


These Social Emotional Skills are **linked to higher instances of positive indicators**, including academic success, as well as lower instances of negative conditions such as mental distress.

Grade point average is one academic indicator that is higher in students with more Social Emotional Skills.



Note: School participation in MSS has changed over the years, but analysis confirms it did not meaningfully affect variation in results.
 "Equipped to learn," as defined by Generation Next for this goal, includes three skills from the Search Institute's Developmental Assets Profile: Commitment to Learning, Social Competence, and Positive Identity
 Source: MN Student Survey, analysis by University of Minnesota



POSTSECONDARY TRANSITIONS & PERSISTENCE MODEL - WORKING DRAFT

POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION & PERSISTENCE

	SITUATIONS/CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS	MEASURES OF SUCCESS
ACADEMIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gap between minimum requirements to graduate high school and minimum requirements for postsecondary success Lacking study skills needed for postsecondary success Availability of pre-college coursework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposure to postsecondary education while in high school (dual credit) Enhanced developmental education Intrusive advising, coaching, and general support services Gather student feedback to inform program improvement Incorporate qualitative data collection methods to understand student experiences and program impact Track student progress (retention, GPA, graduation rates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postsecondary enrollment rates Credential attainment / course completion Relationship between persistence and developmental education proposed enhancements
SOCIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role models and family history Representation and identity in institutions (e.g., peer/affinity groups) Race and gender bias regarding "who should be in college" Natural support group perceptions of value of college Economic conditions (cost of tuition and employment rates) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohorts of students that create a sense of shared experience and belonging Mentorship from program staff, faculty, and community partners and peers who reflect the diversity of students Trauma-informed and person-centered mentorship from program staff, faculty, and community partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of staff and student representation Student perspectives of representation
PERSONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of available programs Ability to build relationships with mentors (personal history contributing to mistrust), and connect and build relationships with faculty and institutional staff Perceived utility of postsecondary education Ability to meet basic needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarships, grants, and emergency aid to address basic needs and financial barriers Workshops and other opportunities to develop leadership skills Help students explore their cultural background and develop a strong sense of self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistence (remaining enrolled) Participation in campus activities Participation in leadership programs and roles Credential attainment
INSTITUTIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to gather and use student input School success based on student success (how many students remain enrolled after the first year) Differentiated learning / catch-up opportunities can delay credential attainment Operating on anti-racist, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer culturally relevant programming and incorporate our 6 culturally sustaining practices Implement a two-person leadership model with a strategic advisor (administrative focus) and student success specialist (student experience focus) Explore funding options like endowments, grants, donations, and student fees Evaluate factors contributing to student exits to adjust programs and build persistence Enroll students in classes earlier (early enrollment is a strong indicator of remaining enrolled) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Composition of staff Budget allocations for affiliated practices (DEI, ARTI, and professional development) Teacher performance evaluations aligned with student persistence measures Participation in cohorts and individual supports

BUILDING EQUITABLE PATHWAYS

POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION & PERSISTENCE

The Problem: Despite efforts by Minneapolis College and Saint Paul College to create equitable and inclusive learning environments, significant challenges persist in transitioning high school graduates to postsecondary education and achieving successful outcomes. There's a need to identify and implement strategies to improve postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and attainment, particularly for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) students.

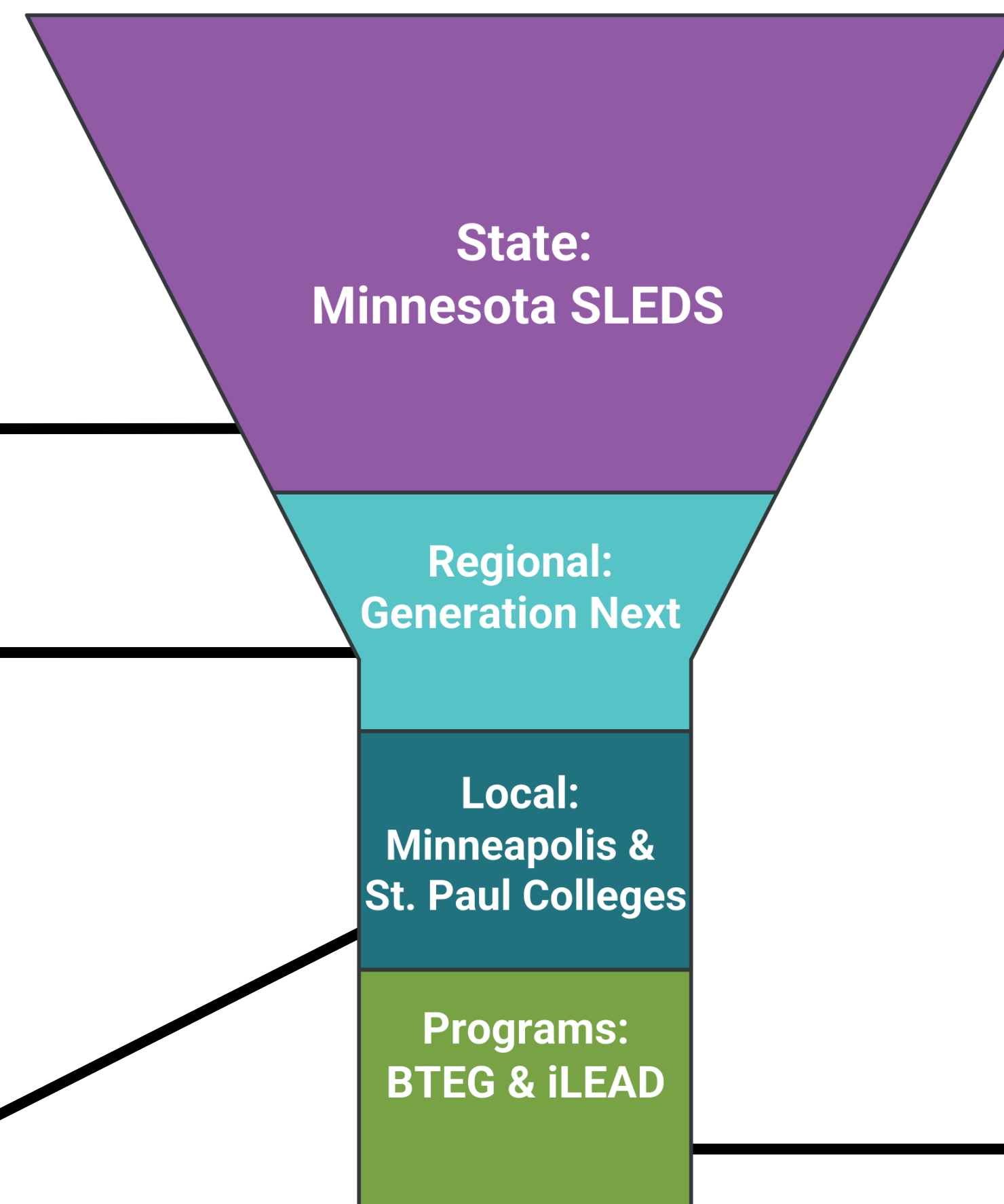


MINNESOTA CONTEXT: ASSETS

- Minnesota created a system called SLEDS (Minnesota Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System) that tracks students from pre-K through college and into their careers.
- This allows the state to see how well education programs are working and how students move between different stages of learning and employment.

- Works to improve education for all students in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.
- Focused on closing achievement gaps and opportunity gaps between different racial and economic groups.
- Uses data and community input to decide what works best to make sure all students are prepared for college completion.

- Community Colleges
- Anti Racist & Trauma-Informed



BTEG & iLEAD PROGRAMS

These culturally sustaining practices are being used across the colleges' strategies

BTEG (Bridging the Equity Gap) Scholarship Program *Minneapolis College*

BTEG is an opportunity for Black and Indigenous male students to be a part of a community engaged in experiential learning, mentorship and leadership. Through academic, social and cultural support, students will be equipped with a quality education and the tools to see greatness in themselves, others and the greater community.

iLEAD (Identity, Leadership, Excellence, Accountability, and Dedication) Fellowship Program *Saint Paul College*

iLEAD is a dynamic community-building initiative designed to provide comprehensive support and empower BIPOC male students on their educational journey. iLEAD is committed to enhancing retention, persistence, and completion rates, ultimately paving the way for successful careers and thriving wages.



BTEG & iLEAD STUDENT ROLES

Co-creation of solutions:

Provide invaluable feedback on program design and implementation.

Living examples of equity:

Share their experiences to inform program improvements and advocacy efforts.

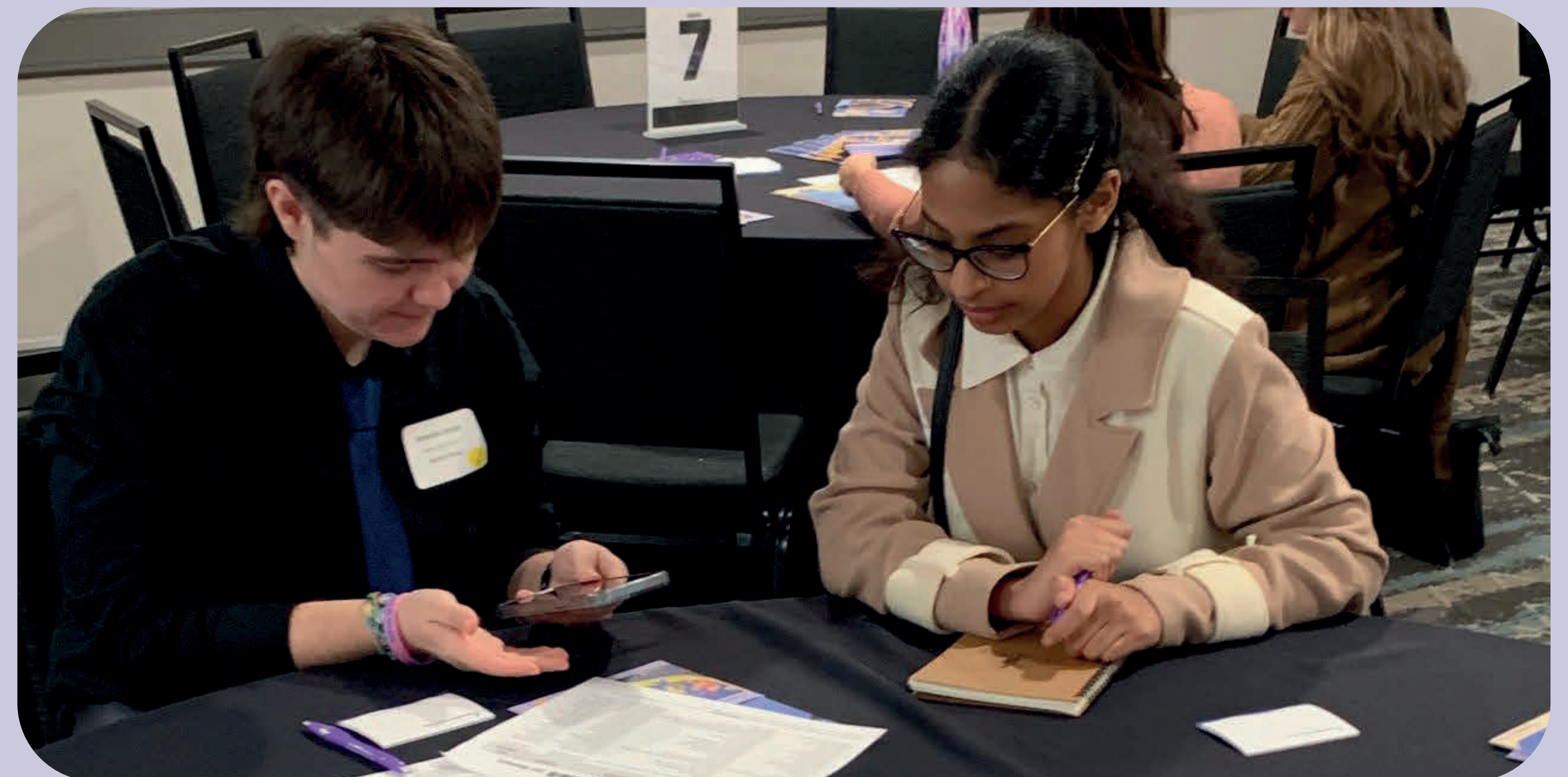
Beneficiaries of change:

Ultimately drive the impact of equity-minded programs.



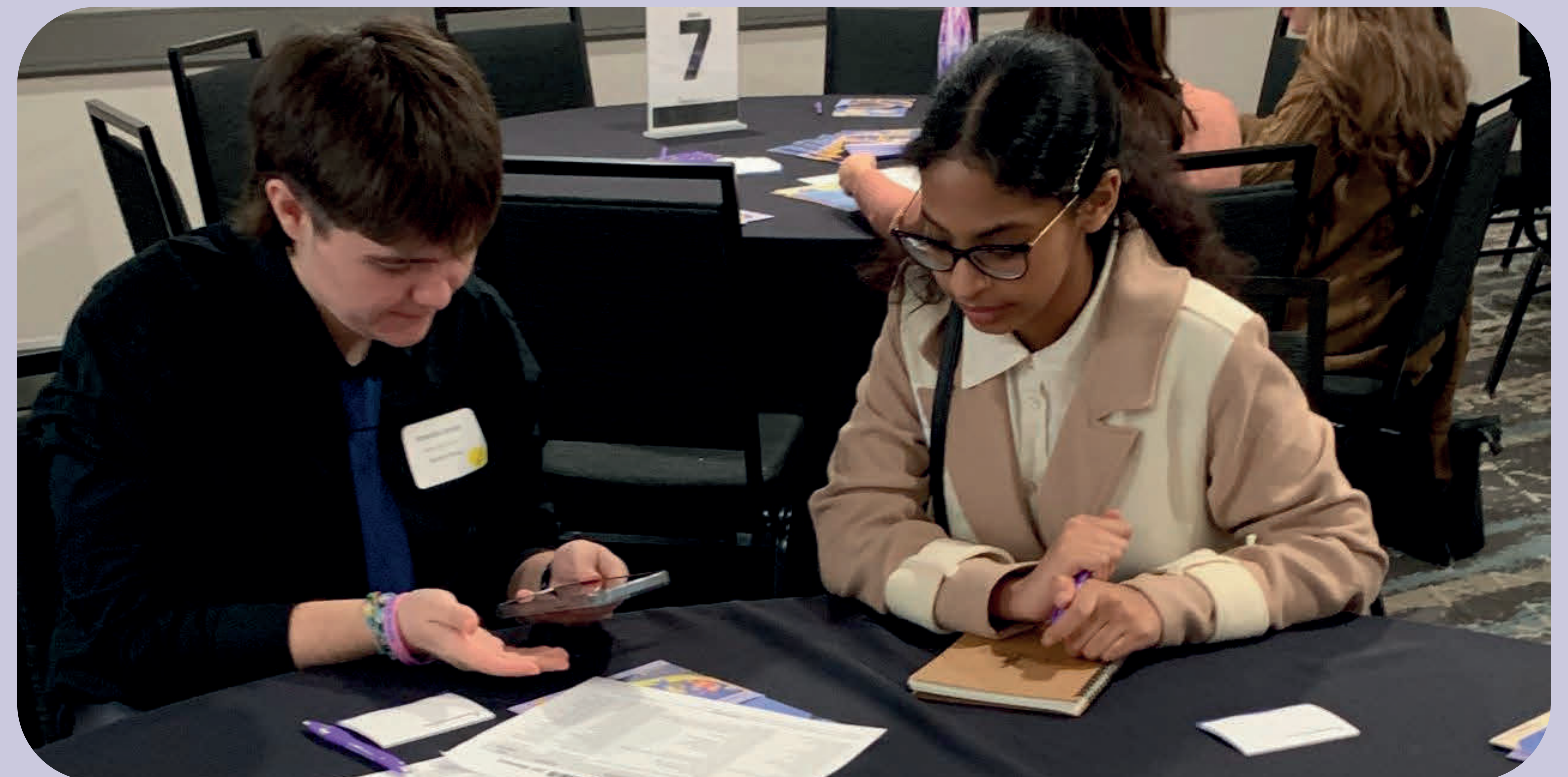
Youth as Champions Key Findings

1. **Youth had positive impressions** of the six key messages, but changed opinions on Opportunity and Evolving.
2. Twin Cities Youth **recognize the value** of the teaching profession while also being **aware of broader systemic issues** impacting the field, including a **lack of teachers of color**.
3. 85% of YAC participants indicated they would be **interested in future Youth as Champions work**.



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