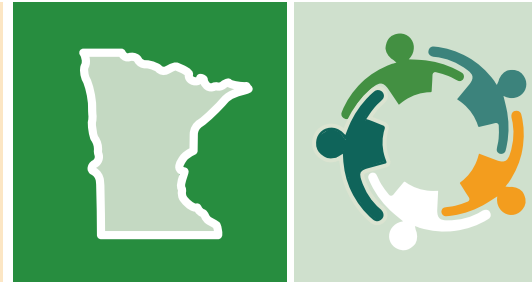


## Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest Supporting Inclusive and Diverse Educator Environments Partnership

**Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest** is partnering with school districts in Minnesota to cultivate and sustain school culture and working conditions that **increase the retention of teachers of color and Indigenous teachers**.



To achieve this goal, the **Supporting Inclusive and Diverse Educator Environments (SIDE E)** partnership will develop a set of professional learning opportunities for school leaders and staff. The SIDE E approach will include training on **cultural proficiency** as well as leadership coaching on building an **inclusive school culture** that supports teachers of color and Indigenous teachers. The approach will engage teachers of color and Indigenous teachers in facilitated opportunities to receive and provide peer support through **affinity groups**. In addition, the SIDE E approach will advance the leadership aspirations of teachers of color and Indigenous teachers by preparing them to serve as **mentors** to support other teachers.



**Cultural proficiency** refers to a capability of educators to teach and support all students using their cultural backgrounds, languages, and learning styles as assets in and beyond classroom learning environments.<sup>1</sup>



**Inclusive school cultures** give educators the autonomy to tailor their instructional practices, curricula, and learning environments to make them relevant to the students they serve. The term also refers more broadly to a school environment that develops mutual respect, full participation, and safety from unfair treatment to ensure all educators are recognized and valued.<sup>2</sup>

### Why is this topic important?

Research has shown that a racially diverse teacher workforce has social-emotional and academic benefits for all students.<sup>3</sup> In particular, students of color taught by teachers of color show improvements in:



Reading and math achievement<sup>4</sup>



Social and emotional well-being<sup>5</sup>



Attendance<sup>6</sup>



High school graduation rates<sup>7</sup>

In Minnesota, **34 percent** of students identify as people of color or Indigenous, whereas **only 4 percent** of teachers identify as people of color or Indigenous.<sup>8</sup>

## Planned partnership activities

In collaboration with **public school districts across Minnesota**, REL Midwest will develop, implement, and test the SIDE approach. This work will take place in stages over a 5-year period, starting with several schools before expanding the partnership to 80 schools.

Visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) to learn more as the work unfolds.

## Contact us to learn more!



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**REL Midwest is part of a network of 10 regional educational laboratories** funded by the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education. REL Midwest works in partnership with practitioners in seven midwestern states to support the use of research and data to improve student outcomes, with a focus on students who are farthest from opportunity.

### REL Midwest

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- <sup>8</sup> Minnesota Department of Education. (2020). *Equitable access to excellent and diverse educators*. <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/equitdiv/>