MINNESOTA
P-20 EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

P-20 Education Partnership
Meeting Minutes

Date/time: Thursday, February 19, 2026, 2:00-4:00pm
Location: Hybrid (WebEx and Minnesota Office of Higher Education, 1450 Energy Park Drive, St. Paul, MN)
Attendees: Tim Benz, Tikki Brown, Emily Carrillo, Rachel Coleman, Jeremiah Ellis, Jessica Espinosa, Chibuzo Ezeigbo, John Fanning, Ryan Fiereck, Satasha Green-Stephen, Deb Henton, Deb Henton, Sheila Hoffman, Krystle Igbo-Ogbonna, Mandy Janssen, Nikki Kovan, Jennifer Kunze, Josiah Litant, Angela Mansfield, Katie McClelland, Anthony Miller, Nora Morris, Dennis Olson, Leiataua Dr. Jon Peterson, Amy Pittenger, Sally Reynolds, Megan Rozowski, Kirk Schneidawind, Deborah Seelinger, Kisha Shanks

Meeting minutes:

1. Welcome

- Executive Director (ED) Litant opened the meeting, acknowledging the busy legislative season and thanking members for attending despite competing priorities.
- Introductions included new members:
  - Dr. Amy Pittenger – Interim Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, University of Minnesota
  - Ryan Fiereck – Secretary/Treasurer, Education Minnesota
  - Deborah Seelinger – Minnesota PTA
- Guests were welcomed, with an invitation to share comments at the end.
- ED Litant recognized Deputy Commissioner Stephanie Graff (MDE) for her leadership and contributions as MNP20 Chair. She recently transitioned out of her role. Discussions with MDE are underway to appoint a new representative to the Executive Committee.
- Approval of Previous Minutes: November 2025 meeting minutes were approved without changes.
- Acknowledgement: ED Litant acknowledged challenges across Minnesota and the education sector in recent months, emphasizing stress on leaders and organizations. Reaffirmed MNP20's mission: "Collaborate across sectors to increase equitable education access and supports, enhance lifelong learning opportunities, and improve outcomes for every Minnesotan." Stressed importance of collective work to address systemic challenges.

2. Member Spotlight: Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF)

- Presented by Nikki Kovan, Director of Early Learning Services, DCYF.
- Shared Early Childhood Ecosystem Framework with eight components: family access, community engagement, workforce development, compensation, service coordination, quality supports, regulatory processes, and data/IT systems.

- Discussed horizontal alignment (across childcare, school-based programs, Head Start) and vertical alignment (continuity from early childhood to K-12 and beyond). Highlighted workforce challenges, underfunding, and statutory requirements for teacher licensure by 2028 without adequate funding. Urged advocacy for early childhood needs and support for childcare providers.

3. Strategic Planning

- Presented by ED Litant and Deputy Director (DD) Janssen.
- ED Litant provided a timeline update on our work with our consultant, The Improve Group. Research phase completed (document review, member surveys, stakeholder interviews, national best practices). MNP20 Strategic Planning Task Force launches next week; plan completion by summer or early fall.
- ED Litant and DD Janssen reviewed the research phase high-level findings *(see PowerPoint slides for details)* and members discussed their thoughts to the strategic questions that were posed.
- Next steps: The Task Force will draft priorities and metrics by April. Executive Committee will review in late spring and provide feedback. MNP20 members will have a review in June, with the final plan approved by Executive Committee in summer.

4. MNP20 Impact Measures

- Presented by DD Janssen.
- DD Janssen explained why MNP20 has developed impact measures to help us demonstrate with quantitative metrics the big picture impact of our work. This will be useful for MNP20 members, for legislators, for funders, and for the public to better understand our work and how we create impact.
- She explained that the framework is focused in three areas: Foundation (connections), Focus (alignment), Future (equity & mobility). The metrics in each of these areas start with specific measures directly tangible in our work (e.g., member sectors, number of expert voices included in our work, etc.), then move up to our strategic plan metrics (forthcoming) and ultimately up to the state-level education indicators, in particular those that show alignment and transition across the education system.
- DD Janssen provided an overview of the draft measures. Data included is only a placeholder for now, she explained that currently staff is looking for feedback on the general framework *(see PowerPoint slides for details.)* Feedback requested via a survey that was administered during the meeting.

5. Project Updates

- Presented by ED Litant.
- **Educational Attainment Goal:** MNP20 leadership made several recommendations in our annual legislative report, should the legislature choose to refresh/renew the attainment goal. The first was to reframe this as a statewide educational attainment goal (not just postsecondary), with postsecondary completion as the ultimate outcome and with sub-goals for early childhood and K-12. This aligns strongly with our understanding of the necessary benchmarks to success throughout the learner lifespan. In addition, MN20 offered to serve as convener for coordination and progress monitoring across agencies and interested MNP20 partners over the duration of the goal. ED Litant does not yet

know if legislation to refresh/renew the goal will be pursued this session, but encouraged members who think this is worthwhile to share that perspective with legislators.

- **Dual Enrollment Policy Cohort:** Draft vision refined from MNP20 feedback in November, will be shared more broadly soon for statewide feedback. Student and family surveys completed (2,000+ student responses, 700+ parent and family responses). Roundtables planned for spring to gather deeper input. Recommendations have also been drafted with regard to strengthening intentionality of student experiences and increasing access and success for rural and BIPOC students. These will be vetted, including with MNP20 members, later this spring. Final report expected fall 2026, and then MNP20 will have the chance to review and endorse recommendations.
- **Educator Workforce Committee:** Joint effort with Governor's Workforce Development Board and Interagency Workforce Alignment Task Force continues. Recommendations are being delivered in three phases; first set due June, second set by end of year. The intent is to align early recommendations with timing for 2027 legislative session. In addition a document scan is launching to gather prior research and recommendations that have been made by other organizations with regard to the educator workforce—stay tuned for an invitation to submit prior work that your organization has done that you would like the committee to consider. The submission form will be sent to many organizations and agencies and will be publicly posted on the DEED website and shareable so it is not an exclusive invitation to submit previously generated recommendations or ideas.
- **Upcoming Lunch & Learn:** Lunch and Learns are informal learning opportunities for MNP20 members and staff in their organizations. The next one will be on April 6, hosted by StriveTogether and Harvard Ed Redesign, about their work to tie place-based cradle-to-career work more closely to state-level policy change. MNP20 and the Education Partnerships Coalition have been participating in this effort and it should be really informative for all of our members. It will be recorded for those who can't make it. Full description is available in the calendar invite.

6. Guest comments, member announcements

- Leiataua Jon Peterson (MNEEP) shared about the Push Forward MN Coalition and provided an update on legislative advocacy (HF 3409 – MN Education Protection Bill) affirming Plyler v. Doe protections and addressing safety concerns for immigrant students.
- Nora Morris (SLEDS) shared that SLEDS/ECLDS reports have been updated with new filters for legislative districts and 2024 graduates data is now available and live.
- ED Litant shares that the next meeting is scheduled for April 2026.

Meeting adjourned at 3:47pm.