



**Branch Alliance**  
for Educator Diversity



**A PRIMER**

# **Educator Preparation**

**AT MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS**



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### A PRIMER

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# INTRODUCTION

Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) serve an important role in higher education and in the lives of millions of students of color and those from low-income backgrounds. MSIs place a heavy focus on learners, creating nurturing environments that develop rooted socioemotional identities. This focus, along with their commitment to service and community development, are little known lessons from MSIs that can greatly benefit the broader field of education. Given their history and unique culture, the students and communities they served, and the successes they have garnered through positive outcomes for their graduates, MSIs are critically important to the education of future teachers and the diversification of the nation's teaching force.

Many MSIs were in fact founded as “teachers’ colleges,” having grown out of a history of educational segregation and racism. MSIs are committed to “uplifting” the communities they serve through insider knowledge, care, and belonging; an ethos that distinguishes MSIs from many other institutions of higher education. For instance, MSIs do more than “add” culture to the curricula; they “reposition culture at the center” of teacher preparation. At the heart of the MSI educator preparation mission is the imperative to bring these same affirming practices to all children. Put simply: The student- and community-centered educational practices used at MSIs can serve as a model for teacher candidates to use in their own PK-12 classrooms. **The field of education ought to look to MSIs as both contemporary models of quality educator preparation and as innovators and changemakers for the next generation of teachers.**

This primer aims to provide a broad overview of the various federal MSI designations, profile of the MSI student body, clarification of the distinction between minority enrolling and minority serving institutions, and both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the landscape of MSI educator preparation. In conclusion, the Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity's (BranchED) assertion of the role that MSIs can play in redefining what the field holds up as high-quality educator preparation is explored.





# Federal MSI Designations

The U.S. Department of Education's eligibility matrix currently flags over 1,903 institutions as eligible to apply for federal MSI designation and funding under Title III and Title V of the Higher Education Opportunity Act. In 2019-20, the year in which the data contained in this volume was collected, roughly 778 institutions received federal MSI designation, representing approximately 19% of all degree-granting, Title IV-eligible institutions of higher education. Collectively, these MSIs enrolled about five million students of color, or about 47% of all students of color enrolled in American higher education.

Federally designated MSIs include Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTIs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Asian American Native American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs), and Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions (ANNHs). Qualification for these designations requires that institutions meet specific primary indicators that include diversity of the student body by race and ethnicity and students qualifying for federal assistance under Federal Pell Grant, Federal College Work Study, Federal Perkins Loan or Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant.

TABLE 1

## Eligibility Requirements for the MSI Designations

DESIGNATION	REQUIREMENT FOR ELIGIBILITY
Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (ANNHs)	Institutions that have an undergraduate enrollment that is at least 20% Alaskan Native students or institutions that have an undergraduate enrollment that is at least 10% Native Hawaiian students
Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs)	Institutions that have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10% Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander student
Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)	Institutions that have an undergraduate enrollment that is at least 25% Hispanic students
Historically Black College or Universities (HBCUs)	Designated by the Higher Education Act of 1965
Native American-Serving non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTIs)	Institutions that are not Tribal Colleges and Universities that have an undergraduate enrollment that is at least 10% Native American students
Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs)	Institutions that are not HBCUs that have an undergraduate enrollment that is at least 40% Black students
Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)	Designated by the Higher Education Act of 1965



official MSI designation. Of the nearly 1,903 institutions that were eligible for MSI designation based upon student demographics, only 778 institutions received OPE funding and were granted official MSI designation in Academic Year (AY 2019-20). Institutions that are officially designated and funded as MSIs are listed on the OPE website under each program as awardees for each fiscal year.

### HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are the oldest MSIs. The first HBCUs were established in the 1830s under legal segregation for the purpose of educating African Americans. The amended Higher Education Act of 1965 defines HBCUs as any historically Black college or university established before 1964, whose principal mission was and is the education of Black Americans (Redd, 1998). Initially, these institutions provided religious education to Black youths and basic skills training to emancipated slaves after the Civil War. However, a number of HBCUs were founded in the later 19th century as a result of segregation policies that prevented Black students from attending institutions that educated White students (Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; O'Brien & Zudak, 1998; Redd, 1998).

Today, over 102 HBCUs represent only 1% of all colleges and universities in the country (Harmon, 2012). HBCUs are diverse in type, including two- and four-year, public and private, urban and rural, and open and selective college admissions (Gasman, 2013).

Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) are institutions that are not HBCUs, but have an undergraduate enrollment of at least 40% Black students. Currently, there are 100 PBIs, which, similar to HBCUs, range from two-year community colleges to four-year universities, public to private, and urban to rural.

At the national level, HBCUs and other PBIs are represented by the *National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO)*, which includes 118-member institutions that award undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees.

**“ 57% of faculty at HBCUs identify as Black, whereas nationally, Blacks make up only 5.5% of faculty.”—Data Points from Penn CMSI Return on Investment Campaign**

### TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), like HBCUs, are defined in the Higher Education Act of 1965 and earn their federal designation because of their founding mission. Although Native Americans were granted access to higher education institutions throughout America's higher education history, the goal was not to empower them, but to convert them to the ways of the colonists (Guillory & Ward, 2008). The direction of educating Native American students changed in the 1960s as a result of the Native American Movement. Not only was the first TCU created during that decade, the mission of these institutions was to provide culturally-based education to Native Americans (Griffin & Hurtado, 2011).



Today, 35 TCUs exist and enroll students from over 250 tribal nations (Griffin & Hurtado, 2011). Many are located on or near Native American reservations and represent less than 1% of all postsecondary institutions (Harmon, 2012; Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005; O'Brien & Zudak, 1998). Most of these unique institutions are community colleges, focusing on local economic development, workforce training, and preparation for continuing education, while placing a distinct focus on culture and language preservation and student support services (Merisotis & McCarthy, 2005).

TCUs are represented by the *American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)*, which was founded in 1972 and represents 37 tribal colleges in the United States and one Canadian institution.

**“ All Tribal Colleges and Universities contribute to their local economy. For example, the College of Menominee Nation added \$37 million, provided 404 jobs, and generated \$833,000 in tax revenues to its local economy in 2011.”—Data Points from Penn CMSI Return on Investment Campaign in 2017**

**“ Some of the unique and stable curricular functions of TCUs are to (a) respond to community needs, (b) empower communities, (c) preserve and revitalize Native culture and language, and (d) facilitate community healing.”—Tribal Colleges and Universities in an Era of Dynamic Development**



## HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONS

Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) represent the most recently recognized type of MSI and include the greatest number of institutions across all the MSI types. Unlike HBCUs and TCUs, most HSIs were not founded to serve a particular demographic but rather evolved through their geographical proximity to Hispanic populations. As defined by the amended Higher Education Act of 1965, Hispanic student enrollment of 25% or more at any institution is the basic and most frequently used criterion to identify HSIs.

In the early 1990s, fewer than two dozen colleges identified as Hispanic-serving. Today, over 436 institutions of higher education identify as servers of significant numbers of Hispanic students. While many HSIs were historically Predominantly White Institutions, economic and demographic changes resulted in a number of these institutions enrolling large numbers of underrepresented and low-income students (Laden, 2004; Mercer & Stedman, 2008). Over 200 additional institutions are described as “emerging” HSIs. While not officially designated as HSIs, many will soon qualify as an HSI due to the number of Hispanic students enrolling in these institutions (Excelencia in Education, 2012/2013; Nunez & Elizondo, 2012).



# 25%

**HISPANIC STUDENT  
ENROLLMENT**

As defined by the amended Higher Education Act of 1965, Hispanic student enrollment of 25% or more at any institution is the basic and most frequently used criterion to identify HSIs.



Although Hispanics are one of the fastest growing minority populations in the United States, their enrollment in college lags behind their population growth (Brown & Santiago, 2004). However, the exponential growth of Hispanics entering higher education fuels growth in the number of federally designated HSIs - surpassing all other MSI categories. Today, HSIs represent less than 5% of all postsecondary institutions (Harmon, 2012). While four-year HSIs exist, the majority are public community colleges (Benitez, 1998; Brown & Santiago, 2004).

National policy and advocacy representation for HSIs is provided by the *Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)*, which includes more than five hundred institutions, over half of which qualify as HSIs, located in twenty-one states, Puerto Rico, and six countries.

“21% of faculty at HSIs identify as Latino, whereas nationally, Latinos make up just over 4% of faculty.”—Data Points from Penn CMSI Return on Investment Campaign

“Hispanic Serving Institutions represent 12.9% of non-profit colleges and universities, yet enroll 21.9% of all students and 60.8% of all Hispanic students.”—Data Points from Penn CMSI Return on Investment Campaign

“The number of eligible Hispanic Serving Institutions grew by 218% between 1990 and 2014 (137 to 435 institutions).”—Data Points from Penn CMSI Return on Investment Campaign

## ASIAN AMERICAN NATIVE AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER SERVING INSTITUTIONS

The newest MSIs are Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISIs). In 2008, the federal government created the AANAPISIs federal program and made five million dollars a year available over two years for eligible institutions. AANAPISIs recognize the unique challenges Asian American and Pacific Islander students face in college and are committed to increasing the retention rates of AAPI and low-income students (Teranishi, 2012). There are two- and four-year public AANAPISI institutions and the majority are located on the East and West coasts.

“There are currently 307 eligible Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions in the United States with student bodies that are comprised of more than 48 different ethnicities.” **Data Points from Penn CMSI Return on Investment Campaign**

## MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS

In 1998, a monograph titled *Minority-Serving Institutions: Distinct Purposes, Common Goals* (Merisotis and O'Brien, 1998) explored the emerging possibility of significant collaboration among HBCUs, HSIs and TCUs in order to advance policy agendas and strengthen alliances. Since 1998, the notion of MSIs as a unified community has grown, and an increasing number of programs and initiatives now emphasize the commonality among these institutions and their prospects for serving students of color.



# 1998

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While institutions often grouped together under the term “MSI” differ in terms of institutional mission, characteristics, student body demographics, and the legal terms under which they gain federal recognition, they all share a common link in their commitment to provide access for and educating low-income students of color. As the higher education student population continues to diversify, the number of MSIs will grow, calling for higher education researchers, leaders, practitioners, and policymakers to better understand how these institutions serve their students and provide a unique space for student success.

National policy and advocacy representation for MSIs is provided by The Alliance for Equity in Higher Education (The Alliance), which was established in 1999 as a partnership of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO). The Alliance represents the shared interests of TCUs, HSIs, and HBCUs.





# Student Body Profile

**Students at MSIs are more likely than those attending Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs)** to have lower levels of academic preparation for college and are more apt to come from high-stress and high-poverty communities. Almost one-half of all MSI students are the first in their families to attend college, compared to only 35% of students attending PWIs. Put simply: for many students MSIs are the gateway to higher education.

**Demographic.** Minority Serving Institutions enroll approximately 7.1 million undergraduate students per year—32% of all undergraduate students enrolled in higher education—and no less significant, a disproportionate percentage of students of color. While HBCUs represent just 2% of all colleges and universities, they enroll 7.4% of African American students. TCUs represent less than 1% of higher education institutions yet enroll 13.7% of Native American students. HSIs represent only 7% of postsecondary institutions but enroll 54% of all Latino students. AANAPISIs represent less than 3% of all colleges and universities yet enroll 32% of all Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

**Financial.** MSIs also serve a disproportionately large number of low-income students. A study by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that 41% of Native American students,

41% of African American students, and 38% of Hispanic students were from families in the lowest income quartile, while only 19% of White students had families with a total annual income of less than \$25,000 (National Center for Education Statistics, 1998). Ninety-eight percent (98%) of African Americans and Native Americans who attend HBCUs or TCUs qualify for federal need-based aid. Moreover, over one-half of all students enrolled at MSIs receive Pell Grants, compared with only 31% of all college students. These high rates of Pell Grant eligibility exist even though tuition rates at MSIs are, on average, 50% less than that of majority institutions.

**Academic.** In addition to financial barriers, students who traditionally attend MSIs are at greater risk for academic failure than their White counterparts. Because Black and Latino students are more likely to attend poorly funded secondary schools, they are more likely than their White counterparts to be less academically prepared for college and to require developmental education courses (Harmon, 2012; Southern Education Foundation, 2011). Native Americans have the lowest level of educational attainment of any racial or ethnic group. In 1990, only 9% of Native Americans 25 years and older had earned a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 21% of all Americans (American Indian Higher Education Consortium, 2000). Seventeen-year-old Hispanic high school students, on average, have



4%

AFRICAN  
AMERICAN  
STUDENTS

8%

HISPANIC  
STUDENTS

In 1996, 4% of African American students and 8% of Hispanic students scored over 1200 on their SATs, compared with 23% of White students (Nettles, Perna, and Edelin, 1998).

the same reading level and mathematics skills as thirteen-year-old White students, and of states recently surveyed by the NCES, more than one-third said that Hispanic students were significantly more likely to drop out of high school than any other racial or ethnic background (Schmidt, 2003). In 1996, 4% of African American students and 8% of Hispanic students scored over 1200 on their SATs, compared with 23% of White students (Nettles, Perna, and Edelin, 1998).

**First Generation.** More than 44% of TCU graduates were the first in their family to receive a postsecondary degree (American Indian Higher Education Consortium, 2000). Hispanic students note that their “first-generation college student” status creates conflicting expectations from family members, who may support their academic endeavors but continue to expect that students live at home with their family and contribute financially to the household. These conflicting cultural values may be particularly strong for Hispanic women whose families may not see higher education as an equal priority with supporting a family and home (McGoldrick, Giordano, and Pearce, 1996). Similarly, studies have shown that Native American students, particularly those educated on reservations, may find mainstream educational systems inattentive to their own unique culture and very unlikely to devote attention to traditional tribal languages (Deloria, 1991; Carney, 1999).

**Geographic.** Geographical concerns are also significant considerations for students who attend MSIs. Because many Hispanic populations inhabit the country's most rapidly growing areas and drive much of this growth, these students are particularly likely to reside near HSIs that are forced to institute enrollment caps to maintain costs (Schmidt, 2003). In 1990, 21% of all Native Americans lived on reservations or trust lands, which are often located in the most economically depressed areas of the United States.





# Enrolling Versus Serving

**MSIs pride themselves in providing students of color access to higher education.** Due to economic reasons and lack of academic preparation, attending an MSI may be a student of color's only opportunity to further their postsecondary education. MSIs often provide the education of first generation college-bound students, particularly those who lack family members to provide college preparation guidance during their secondary education. However, a critical distinction should be made between institutions of higher education that merely enroll these students and institutions that intentionally make strides to serve the unique needs of these student populations. The federal designation is not always the best determinant of which bucket an institution falls within, as not all MSIs embrace their designation as part of their institutional identity and take all determined steps to support the student population that makes the designation possible. This section highlights a number of ways in which MSIs intentionally create unique spaces for their students to thrive.

## **SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT: A FOCUS ON STUDENT SUCCESS**

Research has indicated that one of the benefits of attending an MSI is its supportive environment where there are increased levels of engagement among faculty and students. Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, and Arellano (2012) describe the ways that aspects of campus climate



are related to diverse students' comfort, integration, and ultimate success in college study. As a result of the nurturing and encouraging aspects of these institutions, a supportive milieu is provided that engenders academic success for underrepresented students (Stage et al., 2012).

**“Hispanic students are exposed to few faculty from their own cultural backgrounds. Hispanic students find few culturally sensitive role models in their college classrooms. A very different picture emerges, however, when one examines the presence of Hispanic faculty in HSIs. Not only that there are many more role models in the classrooms, in faculty offices, and in administrative posts who look like the students themselves, but also that these are faculty and administrators who are more likely to have a much greater understanding about and commitment to meeting Hispanic students' academic, cultural, and personal needs.”—Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Myths and Realities**

MSIs have implemented policies and practices that work to increase student success. However, sustaining and expanding upon these practices requires a high level of institutional capacity and resources with which to do so. Some examples of these practices include:

- Utilizing peer-to-peer mentoring to create a sense of community among students where they support one another both with their academic work and in their personal lives
- Investing their MSI grant funding in the creation of student support centers and establishing financial counseling services to support at-risk student
- Developing partnerships with their community's local high schools to create dual enrollment programs and provide cultural competency professional development opportunities for faculty to better understand the backgrounds and needs of their students
- Using learning communities to create environments that provide assistance for students transferring from remedial to college-level courses

## CULTURAL AFFIRMATION

MSIs provide a nurturing context that maintains the underrepresented minority culture, and relative freedom from racial discrimination (Brown, 2003; Gasman et al., 2008). Additionally, for students new to college, MSIs provide an environment comparatively rich in role models among faculty, staff, and upper class students. Faculty members at these institutions are racially/ethnically diverse, including larger populations of international faculty. HBCUs and TCUs afford students cultural affirmation and opportunities to serve in leadership positions through student organizations. Conversely, many Hispanic serving institutions are struggling to find a cultural connection with their students and are just now beginning to explore what it means for their institutions to make the transition from being Hispanic-enrolling to Hispanic-serving institutions.

## COMPLETION RATES

MSIs have demonstrated the ability to graduate underrepresented minority college students at rates that exceed those of predominantly White populations (Stage, Lundy-Wagner, & John, 2012). A new report from ACE's Center for Policy Research and Strategy, *Pulling Back the Curtain: Enrollment and Outcomes at Minority Serving Institutions*, uses data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to examine enrollment and outcomes of students who began their college education at an MSI in 2007. The first study to utilize these data in examining outcomes at MSIs, the report aims to provide a more complete picture of the contributions MSIs make to the higher education landscape and the communities where they reside. The researchers had two major findings

1. **Students who attend MSIs do not fit the profile of traditional college students captured through the federal graduation rate.** Traditional college students tend to enroll full-time in

college, typically the fall after graduating from high school. Contrastingly, the majority of students who enroll at MSIs fit a non-traditional student profile, and may be transfer, returning, or part-time students. Students at MSIs, in fact, predominantly enroll through “mixed enrollment,” meaning they move between full-time and part-time enrollment status.

2. **Completion rates for MSIs are higher than the federal rate suggests.** As with other institutions who primarily enroll non-traditional students, the federal graduation rate of MSIs captures only a small segment of the total student population. Across all two- and four-year MSIs included in the study, the total completion rate for students enrolled exclusively full-time—the NSC sub-cohort most comparable to the cohort used to calculate traditional graduation rates—was higher than the federal rate.



# 67%

## HBCUs COMPLETION RATE

Exclusively full-time students at private four-year HBCUs had a completion rate of 66.7%, compared to a federal graduation rate of 43.9%.



Some additional highlights include:

- The NSC total completion rate for public four-year HBCUs was 43% and increased to nearly 62% for students who enrolled exclusively full-time. Comparatively, the federal graduation rate was 34.1%.
- Exclusively full-time students at private four-year HBCUs had a completion rate of 66.7%, compared to a federal graduation rate of 43.9%.
- The NSC total completion rate for all students at public four-year PBIs was 34.1%. Students enrolled exclusively full-time had a higher completion rate of nearly 52%, compared to a federal graduation rate of 16.6%.
- The completion rate for exclusively full-time students at public two-year HSIs was 40.3% using NSC data, compared to the federal graduation rate of 25.5%.
- The NSC total completion rate for all students at public four-year HSIs was approximately 50%, and increased to 74.1% for exclusively full-time students. In comparison, the federal graduation rate was 42.7%.
- NSC data reveal a completion rate of nearly 88% for exclusively full-time students at public four-year AANAPISIs, compared to 66.2% using the federal graduation rate.

These findings call for both the improvement of student outcomes data and greater transparency and understanding of what data do and do not tell us, especially for policy- and decision-makers. While the data speak volumes, we know that data alone do not tell the whole story of how MSIs work to ensure the success of their students.

## PRODUCTION OF GRADUATES

A positive factor related to attending MSIs is their contribution to producing graduates in important fields such as education, science, technology, engineering, and math (Stage & Hubbard, 2009; Stage, John, & Hubbard, 2011; Stage et al., 2012). Research has shown that two- and four-year MSIs awarded a greater proportion of certificate, associates, and baccalaureate degrees to students of color compared to their overall representation. Researchers Nikki Edgecombe and Jasmine M. Sanders (September 2018) conducted a descriptive analysis of credential production (i.e., or the percentage of certificates and degrees awarded by major or occupational field) by field of study across the two- and four-year postsecondary education sectors and compared results for MSIs and non-MSIs. They found that:

1. MSIs and non-MSIs have similar credential production patterns and share the same top two fields: 1) education and training and 2) STEM. Business, management and administration is the third highest field of credential production for MSIs and health science is the third highest field for non-MSIs
2. Four-year HSIs dominate credential production in education and training among MSIs and are significant contributors across most fields. Notably, AANAPISIs (25.2%), ANNHs (20.2%) and HBCUs (18.9%) produce STEM credentials at rates above the MSI average of 18.8%.
3. The most associate degrees were generated in the field of education and training at MSI and non-MSIs alike and may reflect popular programs with strong employment prospects, including early childhood education (U.S. Department of Education, 2016a).
4. At the baccalaureate level, more than half of the degrees conferred by MSIs were in the field of STEM; education and training; and business, management, and administration—popular programs nationwide at four-year colleges and universities (U.S. Department of Education, 2015b; Carnevale, Cheah, & Hanson, 2015).



## ELEMENTS OF WELL-BEING

Though research is limited, studies have found strong social-emotional benefits to students who attend MSIs. For instance, Black graduates of HBCUs are significantly more likely to feel supported while in college, and to thrive afterwards, than are their Black peers who graduated from PWIs, according to the newest data from an ongoing Gallup-Purdue University study (2015). The survey – which is the largest of its kind, collecting data from 50,000 college alumni over two years – attempts to measure whether colleges are doing enough to help students' well-being after they graduate. It measures five "elements of well being," including social, financial, purpose community and physical elements. The survey also asks graduates if they remember having had a professor who cared about them, made them excited to learn, or encouraged them to follow their dreams -- which Gallup refers to collectively as being "emotionally supported" while in college. Survey results indicate:

- About 55% of Black HBCU graduates said they "strongly agreed" that their college or university "prepared them well for life outside of college," compared to less than 30% of non-HBCU Black graduates.



- More than half of HBCU graduates reported “thriving in purpose well-being,” compared to 43% of Black graduates from non-HBCUs.
- While 29% of Black graduates who did not attend an HBCU said they were “thriving in financial well-being,” 1% of Black HBCU graduates reported doing so.
- Black graduates of HBCUs were more than twice as likely as those who graduated from PWIs to recall feeling supported by a professor.
- About half of Black HBCU graduates said their college or university was “the perfect school” for them, compared to 34% of non-HBCU Black alumni.
- Nearly half said they couldn’t “imagine a world” without the HBCU they attended. Only 25% of Black graduates of PWIs agreed.



# 55%

## BLACK HBCU GRADUATES

About 55% of Black HBCU graduates said they “strongly agreed” that their college or university “prepared them well for life outside of college,” compared to less than 30% of non-HBCU Black graduates.



## UPWARD MOBILITY

MSIs play an important role in promoting the upward mobility of students of color. A September 2018 report by ACE’s Center for Policy Research and Strategy, *Minority Serving Institutions as Engines of Upward Mobility*, uses Equality of Opportunity Project (EOP) data to analyze upward income mobility at MSIs compared to non-MSIs. The report describes the contributions of MSIs to intergenerational mobility for four MSI types: HBCUs, HSIs, PBIs, and AANAPISIs. They found that **MSIs propel their lowest-income students to the top income quintile at rates similar to—and in many cases, rates exceeding that of—non-MSIs**. For example, the mobility rate of four-year HSIs was three times that of non-MSIs (4.3% compared to 1.5%). The mobility rate of AANAPISIs, PBIs, and HBCUs was double that of non-MSIs.

In a report published in January 2017, researchers at EOP, reviewing data from tax records, reveal that HBCUs are doing a better job than the average postsecondary institution in terms of vaulting lowest-income children into the top quintile as adults. Of those HBCUs that the researchers were able to collect data for, over 85% had a higher “mobility score” than the average across all institutions in the U.S. The mobility score measures the share of the student body at each institution that goes from the bottom quintile of income distribution as children to the top income quintile as adults. In more precise terms, the score is the product of two factors: access and success. Access is measured by the proportion of students coming from families in the bottom income quintile. Success tracks the proportion of this group who make it to the top quintile as adults. The EOP researchers conclude, “As the findings in the report show, MSIs do well by their students even under financial constraints. However, imagine what they could do with more. Additional funding to Titles III and V invests not only in the capacity of MSIs, but also in the success of the millions of students of color and low-income students they serve.”



# Educator Preparation at MSIs by the Numbers

There are 322 minority serving institutions that offer educator preparation programs (21% of educator preparation providers in the United States and territories). These institutions are found across 46 states and the District of Columbia, and territories with the highest concentrations in California (47 institutions), Texas (43), Puerto Rico (30), New York (19), Florida (17), North Carolina (12), and Alabama (10). Some 29 states have fewer than five MSI educator preparation providers, and 10 states and territories have only one. HSIs make up the largest share (177 institutions or 55%) of the MSIs that offer educator preparation programs, followed by HBCUs (71 institutions or 22%), AANAPISIs (73 institutions or 23%), PBIs (17 institutions or 5%), ANNHs (17 institutions or 5%), NASNTIs (10 institutions or 3%) and TCUs (9 institutions or 3%). Fifty-two (16%) of the MSIs offering educator preparation programs hold more than one MSI designation.

“Many MSIs were founded for the express purpose of educating teachers. Though their institutional missions have been reshaped to suit changing times and economic demands, training educators has remained at the heart of what they do....MSIs place major importance on educating minorities to become teachers in order to create role models for the communities, thereby facilitating a lineage of leadership for generations to come.”—*Educating the Emerging Majority: The Role of Minority Serving Colleges and Universities in Confronting America’s Teacher Crisis*

The respective groups of MSIs differ in their offering of educator preparation programs. For instance, 70% of HBCUs offer educator preparation programs, followed by ANNH (47%), AANAPSI (45%), HSI (41%), and NASNTIs (36%). Only about a fourth of TCUs offer some form of educator preparation, and nearly a fifth of PBIs (17%) offer educator preparation programs.

**TABLE 2.**

**Total Number of MSIs and the Number and Percentage Offering Teacher Preparation by Type in 2018-19**

MSI TYPE	TOTAL NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE U.S.	NUMBER OFFERING TEACHER PREPARATION	PERCENTAGE OFFERING TEACHER PREPARATION
HBCUs	102	71	70%
PBI	100	17	17%
ANNHI	36	17	47%
TCU	35	9	26%
AANAPSI	162	73	45%
HSI	436	176	40%
NANTI	28	10	36%
<b>Total MSI*</b>	778	321	41%
Total Non-MSI	5,668	1,102	19%
MSI Percentage of Total Number of Institutions/ Providers in United States	14%	29%	-

Data from Title II, 2018-19  
Cross-referenced with College Score Card



In 2015-16, MSIs enrolled 18% (79,669 of the total number of students enrolled in teacher preparation programs in the country, including 20% of male candidates and 19% of female candidates. This percentage is slightly higher than the relatively consistent percentage over the past three years, enrolling 12% in 2013-14, and 13% in 2012-13 and 2011-12. These institutions enrolled 31% of candidates of color nationally. Significantly, MSIs enroll 56% of Pacific Islander and 49% of Latinx candidates, followed by 36% of Asian, 27% of Multi-racial, 26% of Native American, 24% of African American, and 10% of Caucasian candidates. As such, while MSIs make up only 13% of the EPPs in the United States, they enroll a disproportionate number of candidates of color.

**“MSIs use proactive recruitment strategies, reaching out to students of color while they are still in high school, looking beyond base tests scores and GPAs to identify dynamic, promising, and committed students who have the potential to be highly effective teachers with additional academic support and encouragement.” —A Rich Source for Teachers of Color and Learning: Minority Serving Institutions**



**TABLE 3.****Number and Percentage of MSI Teacher Preparation Enrollment in 2018-19**

ENROLLMENT	MSI CANDIDATES	NON-MSI CANDIDATES	PERCENTAGE MSI
Male	23,498	71,749	25%
Female	74,209	260,978	22%
Total enrollment	101,928	339,605	23%
Hispanic/Latino of Any Race	28,680	24,322	54%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,368	2,612	34%
Asian	6,999	9,785	42%
Black or African American	13,576	21,996	38%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1,636	595	73%
White	36,648	251,087	13%
Multi-racial	3,984	8,414	32%
Total Candidates of Color	56,243	67,724	45%

Data from Title II, 2018-19

In 2018-19, minority serving institutions produced 23% (28,530) of the total number of teacher preparation program completers in the country. This percentage has remained relatively consistent over for the past three years, with 23% completers in 2017-18 and 2016-17.

**TABLE 4.****Number of and Percentage Change in MSI Teacher Preparation Program Completers from 2016 to 2019**

COMPLETERS	MSI		NON-MSI		PERCENTAGE MSI	
	NUMBER	% CHANGE	NUMBER	% CHANGE	PERCENT	% CHANGE
AY2018-2019	28,530	-8.7%	96,551	-5.9%	22.81%	-2.3%
AY2017-2018	31,258	-5.4%	102,599	-4.9%	23.35%	-0.4%
AY2016-2017	30,222	9.3%	107,834	5.6%	23.45%	2.7%

Data from Title II, 2017-18, w/College Score Card MSI Designations

In reference to degrees conferred, MSIs awarded 20% (125,704) of all degrees in education awarded in the nation in 2019-2020, and 36% of those awarded to candidates of color. Significantly, MSIs awarded 48% of all education degrees in education awarded to Hispanics, 38% of those conferred on Asian Americans, 56% of those awarded to Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, 41% awarded to Native Americans, 26% awarded to African Americans, 22% to two or more races, 20% to nonresident students, and 16% to graduates whose race/ethnicity is unknown. These institutions also conferred 12% of all of the degrees in education awarded to Caucasian Americans. The impact of MSI education degrees varies across the level of degree program.

TABLE 5.

## MSI Production of Education Degrees in 2018-19

## Number of Degrees Awarded by MSIs and MSI Percentage of All Degrees Awarded in U.S. by Award Level

AWARD LEVEL	TOTAL PEOPLE OF COLOR	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	NON-RESIDENT
< 1 year	6,732 (37.8%)	432 (65.1%)	640 (44.4%)	796 (15%)	4,164 (50.7%)	28 (17.9%)	296 (25.3%)	376 43.9%
1 <> 2 years	1,260 32.1%	32 31.4%	106 44.2%	422 (38.5%)	502 (24.3%)	96 (85.7%)	82 35.0%	20 (25.6%)
Associate's degree	9,330 (45.6%)	458 (2.0%)	1,596 (37.9%)	1,596 (37.9%)	5,892 (71.8%)	272 (0.3%)	372 (2.7%)	240 (1.4%)
2 <> 4 years	90 (93.8%)	0 -	0 (-)	0 -	0 -	90 100%)	0 0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Bachelor's degree	20,538 (42.8%)	332 (32.0%)	2,264 (47.9%)	4,136 (34.7%)	11,822 (52.5%)	236 (57.8%)	1,018 (20.0%)	730 (31.3%)
Postbacc certificate	1,858 (23.4%)	20 17.2%)	296 32.0%)	324 (12.7%)	918 (33.4%)	12 (28.6%)	98 (13.1%)	190 (23.6%)
Master's degree	29,220 (31.6%)	358 (27.1%)	2,962 32.2%)	7,380 (24.5%)	15,632 (43.2%)	334 (44.4%)	1,626 (22.3%)	928 (12.1%)
Post-master's certificate	1,364 (20.9%)	4 4.8%)	88 (22.7%)	702 (18.2%)	490 (34.5%)	2 (10.0%)	50 (9.0%)	28 (13.7%)
Doctorate research	2,728 (27.3%)	16 (15.7%)	174 (22.9%)	1,220 (25.0%)	916 (42.2%)	10 (17.2%)	98 (19.1%)	294 (19.5%)
Doctorate-professional practice	30 (26.6%)	0 (0%)	0 0.0%)	24 (33.3%)	4 (15.4%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Doctorate - other	388 (66%)	0 (0%)	86 (79.6%)	92 (43.8%)	174 (86.1%)	2 (100.0%)	28 (63.6%)	6 (30.0%)
Total Education Credentials	73538 (36.2%)	1,652 (40.6%)	7,116 (38.3%)	16,692 (26.0%)	40,514 (48.4%)	1,082 (55.7%)	7,314 (22.2%)	2,812 (20.2%)

Data from IPEDS, 2019-20 w/College Score Card MSI Designations

MSIs offer both traditional and alternate route preparation programs. Some 310 MSI EPPs offer traditional teacher preparation programs, while 168 offer alternative routes. One hundred fifty-three (153) MSI EPPs offer both traditional and alternative route programs. MSIs serve 38% of all candidates enrolled in institutions of higher education-based (IHE) alternative routes to certification programs, and some 53% of candidates of color enrolled in such programs. MSIs serve a significant proportion of candidates of color in every racial/ethnic group, including: 53% of Hispanic candidates, 36% of Native American, 36% of Asian, 67% of Black, 68% of Islander, and 50% of multi-racial alternative route candidates. MSIs awarded some 32% of alternative route education degrees in 2018-19.

**TABLE 6.**

**Education Credentials Awarded by Minority Serving Institutions in 2019-20 by CIP Code**

CIP TITLE & CODE	TOTAL GRADUATES	GRADUATES OF COLOR	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	NON-RESIDENT
Education, General (13.01)	7,398	4,313	65	580	756	2,369	99	255	189
Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education (13.02)	521	404	32	34	14	295	3	5	21
Curriculum and Instruction (13.03)	2,635	1,353	8	103	284	761	52	70	75
Educational Administration and Supervision (13.04)	7,288	3,750	60	238	1,451	1,707	22	191	81
Educational/ Instructional Media Design (13.05)	994	441	4	61	91	204	3	43	35
Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research (13.06)	311	149	2	9	25	84	0	10	19
International and Comparative Education (13.07)	9	7	0	0	2	4	0	0	1
Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education (13.09)	78	47	1	10	5	13	2	14	2
Special Education and Teaching (13.10)	6,655	3,599	25	404	644	2,231	20	187	88
Student Counseling and Personnel Services (13.11)	3,729	2,240	42	172	544	1,319	15	87	61
Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Levels and Methods (13.12)	22,460	14,174	476	1,376	2,853	7,975	283	705	506

TABLE CONTINUED NEXT PAGE ...



CIP TITLE & CODE	TOTAL GRADUATES	GRADUATES OF COLOR	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	NON-RESIDENT
Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Subject Areas (13.13)	6,757	3,743	69	324	1,103	1,896	33	187	131
Teaching English or French as a Second or Foreign Language (13.14)	1,582	929	1	130	130	492	1	35	140
Teaching Assistants /Aides (13.15)	907	762	11	51	171	485	5	13	26
Education, Other (13.99)	1,528	858	30	66	273	422	3	33	31

Data from IPEDS, 2018-19 w/College Score Card MSI Designations

**TABLE 7.**

**Credentials Awarded by Minority Serving Institutions in Teacher Education and Professional Development, Specific Levels and Methods (CIP 13.12) in 2018-19 by CIP Sub-Code**

CIP TITLE & CODE	TOTAL GRADUATES	TOTAL GRADUATES OF COLOR	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	NON-RESIDENT
Adult and Continuing Education and Teaching (13.1201)	48	43	0	0	37	3	0	1	2
Elementary Education and Teaching (13.1202)	6,137	3,243	166	320	720	1,637	145	188	67
Junior High/ Intermediate/ Middle School Teaching (13.1203)	302	153	0	9	73	65	0	4	2
Secondary Education and Teaching (13.1205)	1,592	745	26	85	157	382	22	63	10
Teacher Education, Multiple Levels (13.1206)	1,656	1,108	11	108	190	709	26	40	24

TABLE CONTINUED NEXT PAGE ...

CIP TITLE & CODE	GRAND TOTAL	TOTAL GRADUATES OF COLOR	AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	TWO OR MORE RACES	NON-RESIDENT
Montessori Teacher Education (13.1207)	55	18	0	4	1	7	1	0	5
Kindergarten/Preschool Teaching (13.1209)	469	328	14	14	190	93	0	15	2
Early Childhood Education and Teaching (13.1210)	10,917	7,940	246	769	1,321	4,864	79	330	331
Teacher Education and PD, Other (13.1299)	1,248	590	13	63	177	199	10	65	63

Data from IPEDS, 2019-20 w/College Score Card MSI Designations

### Saturation of MSI EPP candidates, completers and institutions over 50% by State

STATE	OVER 50% CANDIDATES OF COLOR PREPPED BY MSI EPP	OVER 50% GRADUATES OF COLOR PREPPED BY MSI EPP	OVER 50% MSI EPPS
Alaska	Y	Y	Y
California	Y	Y	Y
Guam	Y	Y	Y
Hawaii	Y	Y	Y
Marshall Islands	Y	Y	Y
Micronesia	Y	Y	Y
New Mexico	Y	Y	Y
Puerto Rico	Y	Y	Y
Texas	Y	Y	Y
Virgin Islands	Y	Y	Y
Nevada	Y	Y	
New York	Y	Y	
Florida	Y		

The quality of these programs is just as important as the numbers of candidates that they produce. There is no national source of data on preparation program performance, aside from the limited information available through Title II reporting. Accreditation, in some sense, is a proxy for program quality. One-hundred seventy-three MSI educator preparation providers (72%) offer programs that are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP).

In addition to accreditation, some states have begun to publish report cards and dashboards that contain data about provider quality. A review of teacher preparation provider report cards from Delaware, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Tennessee reveal trends that: (1) the MSI graduate performance was at or below the state averages in PK-12 student learning outcomes; (2) the MSI graduate performance was at or above the state averages in performance evaluations; (3) surveys of recent MSI graduates tend to be positive, with identified areas for improvement; and (4) a significant number of MSI providers had too few graduates over a two-year timespan to report on the quality indicators. These data are not directly comparable across states, as the measures differ. However, these trends do support the assertion that there is room to improve the quality of MSI preparation program performance.



# 72%

**MSI EDUCATOR  
PREPARATION PROVIDERS**

One-hundred seventy-three MSI educator preparation providers (72%) offer programs that are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP).

In sum, MSIs make important contributions to the production of teachers, particularly those who are from diverse racial/ethnic groups. Their success in graduating these candidates in percentages that surpass their enrollment percentages supports the assertion that MSIs may have success strategies that could benefit the field at large. All teacher preparation programs must increase their production of teachers of color if the nation is to address the diversity gap between teachers and students. MSIs are uniquely situated to further the nation's efforts by both increasing their productivity and helping the field learn about the supports needed to successfully graduate increased numbers of teachers of color.

**“ At MSIs, which have historically been rooted in community engagement and empowerment, it is common for students to end up teaching in the neighborhoods in which they grew up or completed their student teaching.”—A Rich Source for Teachers of Color and Learning: Minority Serving Institutions**





# The Qualitative Difference

**Until recently, much of the research literature on MSI educator preparation focused on programs** at HBCUs, perhaps the most well-known MSI group. These articles underscored the commitment of HBCU teacher graduates to work in high-needs schools, to address issues of equity and social justice, and to “give back” to their communities. Primary recommendations focused on increased institutional funding, testing and accreditation support, and student financial aid (Bristol, 2014; Dilworth, 2008; Fenwick, 2016; Irvine, 2009).

A rich comprehensive analysis of the larger impact of MSIs did not appear until 2000, when the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education published *Educating the Emerging Majority: The Role of America’s Minority Serving College and Universities in Confronting America’s Teacher Crisis*. Describing MSIs as “a critical and little understood spoke in the wheel of teacher education programs and schools,” the report highlighted the impact of MSIs in both the number of teachers of color they produced and their innovative approaches to teacher education and recommended that “more research is needed to identify the positive factors that enable some students of color to pursue degrees in education.” It was almost two decades, however, before the next large-scale report on MSI educator preparation programs.

Because MSIs are chronically under-funded and have to do more with less, there are fewer opportunities for faculty to attend national conferences where other educators could greatly benefit from learning about their work. While progress has been slow, in the past five year educational policymakers, researchers, and funders have begun to pay more attention to the unique contributions of MSI EPPs.

In 2016, the Penn Center for Minority Serving Institutions, now the Rutgers Center for Minority Serving Institutions, published *A Rich Source for Teachers of Color and Learning: Minority Serving Institutions*. Based on extensive case studies of four diverse MSIs, the report explored a multitude of ways that MSIs were changing the landscape of teacher education, including integrating critical discussions of diversity and equity through all coursework, maintaining close and reciprocal relations with local school districts and the larger communities in which they are embedded, and aligning current standards to culturally responsive curricula and pedagogy. The authors concluded that: “Just as our goal is to reach all children, the innovative ideas coming out of MSI teacher education programs are relevant for all teachers, not just minority teachers” (Gasman, Samayao and Ginsberg, 2016).



Most recently, Petchauer and Mawhinney (2018) published a collection of current research, *Teacher Education Across Minority Serving Institutions: Program, Policies and Social Justice*, that included chapters on teacher education at all designations of MSIs and addressed issues of bilingual education, preserving tribal culture, co-teaching, testing, and special education, among others. The editors concluded that: “If we want a more racially diverse teaching profession, minority-serving institutions are one of the first places to invest.

**“ We came to understand that MSI teacher education programs do much more than create a more racially diverse teaching profession. They shape teacher education in important ways not always evident at historically and Predominantly White Institutions...Principles of freedom, justice, and service are woven into their teacher education programs...MSIs have done much more than help increase racial diversity in the teachers’ lounge; instead they have pushed and advanced teacher education in ways not always evident in studies of teacher education program design and effectiveness.”—Petchauer and Mawhinney, 2018**

While we are beginning to know more about educator preparation programs at minority serving institutions (MSI EPPs, the unique contributions and cumulative impact of this work remains largely “under the radar” in national conversations and research about quality educator preparation. One reason for this is that MSI faculty are committed first and foremost to serving students, often making it more difficult for them to find time to do research and publish about the impact of their work. Seven themes about the uniqueness and quality of the MSI teacher preparation experience emerge from the literature and the individual statements of participants in these important programs. The following provides a glimpse into the themes through the voices of researchers (in orange) and faculty and candidates (in green).





# Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity

Launched on September 1, 2017, the Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity (BranchED), is the only nonprofit organization in the country that is dedicated to strengthening, growing, and amplifying the impact of educator preparation at the nation's MSIs, with the longer-range goals of both diversifying the teaching profession and intentionally addressing critical issues of educational equity for all students. BranchED is an inclusive organization that seeks to empower and connect MSI providers to improve programming and advance innovation in preparing highly effective educators. BranchED works with MSIs to strengthen the quality of programs by breaking down silos among institutions, forging strategic partnerships, serving as a voice for quality, and fueling the urgency to improve. Arising out of the MSI community and with a singular focus on educator preparation at MSIs, BranchED is the only organization in our nation that is pursuing this strategy to transform the teaching force.

BranchED has already achieved significant traction in a short period of time. BranchED has documented the needs of MSIs preparation program providers. Key engagement and support strategies have been implemented, evaluated, and refined. Since its inception, BranchED engaged some 159 MSI EPPs and over 740 MSI education faculty and leaders. Moving forward, our goal is to engage with 75% of our core community EPPs. Currently, our core community EPPs make up 23% of all educator preparation providers, yet they prepare 43% of the nation's new teachers of color annually. They prepare over 101,000 candidates per year and graduate some 28,530 teachers per year; 15,825 are teachers of color. We believe that these EPPs can do even more. By 2033, our North Star is that engaged EPPs produce 100,000 highly qualified graduates.

In addition to the impact that BranchED will have on institutions, its work promises to influence the broader field of educator preparation as well by mining the expertise of MSI EPP practitioners and identifying and promoting the effective and innovative practices of these unique providers. BranchED will hone the collective voice and amplify best practices in order to educate others on unique MSI approaches to the cultivation of diverse educators.



# CONCLUSION

## An Expansive Vision for the Future of Teacher Preparation and the Role of MSI ED-PREP in Realizing IT

While the essential role of MSI EPPs in preparing a new generation of diverse, culturally proficient, and equity-minded teachers is slowly gaining national attention, BranchED believes that these institutions need more than just “recognition.” It is important that we see these institutions as more than just sites that enroll large numbers of candidates of color. Diversifying the teaching force through increased representation of minority candidates in EPPs is an essential first step, but it doesn’t end there.

MSIs provide spaces where many candidates of color and other underserved groups first experience education in a positive way, where they feel they belong, have agency, are held to high expectations and provided with equally high support. In this way, MSI EPPs nurture candidate dispositions of inclusiveness, empathy, curiosity, and asset-based learning that they bring with them to the PK-12 classroom.

Through our unique and foundational commitment to empowering MSI EPPs, BranchED seeks to transcend the kinds of siloed and sporadic support that has been available in the past. We are in it for the long haul, seeking to catalyze not just individual pockets of program improvement, but also transformational change in the field of educator preparation. By growing BranchED’s network of change agents and disseminating promising practices to the field, we move closer to ensuring that every child in this country will have a diversity of great teachers. As former Secretary of Education John King avows, we can’t let another 50 years go by. Our children can’t wait. The future of our nation is at stake.

# We hope you will join us in this important work!



**Branch Alliance**  
for Educator Diversity

**BRANCH ALLIANCE FOR EDUCATOR DIVERSITY**

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