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CONTACT:

Sarah Lemagie

PR & Communications Manager

(612) 672-3877

slemagie@mplsfoundation.org

**The Minneapolis Foundation Awards First Round of
Reimagine Education Grants**

***27 organizations will receive \$1.44 million through new funding
opportunity.***

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — The Minneapolis Foundation today announced \$1,440,095 in Reimagine Education grants to 27 local organizations that are doing innovative work to advance equity in Minnesota's K-12 education system.

These grants are the first awards made from a new funding opportunity that flows from the Minneapolis Foundation's [Reimagine Education](#) strategy, a collaborative initiative that transforms research into collective action to make Minnesota's schools better for all students. As part of that work, launched in 2019, the Minneapolis Foundation has engaged with hundreds of students, parents, community members, school leaders, and researchers to better understand what is working—and what isn't working—in Minnesota's schools. These Reimagine Education grants resulted from advice and themes that emerged from youth and educator convenings co-hosted by the Foundation, research reports, and voices in community.

"Our investments must be guided by the lived experiences and wisdom of those who are closest to the challenges," said Chanda Smith Baker, the Minneapolis Foundation's Chief Impact Officer and Senior Vice President. "Our strategy reflects that insight, and these grants prioritized deepening the impact that we can have with students and the community."

Many of the projects that received funding are led or heavily influenced by Black, Indigenous and people of color, including the Advancing Equity Coalition, which was co-founded by 28-year old Kenneth Eban. The Advancing Equity Coalition formed in 2019 to oppose the status quo and dismantle institutional racism in Minneapolis Public Schools.

"Our coalition is made up of organizations that serve community members who represent the racial and cultural diversity of Minneapolis and whose lives are at the intersection of every

inequity in our city,” said Eban. “This grant supports our multi-racial and multi-cultural movement of students, parents and community members who believe so strongly in the power of an equitable education system that they are willing to fight for it.”

Reimagine Education grants support organizations and projects that:

- Elevate student and community voices and power to build bridges between schools, families, and communities and improve school climates and academic outcomes.
- Provide opportunities for educators to build their understanding of race and equity and implement strategies that create culturally responsive and inclusive schools.
- Advocate for policies at the school, local, and state level to address systemic barriers to racial equity in Minnesota’s education system.

Overall, the Minneapolis Foundation received Reimagine Education applications from 99 organizations that collectively sought roughly \$5.1 million in funding, more than three times the amount available for the inaugural round of grants.

The grants announced today are as follows:

- **Advancing Equity Coalition:** \$50,000 to engage coalition partners and students, families, and community members in advocating for a change in Minneapolis Public Schools policy and its contract with the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers to create more equitable access to the highest-quality teachers for students of color.
- **American Indian OIC:** \$60,000 to support advocacy for culturally reflective curricula and teaching methods, and for a temporary suspension of the state’s age limit for funding to support young people to complete their high school diploma.
- **Black Men Teach:** \$60,000 to build out the organization’s model to recruit and support Black male teachers as they work in a cohort of up to eight Minneapolis and suburban elementary schools. Black Men Teach will also partner with local high schools and post-secondary institutions to provide mentoring and scholarship to build a local pipeline for Black men who are interested in teaching careers.
- **Bridgemakers:** \$50,000 to launch a youth-led and -initiated fellowship program that engages Minneapolis high school students and young adults ages 14-24 in mentoring, organizing, and social media outreach to launch school transformation and state policy change initiatives.
- **Coalition of Asian American Leaders:** \$50,000 to build power with Asian Minnesotan parents and families by listening and supporting them to positively shape education policies in the Minneapolis and Osseo Area school districts. The Coalition of Asian American Leaders will support multi-lingual learners locally and statewide by advocating for heritage language and ethnic studies options in schools.
- **Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota:** \$70,000 to engage American Indian and youth of color and parents in creating social media content that encourages Minnesotans to engage in civic participation. The Coalition will also host a summer conference and gatherings to help support and retain American Indian and teachers of color statewide.
- **East Side Neighborhood Services:** \$45,928 to support Menlo Park Academy teachers, the staff of East Side Neighborhood Services youth programs, and community artists as they collaborate to build a virtual curriculum focused on family and cultural identity, neighborhood pride, and social justice issues. Menlo Park staff will ensure students at the Northeast Minneapolis alternative high school can earn academic credits and gain skills while completing art, storytelling, and multi-media projects. Menlo Park will host a virtual exhibit of students’ work for parents and community members.

- **Ed Allies:** \$75,000 to support work that centers students in Minnesota's COVID-19 recovery. The organization will build networks to advance policy goals related to strengthening teacher quality and diversity, eliminating college and career readiness disparities and other barriers to racial equity in Minnesota's education system as families recover from the pandemic, unrest, and months of social disconnection.
- **Educators 4 Excellence, Inc.:** \$40,000 to advocate for state-level policy change related to equitable school funding and new challenges to education equity brought on by COVID-19 and to drive conversations about teacher quality at the district and union levels.
- **Great MN Schools:** \$50,000 to engage racially diverse cohorts of parents and community members in a process to review existing quality measures for schools and understand what resonates with families to develop a multi-measure performance rating framework that considers students' academic and social/emotional needs.
- **Hamline University:** \$16,325 to increase the accessibility of the university's Minnesota Educational Equity Edcamp, an unconventional conference that provides opportunities for teachers, administrators, community members, and equity-focused leaders to learn from and network with others who are passionate about education equity and justice.
- **Hiawatha Academies:** \$60,000 to support teams focused on restorative practices as they attend trainings, review data, and implement new school culture policies to reduce suspensions and disciplinary action that disproportionately affects students of color and those receiving special education services.
- **Innocent Technologies:** \$60,000 to train and coach teachers and school staff members at three Minneapolis middle schools (Field, Anthony, and Northeast) on anti-racist relationship building methodology, and to support the integration of these practices into school strategies to support every child, especially children of color.
- **Juxtaposition Arts:** \$41,000 to analyze JXTALabs' paid apprenticeships and Pathways to Colleges and Careers model to understand the potential replicability of its culturally reflective leadership, youth voice, mentorships, and other elements that support youth to gain the skills needed for successful futures in other education and career spaces.
- **Minneapolis Public Schools:** \$75,000 to support school leaders at 15 racially isolated and high-needs schools as they implement site-based equity and family engagement strategies and support the recruitment and retention of high-quality, diverse teachers.
- **Minnesota Education Equity Partnership:** \$50,000 for advocacy, research, policy analysis, and convening to advance racial equity in Minnesota's education system through shifts in education policies and practices related to school climate, leadership development, teacher diversity, multi-lingual learners, and college completion.
- **Minnesota Humanities Center:** \$50,000 to support educational equity in Roseville Area Schools through the Humanities Center's Absent Narrative professional learning, which supports educators to understand their biases and how exclusion impacts students. The Humanities Center will also support Roseville schools with community listening and storytelling to amplify diverse voices and advance anti-racist curricula and policies.
- **Minnesota Parent Union:** \$70,000 for individualized enrollment support, for assistance to help Minneapolis parents and caregivers address school issues, and for schools and districts to develop community engagement strategies that help them build better relationships with families and improve academic outcomes.
- **MN Zej Zog:** \$30,000 to leverage existing collaboration among Hmong educators and youth advocates to advance Hmong language learning and dismantle barriers to licensure for Hmong educators. MN Zej Zog will also support Hmong parents and youth in Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, and Osseo Area schools to identify and challenge racial disparities that impact Hmong and Southeast Asian students and families.

- **Multiple Metro Area School Districts:** \$75,000 to support the attendance of principals, superintendents, and administrators from seven inner-ring suburban districts at the University of Minnesota's Culturally Responsive School Leadership Academy. School officials will learn how racial and social oppression is reproduced in K-12 schools and develop community-oriented strategies to disrupt these systems.
- **Pillsbury United Communities:** \$60,000 to support Pillsbury's Office of Public Charter Schools in partnering with Future Focused Education and local school leaders to build performance frameworks that are grounded in students' social and emotional needs and support schools as they establish systems to track their progress toward equity goals.
- **Saint Louis Park Public Schools:** \$50,000 to support the St. Louis Park school district and city as they deepen their commitment to racial equity by creating a Youth Development Committee that will provide oversight for key projects, including experiential and service learning, to foster diverse perspectives and collaboration.
- **Spark-Y:** \$20,000 to integrate anti-racism and cultural competency training into Spark-Y's staff development plans and its curriculum for hands-on education and entrepreneurship programs for youth at Edison High School in Minneapolis.
- **Teach for America:** \$60,000 to recruit, train, and support 20 teacher candidates and advocate for dismantling licensure barriers that make it difficult to recruit and retain diverse teachers. TFA will also support Robbinsdale Area Schools with professional learning on culturally responsive pedagogy and assist the district with sourcing candidates for teaching positions.
- **TNTP, Inc.:** \$50,000 to launch Teach Minnesota, an alternative licensure preparation program designed to support statewide efforts to address teacher shortages and disparities in educator diversity while supporting stronger and more stable K-12 schools.
- **University of St. Thomas School of Education:** \$71,842 to support a partnership with the Robbinsdale Area Schools Work and Learn Program. This program trains mentor teachers and university supervisors to understand how discretionary decisions can reproduce or disrupt oppression in schools, and to learn culturally sustaining practices that support diverse teacher candidates.
- **Voices for Racial Justice:** \$50,000 for the organization's Education Equity Parent Fellowship, a cohort training model for Black, Indigenous and people of color that helps parents and caregivers learn about education issues and trains them to advocate for systems change at the school, district, and state level. Parents and caregivers also train other community members to broaden the reach of their advocacy and build power.

To receive updates about future Reimagine Education grant rounds and other funding opportunities at the Minneapolis Foundation, sign up for email updates at <https://www.minneapolisfoundation.org/funding-opportunities/>.

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About the Minneapolis Foundation: *The Minneapolis Foundation drives collective action to realize strong, vibrant communities. The Foundation cultivates generosity by taking action on the greatest civic, social, and economic needs—partnering with nonprofits, facilitating grantmaking, driving research and advocacy, and providing services to donors seeking to make a difference in their communities.* www.minneapolisfoundation.org