



Minnesota  
**Education Equity**  
Partnership

Advancing **Race Equity** & Excellence

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Wednesday, May 3rd, 2023

Dear Chair Pelowski and Chair Fateh,

On behalf of the Minnesota Education Equity Partnership (MnEEP), we would like to thank you for your work during the legislative session to advance and elevate the importance of higher education in Minnesota. Investing in higher education in racially equitable ways is a moral imperative for the state and one that can no longer be relegated to secondary status during any legislative session. As such, it is critical that the Higher Education Conference Committee keenly focus on developing higher education policies using a race equity lens to gain more racially equitable outcomes in college completion.

Using a race equity lens to develop and make key policy decisions will have a positive impact on the thousands of students attending college in Minnesota and lead to better and less racially predictable outcomes for People of Color and Indigenous (POCI) students. Achieving better outcomes for POCI in higher education is critically important to the health of Minnesota. With the health of our state and POCI people in mind, MnEEP will continue to maintain and advance the following as part of its legislative priorities:

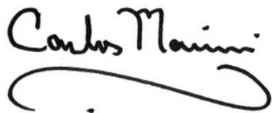
- Race equity and excellence in higher education need to remain as the primary goal of the committee's work and through to the close of the legislative session;
- Striking a compromise in the conference committee by balancing the competing needs of systems, while also keeping a close eye on meeting the real and ongoing needs of college-going POCI students, must also remain as a goal of the committee now and moving forward;
- Any compromise made, fiscal or otherwise, must center upon gaining more racially equitable outcomes for POCI students specific to college completion with a degree and/or a credential;
- Minnesota's commitment to investing in students' needs for having access to high quality and affordable college through the State Grant, must be considered prior to taking increases in federal grants like the Pell Grant into consideration;

- Students who identify as POCI and attend an institution of higher education must be provided with the agency, irrespective of the policy landscape, to achieve their hopes and dreams for college and career;
- Providing students, and especially POCI students, with voice and choice in self-determining what college path is best for them as a student will not only drive good policy decisions in higher education, it will propel Minnesota forward as a state socially, politically, and economically, as the direct result of centering race equity in culturally validating and powerful ways.

MnEEP will continue to track the work of the committee using a race equity lens and be prepared to speak to the presence and/or lack of racial equity present in higher education policies. It is our hope that we may continue to work together in partnership with you both as the Chairs of the committee now, and moving forward, to continue the work of advancing race equity and college completion for POCI students and all students in higher education in Minnesota. Thank you for your work, your partnership, and your leadership.

Sincerely,

Carlos Mariani, Executive Director, MnEEP

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carlos Mariani". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Leiatua Dr. Robert Jon Peterson, Long-Term Consultant, MnEEP

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leiatua Dr. Robert Jon Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, horizontal underline that extends across the width of the signature.

Ikram Mohamud, College Race Equity Initiative Coordinator, MnEEP

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ikram Mohamud". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, horizontal underline that extends across the width of the signature.