

# 2017 Legislative Report

## Related to Increasing Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers (TOCAIT) in Minnesota



The Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota

June 2017

[www.tocaimn.com](http://www.tocaimn.com)

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## Some Words of Appreciation

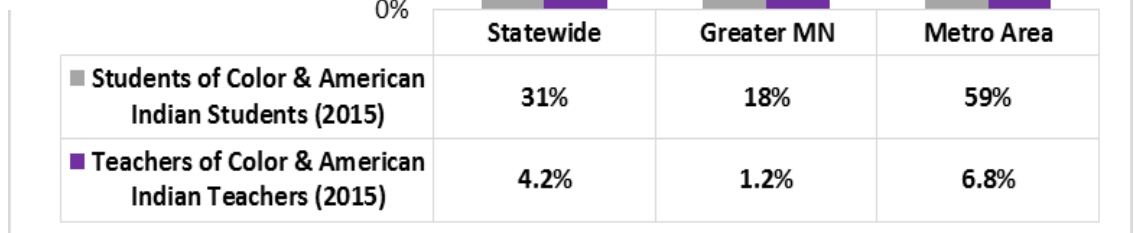
The successes of the 2017 Legislative Session summarized in this report could not have been possible without dozens of people who helped to raise awareness, build bipartisan support, draft legislation, provide guidance and support to the Coalition legislative action team, and pass legislation. In particular, Sen. Carla Nelson was the strongest and most vocal legislative champion of the Increase Teachers of Color Act, and Violeta Hernandez Espinosa from the MN Council on Latino Affairs was instrumental in her involvement and issue advocacy around the Capitol. Many others are mentioned herein, but many others are not and most likely they would prefer not to be publicly acknowledged. You all know who you are.

**THANK YOU for making a difference!!**



## Introduction: Overview of the Issue and Legislative Advocacy

Just months after forming, the Coalition made a difference in the 2016 Legislative Session in proposing and seeing that several state statutes and laws were amended so that all students in Minnesota shall have “equitable access to effective and diverse teachers” (Mariani, HF2749). However, the 2017 Minnesota Teacher Supply and Demand Report published by the Minnesota Department of Education noted, “**district and charter school survey results indicate that there is access to effective teachers that reflect the student population for white students, but not for Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaskan Native, or Hispanic student populations.**”



### Another way to think about all students’ inequitable access to diverse teachers:

- **1 for every 10** = the ratio of white teachers to white students in MN
- **1 for every 98** = the ratio of teachers of color and American Indian teachers (n=2,541) to students of color and American Indian students (n=248,261) in MN

## Overview of the Coalition’s 2017 Legislative Advocacy Approach

Our 2017 Platform was developed by members of the Coalition’s Legislative Action Team based on input from dozens of Coalition members at our 2016 events. Given the November elections and lessons learned in the 2016 legislative session, we prioritized meeting with Republican legislators and key education organizations, we formed a strong partnership with the state ethnic and Indian affairs councils, we drafted bills early and over the course of two months we met with dozens of legislators, legislative staff and representatives from various education organizations to secure bill authors and co-authors, get feedback for revisions, and gain organizational endorsements. In March, our bills were heard in committees and by May most of our provisions made it into 2017 law.





## Coalition's 2017 Legislative Platform

**GOAL: By 2020, double the number of teachers of color and American Indian teachers in Minnesota** (currently approximately 2,500 or 4.2% of all teachers), **and ensure that at least 20% of those in teacher preparation pathways are persons of color and American Indian** (approx. 1,500 candidates).

### Support Expanded Pathways to Teaching

- Appropriate new or additional funding for:
  - the development and expansion of “Grow Your Own” programs that recruit racially/ethnically diverse secondary students, paraprofessionals and parents into the teaching profession;
  - signing bonuses for teachers who are of color and American Indian to work in Greater MN, tribal community schools, and the Metro area;
  - incentives to attract out-of-state teachers who are of color and American Indian.

### Create Inclusive Climate and Curriculum

- Appropriate new funding for:
  - grants as incentives and support for preK-12 schools and colleges to become more equitable, inclusive and respectful of racial/ethnic diversity;
  - the development of school leaders who are of color and American Indian.

### Provide Financial Incentives and Support

- Provide scholarships up to \$5,000 per semester to teacher candidates who are of color and American Indian for a maximum of 2.5 years of full-time study.
- Provide student teaching stipends of \$7,500 to subsidize tuition and cost of living during the full-time, unpaid internship that lasts 12-16 weeks.
- Offer up to \$5,000 student loan forgiveness for each year of licensed service in MN, up to five years.

### Eliminate Discriminatory Teacher Testing Requirements

- Repeal current language in statute requiring the passing of “basic skills” exams, and replace with “demonstration of reading, writing and mathematics skills” through either Board of Teaching approved exams or satisfactory grades in college-level coursework. Also, eliminate time limits on tests.  
**OR**
- Waive exam fees for candidates taking any test more than twice.
- Commission research to study the effectiveness of teachers with one-year licenses because they have not passed one or more licensure exams, and then repeal requirements for any exams that show no predictive validity for ineffectiveness.

### Provide Induction and Retention Support

- Appropriate funding for residency or professional development programs with paid mentors.
- Provide scholarships and loan forgiveness programs to earn advanced degrees or additional licensure.

## Summaries of Bills Co-Drafted including Authors & Endorsements

The following bills were drafted by the Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota, and the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs with technical assistance from the Legislative Revisor's Office. The ideas for the bills came from the Coalition's 2017 Legislative Platform, which were developed based on stakeholder engagement with hundreds of participants at three different Coalition events in 2016. With key Republican leadership as chief bill authors and scaling back the breadth and size of our original Increase Teachers of Color Act (see [HF2331](#) / [SF2182](#) which were introduced by Democrats late in the 2017 session), all of the bills listed below had strong bipartisan support and were given hearings in three of the four respective committees needed for final legislative approval. Most of the provisions in these bills were included in the omnibus education and higher education bills.

### E-12 BILL SUMMARY [SF 1555](#) / [HF 2077](#) Increase Teachers of Color Act of 2017

**Senate Lead Author:** [Sen. Carla Nelson](#)  
Senate Co-Authors: [Wiger](#); [Torres Ray](#); [Abeler](#)

**House Lead Author:** [Rep. Dean Urdahl](#)  
House Co-Authors: [Davnie](#); [Maye Quade](#); [Moran](#); [Hamilton](#); [Theis](#); [Smith](#);  
[Kresha](#); [Poston](#); [Lee](#); [Koznick](#); [Mariani](#)

#### Key Provisions:

##### ➤ Supports Expanded Pathways to Teaching

- Expands funding for "Grow Your Own" programs throughout the state to recruit racially and ethnically diverse paraprofessionals, cultural liaisons and secondary students into teaching, and support the expansion of concurrent enrollment "intro to teaching" college in schools courses.
- Continues current collaborative urban educator (CUE) program at four Twin Cities area private colleges and universities. Expands to include Greater MN and other metro area institutions by offering competitive grants for recruitment and retention efforts.
- Increases current appropriation for American Indian teacher preparation by 30% (\$140K).

##### ➤ Provides Financial Incentives and Support

- Clarifies that Alternative Teacher Pay System may include signing bonuses for teachers from underrepresented racial, ethnic groups to work in Greater MN, tribal schools, and the Metro area.
- Increases the amount of student loan forgiveness from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year for each year of licensed service in MN (up to five years) for teachers in shortage areas, including teacher diversity.

##### ➤ Provides Induction and Retention Support

- Appropriates funding for induction, residency, mentoring and other professional development programs to retain effective teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

##### ➤ Increases Accountability

- Increases accountability reporting for grant recipients and focuses grants on outcomes that increase the racial, ethnic diversity of the teacher workforce.



# HIGHER EDUCATION BILL SUMMARY [HF 1409](#) / [SF 1585](#)

## Teacher Candidates of Color Scholarships & Expanded Grants to Student Teachers in Shortage Areas Program

**House Lead Author:** [Rep. Bud Nornes](#)

House Co-Authors: [Thissen](#); [Jessup](#); [Lien](#); [Omar](#); [Murphy, E.](#); [Moran](#); [Lee](#); [Mariani](#); [Maye Quade](#); [Kunesh-Podein](#); [Slocum](#); [Hamilton](#); [Johnson, C.](#); [Davnies](#); [Christensen](#); [Poston](#)

**Senate Lead Author:** [Sen. Paul Anderson](#)

Senate Co-Authors: [Draheim](#); [Abeler](#); [Jensen](#); [Hawi](#)

### Key Provisions:

- Creates a scholarship program for teacher candidates of color admitted to any Board-approved teacher preparation program throughout the state that incentivizes going into teaching and supports retention.
- Scholarships up to \$5,000 per term, maximum \$10,000 per year and \$25,000 total for a maximum of 2.5 years of full-time study.
- Expands Grants to Student Teachers in Shortage Areas program (statute 136A.1275) that supports licensure program completion for more candidates in understaffed licensure fields, geographic regions and diverse racial/ethnic groups.
- Stipulates amount of student teaching grants (up to \$7,500 based on need) to subsidize tuition and cost of living during the full-time, unpaid internship that typically lasts 12-16 weeks.

### State Council Endorsements of these bills (SF1555/HF2077 & HF1409/SF1585)

- Minnesota Indian Affairs Council
- Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs
- Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans
- Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage

### Education & Community-Based Organization Endorsements of these bills

(as of 3/6/17 for Committee Hearings):

- Tribal Nations Education Committee
- Education Minnesota
- MN Rural Education Association
- MN School Boards Association
- MN Association of School Administrators
- MN Association of Elementary School Principals
- MN Association of Secondary School Principals
- MN Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- MN Indian Education Association
- MN Education Equity Partnership
- Association of Metropolitan School Districts
- Educators 4 Excellence
- Ed Allies
- Voices for Racial Justice
- Equity Alliance of MN
- Intermediate District 287
- St. Catherine University Education Department
- Augsburg College Department of Education
- Macalester College Educational Studies Department
- SEIU Local 284
- Coalition of Asian American Leaders
- The Southeast Asian Diaspora Development Project
- Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES)
- Center for School Change





## Committee Hearings and Testifiers

We had great hearings Monday, March 6 and Tuesday, March 7 in the Senate and House with powerful joint testimony by the state ethnic councils, students, parents, teachers, and Coalition leaders.



Teachers of Color testify in favor of bill SF1555 with Sen. Nelson on March 6, 2017.

- See more [Pictures from Senate E-12 Finance hearing](https://tinyurl.com/y8scbu8u) (https://tinyurl.com/y8scbu8u)



American Indian and Teacher Candidates of Color testify in favor of bill SF1585 with Sen. Paul Anderson on March 7, 2017.

- See more [Pictures from Senate Higher Ed hearing](https://tinyurl.com/ybrh86wq) (https://tinyurl.com/ybrh86wq)

- See the [Video of Coalition Testimony at House Higher Ed hearing](https://tinyurl.com/y85mfx58) for HF 1409 Rep. Nornes on March 7, 2017 (https://tinyurl.com/y85mfx58 Fast forward to testimony starting at 55:10)

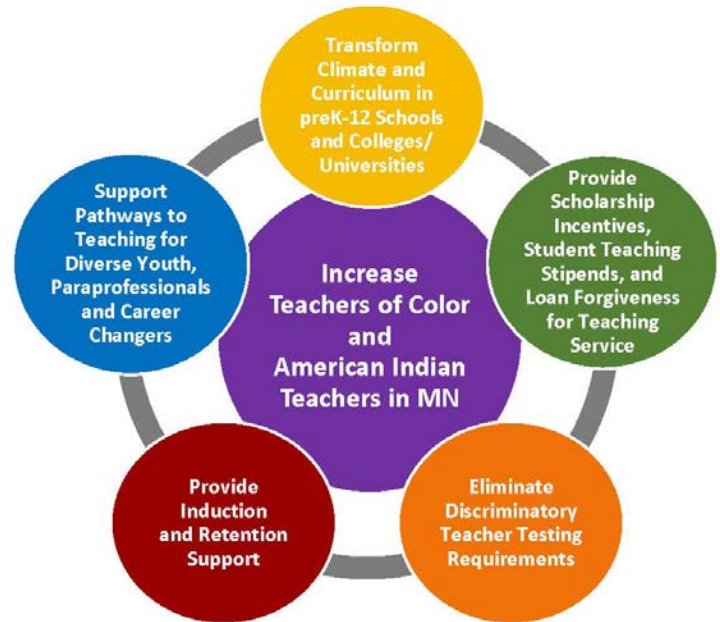
**THANKS to the following testifiers** made their voices heard to legislators and committees during the 2017 Session:

- **STATE COUNCILS:** Violeta Hernandez Espinosa (MN Council on Latino Affairs), Sia Her and Tou Xiong (Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans), Kaade Wallace (Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage), Dennis Olson (MN Indian Affairs Council)
- **STUDENTS:** Kamal Suleiman (Woodbury HS) & peers from Equity Alliance MN Youth Executive Board who attended in support)
- **PARENT:** Michelle Deziel (Stillwater)
- **TEACHERS:** Maria Higueros-Canny (Osseo ISD 279), Carmen Higueros (Osseo ISD 279), Natasha Brown-Guhin (Anoka High School), Whitney McKinley (Hiawatha Academies, 2016 MN Teacher of the Year semi-finalist)
- **TEACHER CANDIDATES:** Antanaya Ferguson (Minnesota State University- Mankato) Selena Hernandez (Normandale Community College), Vanessa Goodthunder (University of Minnesota-Twin Cities), Yue Cheng (Rosemount HS/St. Cloud State), Najma Abdille (Hamline University), Osob Mohamed (Metropolitan State University), Leyla Sahal (Augsburg), Hanna Haileyesus (U of M-TC). [Read written testimony submitted by teacher candidates of color from throughout MN](https://tinyurl.com/y7dbnxmj) https://tinyurl.com/y7dbnxmj
- **DISTRICT OFFICIALS:** Dr. Kate Maguire (Osseo), Dr. Stanley Brown (Hopkins)
- **TEACHER EDUCATION STAFF:** Ea Porter (St. Thomas), Yodit Tesfaye and Peg Finders (Augsburg)
- **COALITION LEGISLATIVE ACTION TEAM:** Robbie Burnett, Brett Grant, Jonathan Hamilton, and Paul Spies




# Overview of Final Signed 2017 Legislation

## Supporting an Increase of Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers (TOCAIT) in Minnesota



### KEY:

- In omnibus Education Bill Special Session [HF2](#)
- ❖ In omnibus Higher Education Bill [SF943](#)
-  Includes language co-drafted by the [Coalition](#)



### Collaborative Urban and Greater MN Educators of Color Program

- Amends title of current program to include “Greater MN” and state the specific purpose “Educators of Color.” (See [HF2](#) pp 82-83, Article 2, Sect 57, Subd 27)
- Continues CUE funding for four, private colleges (St. Thomas, Concordia, Hamline, and Augsburg will each receive \$195,000 in FY18 & FY19), and increases program by \$220,000 each FY for competitive grants to recruit and retain teacher candidates of color and American Indian candidates at other public or private institutions throughout the state. Total appropriation is \$1M in both FY18 & FY19.
- Adds accountability reporting requirements for all programs receiving grants.



### American Indian Teacher Preparation

- Continues funding \$460,000 per fiscal year for existing American Indian Teacher Preparation programs at four higher education-school district partnerships. (See [HF2](#) pg 84, Article 2, Sect 57, Subd 31)



### Grants to Teacher Candidates

- ❖ Appropriates \$500,000 in FY18 & FY19 in addition to \$2.8M one-time appropriation in 2016 that has not yet been administered for Grants to Student Teachers in Shortage Areas program 136A.1275. (See [SF943](#) pg 9, Article 1, Sect 2, Subd 30)
- ❖ Amends policy to include teachers of color and American Indian candidates with the percentage of grants at least equal to the percentage of K-12 students of color and American Indian students in the state (currently 32%), and specifies that grants for student teachers shall be up to \$7500 per candidate. (See [SF943](#) pp 29-30, Article 2, Sec. 11. amending 136A.1275)







## Concurrent Enrollment “Intro to Teaching” College-in-the-Schools Courses

- Creates new grant program to expand concurrent enrollment with the development of “Introduction to Teaching or Education” courses offered in high schools for college credit in order “to encourage students, especially American Indian students and students of color, to consider teaching as a profession...” (See [HF2](#) pg 49, Article 2, Sect 31 amending 124D.09, subdivision 10)
- Appropriates \$375,000 in FY18 and FY19. (See [HF2](#) pp 81, Article 2, Sect 57, Subd 23)



## Paraprofessional to Teacher “Grow Your Own” Programs

- Continues grant funding \$1.5M per fiscal year (increase of \$500k more than base appropriation) for districts with at least 30 percent students of color to develop nonconventional teacher residency programs that provide tuition scholarships and stipends to district employees and community members seeking teaching licensure. (Current programs sharing \$1.5M include Minneapolis Public Schools, St. Paul Public Schools and NE Metro District 916.)
- School districts that receive funds are “strongly encouraged to recruit candidates of color and American Indian candidates to participate in the Grow Your Own new teacher programs” and may also use funds to develop programs for secondary students to pursue teaching. (See [HF2](#) pp 81, Article 2, Sect 57, Subd 23)



## Hiring Bonuses and Grow Your Own Programs in Alternative Pay System

- Amends policy to expand possible uses of Alternative Teacher Pay System aka “Q Comp” funds to:
  - offer hiring bonuses to provide students with equitable access to effective and diverse teachers (120B.11, subd 2, clause 3) who demonstrate skills for closing achievement gaps
  - “help fund a Grow Your Own new teacher initiative involving nonlicensed educational professionals, including paraprofessionals and cultural liaisons.” (See [HF2](#) pg 45, Article 2, Sect. 23, part (c) amending 122A.414, subdivision 2)



## Teacher Shortage Loan Forgiveness

- This is an existing program that provides up to \$1,000 loan forgiveness per year (max. 5 years) to teachers working in shortage areas.
- Amends current program criteria that defined shortage area as only licensure and geographic areas, and now includes teachers of color and American Indian teachers as a shortage area with this additional definition: “economic development regions where there is a shortage of licensed teachers who reflect the racial or ethnic diversity of students in the region as reported by the commissioner of education.” (See [HF2](#) pg 63, Article 2, Sect. 45, amending section 136A.1791, subdivision 1, part (e) )
- E12 bill appropriates an additional \$500,000 for FY18 only. (See [HF2](#) pg 85, Article 2, Sect 57, Subd 36)
- ❖ Higher Ed bill kept base appropriation of \$200,000 per fiscal year. (See [SF943](#) pg 9, Article 1, Sect 2, Subd 31)





## Defining “Shortage Area” and Disaggregating Data Reporting

- Working definition of “shortage area” for newly established Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board includes “licensed teachers who reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of students”, and amends current policy language to require that teacher and administrator preparation programs’ accountability reports include disaggregated data about their programs by race and ethnicity. (see [HF2](#) pg 172, Article 12, Sect 2, and pp 184-5, Sec. 13. [122A.091] REPORTS.)

## Other Provisions Related to TOCAIT in the Signed Education Bill Endorsed by but Not Co-Drafted by the Coalition

### Eliminating Testing Requirement for New Tier 3 license

- In the new tiered licensure system effective July 1, 2018, the skills tests in reading, writing and math are not required for a Tier 1, 2, or 3 license, just Tier 4. If applicants meet other requirements, including completing a MN-approved teacher preparation program with a bachelor’s degree and passing the content and pedagogy exams, they can earn a Tier 3 license that is renewable every three years without limitation. (see [HF2](#) pg 99, Article 3, Sec. 14. [122A.185] TEACHER LICENSURE ASSESSMENT). *Note: The various “skills” exams (PPST, MTLE, NES) and their established cut scores have been the most significant contributor to the general teacher shortage in MN and having kept thousands of effective teachers, including a disproportionate percentage of TOCAIT, out of the profession over the past two decades. The Coalition drafted language that wouldn’t require the skills tests for any license if alternative measures of needed skills (i.e., grades or performance) were satisfactory, but it did not get included in an authored bill.*

### African American Registry’s Teachers Forum

- Appropriates \$100,000 in only FY18 and FY19 for a new program to provide access to the Registry’s abundance of online curriculum resources to teacher candidates at St. Thomas and Metropolitan State universities for increasing their cultural competency. (See [HF2](#) pg 84, Article 2, Sect 57, Subd 32)

## Related Provision Not Endorsed by the Coalition<sup>1</sup>

### Alternative Teacher Preparation Grants

- Appropriates \$750,000 in FY18 only for districts and organizations to develop new alternative teacher preparation programs without partnerships involving higher education institutions. Programs could include a focus on addressing shortage of teachers of color but are not required to do so. They are required to report on the percentage of teachers of color participating in their programs. (See [HF2](#) pp 61-62, Article 2, Sect. 44 and pg 85, Sect 57, Subd 35)

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<sup>1</sup> While one of the Coalition’s five main strategies in its platform is to “support pathways to teaching for diverse youth, paraprofessionals and career changers,” the Coalition does not at this time endorse alternative teacher preparation because there isn’t wide agreement among Coalition members that alternative teacher preparation programs with very limited preparation are an effective means towards preparing effective teachers in general, and TOCAIT in particular. The Coalition advocated some of this appropriation be allocated to existing, approved preparation programs working with TOCAIT candidates seeking financial support.



## Looking Forward

While much was accomplished during the 2017 Legislative Session, much remains to be done. To make sure all Minnesota students have “equitable access to effective and diverse teachers” who reflect the diversity of students in the state as promised in 2016 state law, the state will need to make systemic changes and significantly greater investments to recruit, prepare and retain teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. The Coalition estimates that it will take approximately \$30 million invested into expanding existing and new programs focused on TOCAIT just to increase their percentage from 4% to 5% (i.e., 600 more TOCAIT equals 1% of 60,090 total teachers in MN). However, the state’s current targeted investments to support TOCAIT in all legislative programs is only about \$3 million per year. Students of color and American Indian students currently represent 32% of all students in the state and their percentage is only expected to increase in the coming years and decades. Increasing TOCAIT benefits all students, and research shows how TOCAIT are important to closing Minnesota’s nation-leading opportunity and achievement gaps. Acknowledging the importance of education attainment on all facets of an individual’s life and on our communities, these gaps will also continue to negatively impact Minnesota’s economy, health, quality of life in the face of a large retiring workforce and demographic trends.

In addition to significantly greater state legislative investments, Minnesota’s non-profit foundations and business community need to focus more of their financial resources on this severe crisis to attract and support more TOCAIT in the teaching profession. Furthermore, systemic changes are needed to help ensure stronger induction and mentoring programs are in place, working conditions and beginning salaries are improved, and issues with non-inclusive climate and curriculum are addressed in order to retain effective and racially diverse teachers. The Coalition is encouraged that the MN Department of Education has now hired staff to focus on the shortage, and that the MN Education Equity Partnership is engaging in mapping the issue and current efforts in Minnesota from recruitment through retention to make recommendations for systemic change. As for the Coalition, we are holding our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual conference for current and aspiring educators of color and American Indian educators August 9-11, 2017 during which we will gather more ideas for legislation needed, and we will organize affinity group gatherings throughout next school year.

Finally, school districts and higher education institutions need to do much more to attract and retain racially and ethnically diverse teachers and teacher candidates who reflect the PreK-12 students in their communities. They should start by becoming very familiar with the provisions and programs passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor that are noted in this Legislative Report, and prioritizing actions for change in their systems. Students, families, communities and educators also need to become aware of these provisions and hold districts and colleges/universities accountable to implement efforts that will result in a significant increase of teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

**Want to Join the Coalition, receive email updates  
and consider ways to get involved?**

**Sign Up at**  
[www.tocaimn.com](http://www.tocaimn.com)



## About the Coalition

**The Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota** currently unites more than 800 individuals from more than 150 schools, districts, organizations and communities throughout the state who are concerned about the lack of racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity in the teaching force. The Coalition was created in November 2015 by seven teacher educators from public and private colleges and universities along with two urban school district administrators who are committed to quality in teacher preparation and concerned about systemic barriers that especially impact persons of color who want to enter and stay in the teaching profession. Since then, the Coalition's volunteer leaders have organized three large conferences and have drafted and helped pass important legislation in 2016 & 2017.

The Coalition is inspired and led by the advocacy work and the 2015 Policy Briefs published by the MN Educational Equity Partnership (MnEEP), Educators4Excellence (E4E), Education Minnesota, and Voices for Racial Justice among others. The Coalition unites these and other organizations to build upon their advocacy work as strong "soloists" and create an even larger and more influential chorus of voices calling for more teachers of color in the profession who are needed to help close unacceptable opportunity and achievement gaps that are among the largest in the United States. The economic development and social fabric of our state needs all students to be successful in school, and all students benefit from a more diverse teaching force.

## "Voices Heard: Transforming Education Equity"



**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference for  
Current and Aspiring Educators of Color and American Indian Educators  
August 9-11, 2017 in St. Paul, MN**

[www.toacaimn.com/upcoming-events](http://www.toacaimn.com/upcoming-events)