



Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color Grant Program

Project Description

June 2020

BACKGROUND

First established in 1997 as the Collaborative Urban Educator program, the Collaborative Urban and Greater Minnesota Educators of Color (CUGMEC) program awards grants to higher education institutions to increase the number of teacher candidates of color and American Indian teacher candidates in Minnesota who can meet certain licensing requirements. Statutes do not specify how institutions that receive grants may use these funds to support teacher candidates. Grantee institutions have used funds for a variety of purposes including tuition scholarships, program administration, and seminars.

The grant program has undergone significant changes in recent years. For example, for Fiscal Year 2018 and beyond, it transitioned into a competitive grant process. Grants were originally awarded to the same three or four institutions each year, which were generally named in law. However, this changed when the 2017 Legislature required that part of the funding for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 and all funding beyond 2019 be awarded competitively. The 2019 Legislature codified the program in statute and expanded on the criteria for selecting grants, which now include prioritizing funding for institutions that previously received grant awards. The 2019 Legislature also transferred responsibility for administering the grant program from the Minnesota Department of Education to the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB).

The Legislature has appropriated between \$500,000 and \$1.3 million to the grant program each fiscal year since the program began. Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2020 were \$1.1 million.

POSSIBLE EVALUATION ISSUES

1. To what extent has the CUGMEC grant program had an impact on the racial and ethnic diversity of Minnesota's teacher workforce?

2. How well has PELSB administered the CUGMEC grant program?

DISCUSSION

We will examine the CUGMEC grant program's impact on the racial and ethnic diversity of Minnesota's teacher workforce by reviewing federal and state data on teacher preparation programs, teacher licensure, and the teacher workforce. We will also compile and analyze data collected by grantee institutions on CUGMEC recipients. In addition, we will survey teacher candidates who have received CUGMEC-funded services through grantee institutions to learn about the impact of the funding on their pursuit of a career as a teacher.

We will determine the extent to which PELSB's processes for granting and monitoring awards have adhered to relevant laws and policies. We will review all grant applications, scoring documents, and final grant agreements from fiscal years 2020 and 2021. To determine how well PELSB has managed the program, we will also review documentation of PELSB's grant monitoring activities and speak with (1) grant application reviewers and (2) institutions that received grants.

We will speak with agency officials, staff at education organizations, and others. We will also review literature on the effectiveness of programs similar to the CUGMEC grant program and the effects on students of having teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

This evaluation is scheduled to be completed in early 2021. For additional information on this evaluation, contact Jodi Munson Rodríguez, evaluation manager, at 651-296-1230 or jodi.rodriguez@state.mn.us