



ANNUAL REPORT

FUTURE FOCUS

2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Co-Chair Letter	1
Executive Director Letter	2
Our Community of Practice	4
Community-Level Outcomes	6
Our Priority Areas	8
Early Childhood Quality & Access	
Teacher Diversity & Teaching Diverse Learners	
Postsecondary Preparation & Persistence	
Our Leadership	11
Funders	13

CO-CHAIR LETTER



Jackie Statum Allen, Grantmaking Director, Bush Foundation (L) & Dr. Lisa Sayles-Adams, Superintendent, Minneapolis Public Schools (R)

As co-chairs of the Generation Next Leadership Council, we're thrilled to share our 2024 Annual Report with all of you. This past year has truly been one of growth, resilience, and a dedication to bridging the achievement and opportunity gaps for our students in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

Under the theme of **"Future Focus,"** we're focusing on our readiness for what's next. In a world that's always changing and full of surprises, Generation Next has shown that we can be flexible, nimble, and adaptable as an organization. We've made it our goal to ensure we're supporting students, educators, and families in the ways they truly need.

We've certainly seen some positive changes in student outcomes, but there's still a lot of work to do—especially since reading and math scores have remained largely unchanged in the lasting impacts of 2020 (see our *Community-Level Outcomes on page 6*). These challenges underscore why focusing on literacy is a big lift for our community, but also an essential step in supporting our students' educational journeys. We're ready to lean into the opportunities brought by Minnesota's Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act to **improve literacy rates and address disparities.**

Our goal has always been to prepare young people to confidently navigate their futures. At Generation Next, we're here to empower our educational partners with the tools and strategies they need to tackle the challenges ahead. Together, we can adapt to the ever-evolving educational landscape and meet the unique needs of our students. Thanks to our strong focus on **data and community engagement,** we've been able to identify and replicate practices that benefit our students, particularly those from communities of color and lower-income backgrounds.

We're energized by the progress of Generation Next's cross-sector coalition over the last year, notably:

- Expanded use of longitudinal data in community - *more on page 4*
- Strengthened the statewide Education Partnerships Coalition (EPC) - *more on page 5*
- Contributed to understanding local impacts of policy and funding in early childhood - *more on page 8*

These advances remind us of the lessons we've learned and how we can better prepare ourselves for what's next.

Looking ahead to the future, we're committed to navigating the upcoming changes in education by continuously supporting our partners as they face new challenges.

At Generation Next, **we're all about adaptation.** We've managed to adapt through leadership changes and evolving community conditions while maintaining our shared vision, priority area focus, and tracking our community-level outcomes. Collaborating and staying focused on what matters most is what drives us forward as a community.

Thank you to every member of the Generation Next coalition for your tireless efforts and passion. Together, we're making a real difference and paving the way for a brighter future for every student.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER



Joe Munnich
Executive Director
Generation Next

2024 was a year of transitions. At Generation Next, we had a Co-Chair change when Dr. Joe Gothard, who served in the role for over six years as he led the Saint Paul Public Schools, left Minnesota for another position. At the same time, Minneapolis Public Schools selected a new superintendent, Dr. Lisa Sayles-Adams, who quickly and ably stepped into the Generation Next Co-Chair role.

On our Data Committee, Dr. Paul Mattessich, who anchored the group since it was the founding Goals and Measures Committee (before Generation Next was even called Generation Next) stayed on in this capacity after his 2022 retirement as Executive Director of Wilder Research. This year, though, he passed the Chair role to Dr. Briellen Griffin, Community Engagement & Partnership Manager at Wilder Research. Again, while Paul will shift into a different role, we see a new energy in Brie's leadership.

These leadership transitions represented losses for us, but they also **strengthened our coalition with new leaders' voices**. Our coalition's stability through changes underscores the importance of Generation Next as the organization that maintains our Minneapolis and Saint Paul communities' shared vision and priorities for our young people even - and especially - as organizations and roles change. Imagine the hub of a wheel, connecting the multidirectional spokes so they can each add their strength to the whole and move forward together. That's the role Generation Next serves, holding the center to give everyone a place to contribute to the solution - and ensure we don't lose ground on the progress we have made together.

Of course, all these leadership and organizational changes are small compared to the potential of the evolving community of growing children and youth around us. For them, we continue to hold this coalition together to **connect information, coordinate efforts, and reshape our systems to better serve all in our next generation**.

To do this, we remain committed to being the hub for community efforts to improve transitions from early childhood into the PK-12 system, and from PK-12 into postsecondary education and employment - and all the expected and unexpected changes along the way - until all our young people experience transitions not as a barrier to their success, but a source of greater strength and economic mobility.

GENERATION NEXT



OUR COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

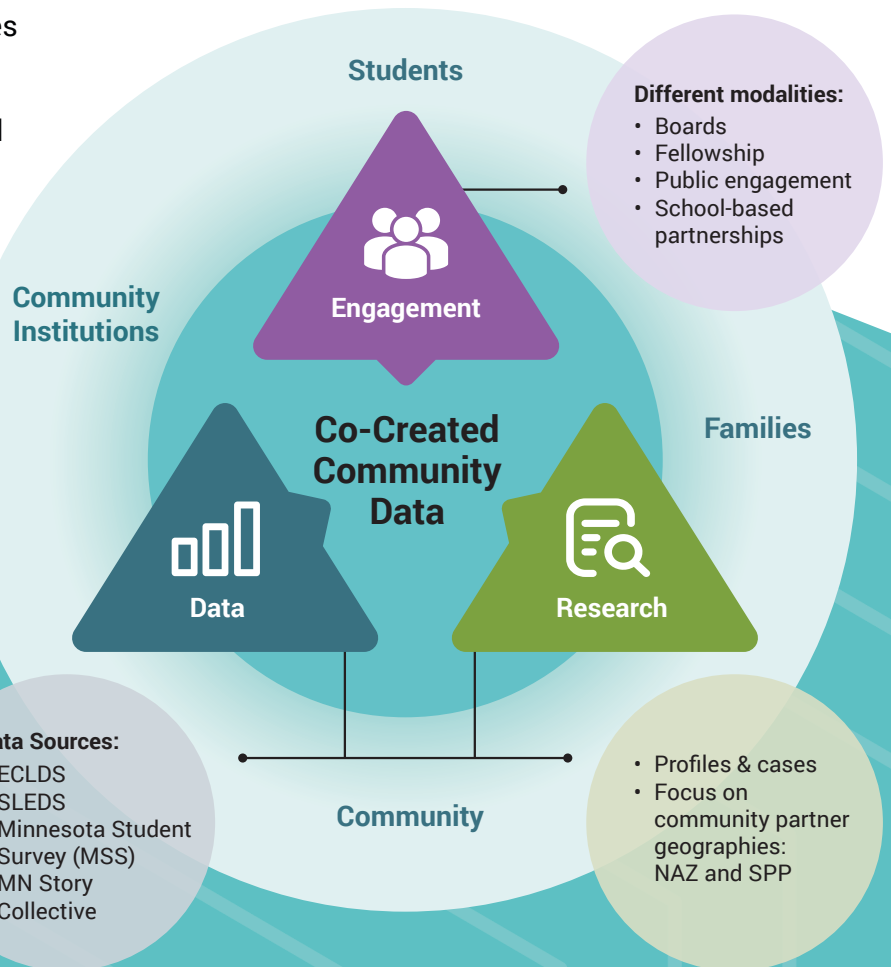
EQUITY IN PRACTICE LEARNING COMMUNITY (EiPLC)

With our Leadership Council (and Data Committee) members Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) and Saint Paul Promise (SPP), along with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Generation Next formed a Minneapolis-Saint Paul data equity team chosen to participate in the highly selective Equity in Practice Learning Community (EiPLC) through the University of Pennsylvania's Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP). This multi-year community of practice builds on AISP's *Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration*.

The Twin Cities EiPLC team is working together to create more accessible, transparent, and equitable practices and policies around education data, from early childhood education to postsecondary opportunities.

In 2024, the Twin Cities EiPLC team introduced a vision for a Minneapolis & Saint Paul (MSP) Education Equity Data Hub, showing how to bring together information of all kinds into actionable co-created community data (see inset visual). This Education Equity Data Hub model shows both the spaces where co-created community data shows up, as well as the technical and relational aspects of data.

The EiPLC team shared use cases for a Data Hub for both NAZ (understanding NAZ families' school choices through data and storytelling) and SPP (exploring postsecondary pathways). The Generation Next Leadership Council designated the Data Hub as the top systems transformation initiative to lead in 2024.





BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY STATEWIDE

Generation Next is a proud member of the StriveTogether national network and the Minnesota Education Partnerships Coalition (EPC). This year, the EPC welcomed John Fanning as Director, EPC's first staff member tasked with uniting the nine Minnesota cradle-to-career initiatives to ensure the success of all children and youth. This added capacity, through a grant from StriveTogether, has been incredibly beneficial to the EPC in growing the coalition as well as reaching our shared goals.

For more information, visit epc-mn.org.

In addition to this leadership, the EPC also began work with three new committees: Marketing & Communications, Policy, and Data. The Marketing & Communications Committee will focus on enhancing awareness and engagement through effective messaging and outreach strategies. The Policy Committee aims to advocate for legislative changes that support educational equity and access, while the Data Committee will work on leveraging data insights to inform our initiatives and measure impact.

In fall 2024, the EPC hosted an engaging in-person convening in Northfield, bringing together communities to strengthen collaboration and share best practices. Additionally, several EPC members presented at the 2024 StriveTogether Cradle to Career Convening, on a variety of topics – policy and legislation, qualitative and quantitative data, parent/caregiver advocacy, and college savings accounts.

Also in 2024, representatives from EPC member organizations joined their peers in the StriveTogether network for the annual Policy Summit in Washington, D.C. On this national stage, Minnesota's own Representative Kaohly Vang Her and Senator Aric Putnam – co-chief authors of our updated EPC statute in the 2023 Minnesota legislative session – participated on a panel of legislative champions supporting collective impact work in their communities. EPC members also visited with our U.S. Senators and Representatives and their staff members to learn about their priorities while also ensuring that they have EPC in mind as a go-to resource on education-to-workforce issues.

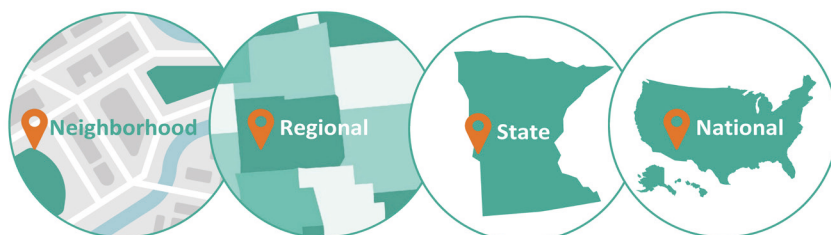
Looking ahead, the EPC is focused on legislative priorities, crafting policy aimed at providing organizational support and creating pathways for new partners to join the coalition. One key initiative includes a bill centered on improving data collection to assess gaps and tailor our efforts for maximum impact. Together, these efforts will foster collaboration and drive systemic change for the betterment of youth across the state of Minnesota.



The Minnesota delegation to the StriveTogether 2024 National Convening, including representatives from communities around the state.



Neighborhood to National Civic Infrastructure



OUR COMMUNITY-LEVEL OUTCOMES

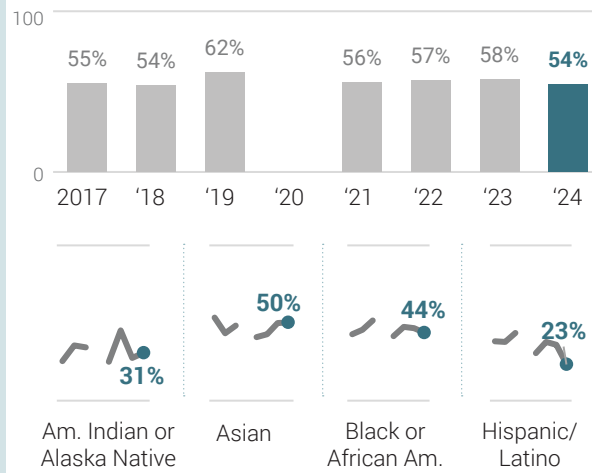
Generation Next was founded to improve results across Minneapolis and Saint Paul, which we continue to measure by student success overall and by racial and ethnic groups. **Taken together at this scale, we use these indicators to hold ourselves accountable as leaders responsible for our community's well-being.**



Kindergarten Readiness

Kindergarten readiness was slightly lower in Fall 2024 than the previous year, similar to pre-pandemic levels. Asian American and Multiracial students have narrower disparities with white students, while other gaps are wider than in the past.

Source: MPS and SPSS



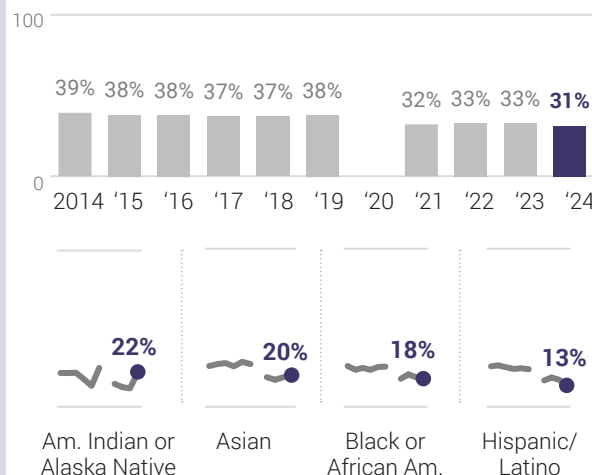
54%
low risk* on early reading (Fall of K) 2024



Early Grade Literacy

The percentage of third grade readers meeting or exceeding proficiency was lower for all groups except white and American Indian students, with other groups left with even larger racial disparities.

Source: Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)



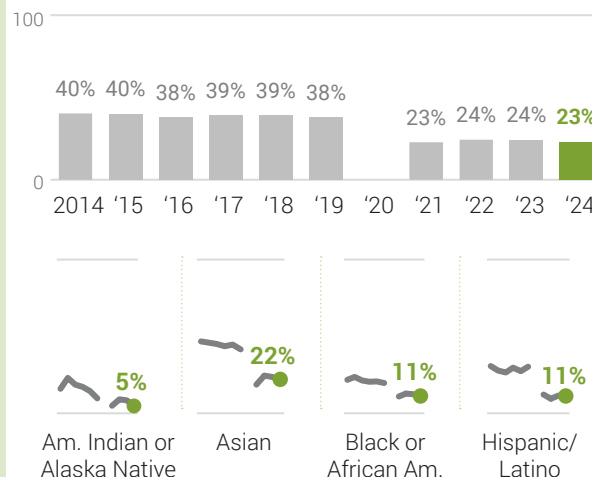
31%
proficient on MCA Reading (3rd grade) 2024



Middle Grade Math

Eighth grade math proficiency levels and disparities have stagnated for all groups well below pre-COVID rates. This stands out as the only indicator that has shown no recovery for any groups.

Source: MDE



23%
proficient on MCA Math (8th grade) 2024

* Low risk indicates the highest score range. All years' results were calculated based on most recent benchmark revision.

To explore further, including disaggregated data and numbers (Ns), visit our Data Center at gennextmsp.org/data or scan the QR code

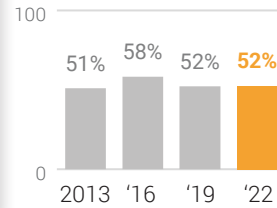


Social and Emotional

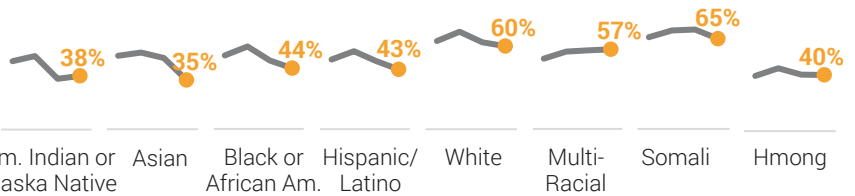
Our community of students experienced an increase in 2016, with some decline in 2019, yet stable since. There is some variation in how students in different racial/ethnic groups experience belonging, but not as great as the differences in academic outcomes.

Source: MN Student Survey,** analysis by University of Minnesota

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.



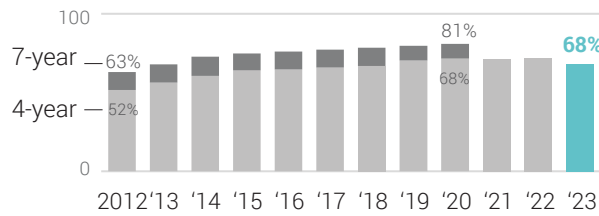
52% experiencing sense of belonging (5th, 8th, 9th & 11th grades) 2022



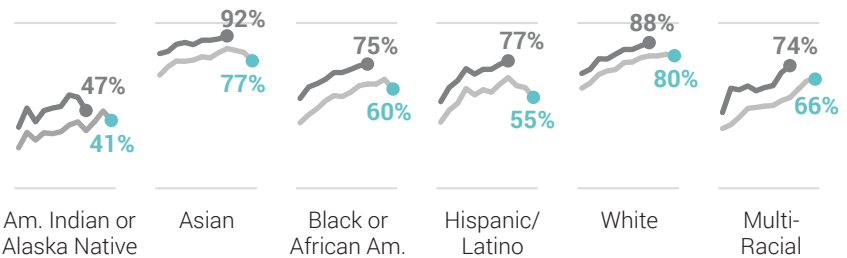
High School Graduation

Due to a reporting error, results for the Class of 2023 do not include all 2023 summer graduates. We will not know until next year's results how much of the lower rates are due to this factor. Seven-year rates were again higher for all groups except American Indian students.

Source: MDE



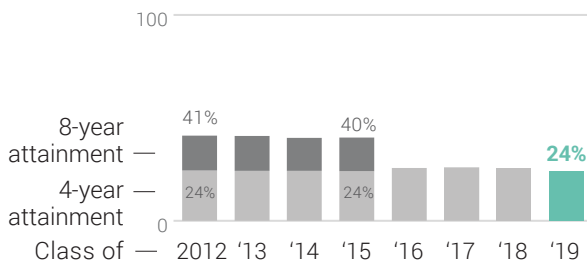
68% of all class of 2023 students graduated in 4 years



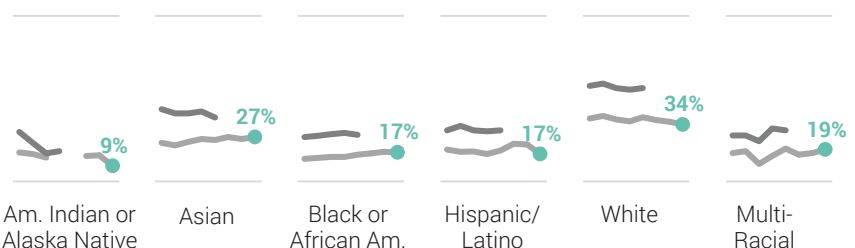
Postsecondary Attainment

Overall postsecondary completion rates, inclusive of a variety of credentials, remain unchanged from previous cohorts. American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, and white high school graduates saw lower rates than the previous cohort, while Asian, Black, and Multiracial students saw slight increases. Our community is still producing higher completion rates among white students than any other group.

Source: MN SLEDS, analysis by GenNext



24% of all 2019 high school graduates completed a postsecondary credential within 4 years



** School participation in MSS has changed over the years, but analysis confirms it did not meaningfully affect variation in results.



EARLY CHILDHOOD QUALITY & ACCESS

Objective: Increase the capacity of quality early childhood programs and improve access for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) families.

Generation Next prioritizes equitable access to high-quality early childhood education (ECE) for all families in the Twin Cities. By addressing systemic barriers, we work to ensure that children, regardless of income, race, or zip code, receive the early learning opportunities they need to thrive.

Key Accomplishments in 2024:

Advocating for Equity: Generation Next continues to be active in advocating for equity in the state’s Great Start 7% family income proposal. In Minnesota, a median family with an infant pays 20% of their income for child care. Families that earn less or have multiple children under age five pay even more. In 2023, the Minnesota Legislature passed a law setting a goal that no family would ever have to pay more than 7% of their yearly income for child care, no matter how many young kids they have in care. Under this approach, public investment would be the bridge between what families are expected to pay and what providers need to offer quality programs.



What is high quality?

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

Local Community Impact: Generation Next contracted with Rob Grunewald, Economics and Public Policy Consultant, to create a model showing preliminary local community analysis of the Great Start 7% family income proposal with the Generation Next Early Childhood Project Team. The project team recommended a few different types of communities to be featured in the local impact study, including Minneapolis and Saint Paul, as well as suburban and rural communities.



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.

Policy Brief Development: Generation Next produced a policy brief, *Increasing Access to High-Quality Early Care & Education*, which includes information on early care and education in Minnesota, an overview of Great Start Scholarships, barriers to accessing high-quality early care and education, and what we’ve learned from past policy.



How many Minnesota families?

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.



OUR FUTURE FOCUS

We will continue to advance our efforts in Early Childhood Quality & Access by:

- **Championing policies** that support equitable funding and high-quality early care and education.
- **Expanding** local impact studies and **refining** implementation strategies.
- **Continuing to build partnerships** with schools, policymakers, and community organizations.
- **Promoting practices** that ensure every child benefits from high-quality early learning opportunities.

TEACHER DIVERSITY & TEACHING DIVERSE LEARNERS



Objective: Reduce barriers to entering and remaining in the teaching profession encountered by BIPOC communities.

Generation Next prioritizes fostering diverse and sustainable teacher pathways to support the needs of all students in the Twin Cities. By connecting stakeholders, amplifying existing efforts, and addressing systemic barriers, we aim to ensure that teachers of color and Indigenous educators are supported, valued, and empowered to thrive in their careers.

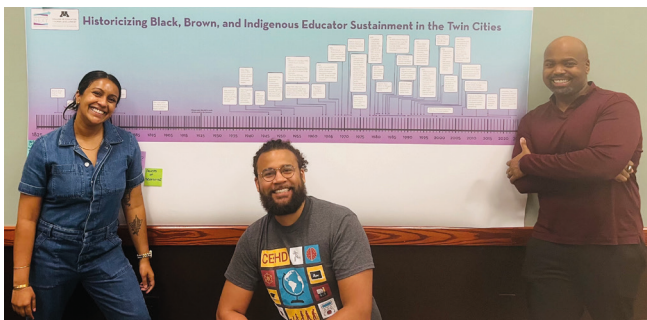
Key Accomplishments in 2024:

Collaborative Advocacy for Teacher Diversity:

The Teacher Diversity Project Team remains a space for sharing insights and learning from one another, particularly regarding the opportunities and challenges in implementing the many varied programs in teacher diversity. Collaboration is especially important in light of the recent historic investments in Minnesota related to the teaching profession. Part of our collective learning is also understanding the efforts of community-based organizations with career development programs for youth and those that support teachers. The Project Team fosters collaboration amidst an often competitive funding environment and collective advocacy for teacher diversity across school districts, higher education institutions, and community-based organizations.

Strengthening Research Partnerships:

We deepened our research collaboration with the University of Minnesota's (UMN) Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development (OLPD) and the Center for Applied Research in Educational Improvement (CAREI), which has explored historical and contemporary experiences of Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators in the Twin Cities.



UMN OLPD researchers Professors Aditi Rajendran, Nathaniel Stewart, and Darius Stanley with a timeline showing triumphs and setbacks for Twin Cities Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators, which was publicly launched for additional community input at the 2024 Generation Next Annual Event.

Supporting Elevate Teaching Initiatives:

Generation Next continues to connect and amplify existing system-level efforts in teacher diversity such as Elevate Teaching. Generation Next supported local Minneapolis and Saint Paul efforts through Elevate Teaching in these ways:

- Supported the Elevate Teaching Key Message Framework and distributed toolkits online and at community events.
- Sponsored affinity meetups for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) educators hosted by the Science Museum of Minnesota in Spring 2024, focusing on elevating the teaching profession, particularly in STEM education.



OUR FUTURE FOCUS

We will continue to advance our efforts in Teacher Diversity by:

- **Seeking funding sources** to digitize the *Black, Brown, and Indigenous Educator Sustainment Timeline* (shown in photo on left) and develop curriculum materials for educational professionals to disseminate critical knowledge.
- **Strengthening partnerships** with schools, higher education institutions, and community organizations to foster collaboration and amplify teacher diversity initiatives.
- **Advocating for policies and practices** that address systemic barriers, promote equity, and support the long-term sustainability of Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators.



POSTSECONDARY PREPARATION & PERSISTENCE

Objective: Expand access to postsecondary preparation programs for BIPOC students

Generation Next prioritizes improving postsecondary attainment for Minneapolis and Saint Paul public school graduates, particularly students of color. Our partnership has identified significant disparities in postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion rates for BIPOC students. To address these disparities, we have piloted a comprehensive postsecondary transitions and persistence approach that incorporates academic, social, personal, and institutional factors as key drivers of student success.

Key Accomplishments in 2024:

- **Data-Driven Insights:** We have leveraged the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS) to analyze postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion rates. These data-driven insights have informed our strategies and highlighted the need for targeted interventions.
- **Postsecondary Transitions Model:** We have developed a comprehensive postsecondary transitions and persistence model, incorporating academic, social, personal, and institutional factors as key drivers of student success. This model guides our work in addressing systemic barriers and improving student outcomes.
- **Partnership and Collaboration:** Our partnership with Minneapolis and Saint Paul Colleges has deepened, fostering collaboration on initiatives like the Bridging the Equity Gap (BTEG) and Identity, Leadership, Excellence, Accountability, and Dedication (iLEAD) programs. These programs have proven effective in supporting BIPOC students' academic and social development.
- **Policy and Practice Recommendations:** We have reviewed recommendations to improve dual credit programs, developmental education practices, and employment outcomes for high school graduates. These recommendations aim to create more equitable pathways to postsecondary success.



OUR FUTURE FOCUS

We will continue to advance our efforts in Postsecondary Preparation & Persistence by:

- **Utilizing SLEDS Data:** Monitor student transitions and identify areas for improvement.
- **Refining the Postsecondary Transitions & Persistence Model:** Address systemic barriers and support student success.
- **Advocating for Equity:** Promote policies and practices that support BIPOC students.
- **Strengthening Partnerships:** Collaborate with schools, colleges, and community organizations.
- **Gathering Student Feedback:** Incorporate student perspectives to inform strategies and interventions.



OUR LEADERSHIP



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OUR LEADERSHIP

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