



LEADMN

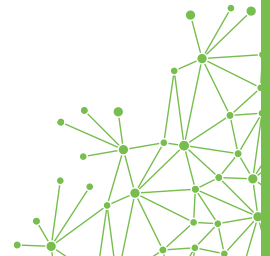
COLLEGE STUDENTS
CONNECTING FOR CHANGE

LeadMN is a statewide association for students at Minnesota's public two-year community and technical colleges. Our mission is to ensure quality, affordable, and accessible higher education, while providing students with representation, leadership development, and communication across the state.

1515 South Robert Street, West Saint Paul, MN 55118

VISIT ON US ON THE WEB AT www.leadmn.org

CALL US AT 877-636-7272



LEADMN SUPPORTS

Reducing or eliminating tuition for community and technical colleges

Reduced tuition rates that allow students to move through college to a degree without taking on massive student debt will benefit the entire state of Minnesota. Businesses in every corner of our state are in need of skilled, well-trained workers and our community and technical colleges are the best equipped to help address the state's workforce shortage.

Increased funding for TRIO and Gear Up programs

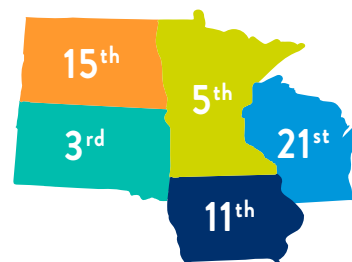
These programs are aimed at assisting students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Low-income, first generation, and students with disabilities often face hardships in college access and completion that other students don't. These programs are aimed at assisting them with staying on a path toward degree completion. In order to meet our societal and workforce needs, it's critical we increase graduation rates from these traditionally under-represented populations.

Permanent protections for DACA-eligible individuals

At LeadMN we believe that everyone should have access to quality education and the opportunity to succeed. It is our fundamental responsibility to protect students and that means protecting our DACA-eligible peers who have been raised and educated in America and who have contributed so much to our communities.

The removal of DACA threatens the lives of students and strips them of their dreams of receiving an education and applying their knowledge in the workforce. We cannot turn our backs on these students. This is why LeadMN supports the passage of legislation that ensures DACA-eligible individuals can continue their education and pursuit of the American Dream.

2018 Federal Legislative Priorities



MINNESOTA
COMMUNITY
AND TECHNICAL
COLLEGES HAVE
THE **5TH HIGHEST**
TUITION AND
FEES IN THE
NATION.

Sources: College Board, Annual Survey of Colleges;
NCES, IPEDS Fall 2015 Enrollment Data. Prepared 10/2017



6,000

Minnesota students
are DACA-eligible
individuals.

Expanding the use of OERs through federal grant programs or other funding initiatives

An often under-reported aspect of college costs, especially in technical programs, is the price of textbooks and other materials. Students often are faced with costs for books and supplies that go well beyond the posted tuition and fees at their institutions. If these costs were reduced by half, it would mean millions in savings and reduced student debt for thousands of students across Minnesota.

While open educational resources or open textbooks are not the answer in every field, we know that increased use of these resources can result in real savings for students. Imagine a world where more faculty were aware of the cost savings and academic usefulness of open textbooks. This could lead to academic improvements in the classroom and students saving millions of dollars.

One faculty member at a Minnesota college saved students in his classes (during one semester) over

\$66,000

by switching to an open textbook.

Efforts to simplify FAFSA

Each year, students leave millions of financial aid dollars on the table that they are eligible to receive.

One of the main reasons is the process to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), is complicated and cumbersome. This process is a barrier for many students, especially for students of color, first generation students, and others who have family or language barriers.

There are a variety of bi-partisan proposals aimed at simplifying the current 128-question form. Efforts to make the application process more student-friendly would help to ensure equality in access to higher education and encourage more students to apply.

AS OF MARCH 6, 2018 **ONLY 43% OF MINNESOTA HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS HAVE COMPLETED THEIR FAFSA.**



Sources: Minnesota Office of Higher Education.
www.fafsaweb.state.mn.us/Reports/Summary?year=2019

Postsecondary data reform and transparency efforts

When students decide to pursue a postsecondary education they should know exactly how much they are going to pay, and if the financial aid and loans they receive will cover those costs. If students are presented with unexpected increases in the cost of attendance, they are often forced to make a decision about remaining enrolled. That is why we support efforts like the removal of the student unit record ban, expanded information about academic programs and majors, and other efforts like the universal financial aid award letter, that arm students and parents with increased information about the cost and effectiveness relating to educational choices.

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