

# 2025 EdAllies Impact Report

Standing With Students, From Policy to Practice



## Our Mission

EdAllies partners with schools, families, and communities to ensure that every young Minnesotan has access to a rigorous and engaging education. We advance policies that put underserved students first, remove barriers facing successful schools and programs, and foster an inclusive conversation about what's possible for students.

## Our Vision

We envision a Minnesota where every student succeeds in a rigorous and engaging education.

## Our Core Values

EQUITY • INVENTIVENESS • HUMILITY • HONESTY • COURAGE



To view all multimedia included in this report, please scan the QR code or visit [edalliesmn.org/2025-annual-report](https://edalliesmn.org/2025-annual-report)



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## A Note from Our Chair



In 2025, our state experienced profound tragedies. The assassination of Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband Mark, alongside attacks on Senator John Hoffman and his wife Yvette, served as a devastating reminder of the personal risks carried by those who shape policy and serve the people of our state. Then, as students returned to school last fall, a shooting at Annunciation Catholic School shook our entire community and brought every other conversation to a halt. In an instant, one question consumed everything: are our children safe?

We used our platform to call for an all-hands-on-deck to enact a both/and, not either/or, approach to prioritizing the lives and safety of our children, and carried that call into the 2026 session. Through these tragedies, EdAllies worked with clarity toward our goals: every student is prepared to meet their full potential and schools are safe and welcoming places for all students. Our key strategies to meet these goals required us to work more in community, advocate fiercely for the well-being of our kids at the Capitol, and share our learning and collaborate with the public.

In 2025, we made meaningful investments in our organization, welcoming Devyn White as Advocacy

Programming Manager to grow community-based programs that amplify student engagement statewide. We also expanded our board with passionate experts from the private, nonprofit, and policy sectors to help lead the organization forward and hold us accountable to meeting student needs.

The impact of our work was recognized this year when EdAllies received the Damus Award from the University of St. Thomas for our systemic efforts to address racial inequities in education. The award is given through a rigorous, student-led process, and we are deeply proud to have earned it.

Despite urgent needs that we had to address, our consistent drive for kids made 2025 one of our most well-rounded years: new publications, growth in programming, building timely coalitions, and meaningful progress on key policy priorities—which we outline in the following pages. The tragedies in our state and the seismic shifts at the federal level have only made clearer what we have always believed: EdAllies' student-centered mission is needed now more than ever.

**Anne Mahle**  
2025 EdAllies Board Chair



## Community Allies: Developing Community Advocacy Capacity

Too often, education policy moves through the halls of the Capitol without meaningful input from the students and families most impacted by key decisions. Through our Community Allies program, we help students and families harness the power of their voice and get involved in the policy process. In 2025, we expanded our impact by welcoming Devyn White as our first Advocacy Programming Manager, to reach more students through our education policy-specific advocacy training. We worked with students at Exploration High School, Marcy Arts Magnet School, Nellie Stone Johnson School, Saint Paul Academy, and beyond to enhance skills centered on exploring identity, mapping community, unlocking impactful storytelling, building systems awareness, and activating advocacy tools. 🏠

### SPOTLIGHT

#### Amplifying Voices at Exploration High School

EdAllies' partnership to teach a regular elective course at Exploration High School in Minneapolis entered its second year this fall. Students learned to harness their voice and fight for education justice through learning, reflecting, researching, planning, and action.

Students explored personal perspectives and the policy process, connecting specific issues to research and advocacy strategy. They chose topics that affected them—including student safety and mental health—and built skills to advance their advocacy and drive change, culminating in a day at the Capitol during the 2026 legislative session.

Students participate in an EdAllies' Community Allies activity



## Storytelling For Change: EdVoices Cohort Launches

Through EdVoices, we give community members a platform to tell their education stories in their own words, bringing authentic voices to decisionmakers and driving honest conversations about key issues facing Minnesota students. In 2025, we layered a cohort training model onto the program, helping students and families sharpen their storytelling skills and build confidence in their role as influencers. This program brought together ten students, parents, and educators.

Cohort members learned best practices in action-oriented storytelling, built personal goals and narratives, and reflected together—building community, creative momentum, and storytelling depth. Attendees learned about key education issues at the Minnesota Capitol, how to research and craft a persuasive position, and how different communication mediums can reach different audiences to make change for students.

In the end, participants delivered a final product—blogs, podcasts, and even a poem—on topics including student mental health, native language supports, school transportation, special education support, and more! 🏡



**2025 EdVoices cohort members learn to turn their stories and passions into meaningful change**

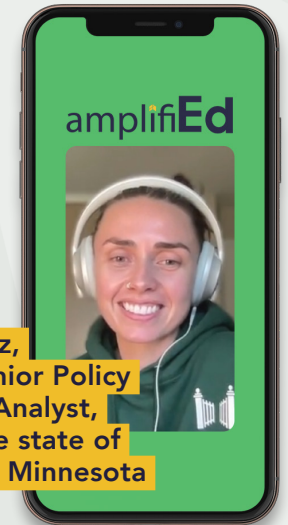


## Turning Up the Volume on Education Equity: The *amplifiED* Podcast

Entering its third year, the *amplifiED* podcast continued to dig into the nuances, details, and lesser-known aspects of education equity through discussions that poke and prod at policymaking, systems, and much more. Over the course of the year, we covered:

- The impact of federal policy change on Minnesota schools with Spencer Sherman from Education First and Dan Gordon from EducationCounsel.
- The future of early learning in Minnesota with Ericca Maas from Think Small.
- The realities of seclusion and its negative impact on students with Jessica Webster from Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid.
- What sets “trajectory-changing” schools apart with Meghna Sohoni and Michael Franco of TNTF
- Civic engagement and youth voice with Libby Stegger at Civic Bridgers
- And more!

Totaling 35 episodes and over 2,000 listeners the podcast continues to be a strong channel for EdAllies to talk through complex education issues and explore key research and best practices that can positively impact education policy in our state. 🏡



**Madie Spartz, EdAllies' Senior Policy & Research Analyst, discusses the state of education in Minnesota**

**amplifiED welcomed Dan Gordon from EducationCounsel to talk about education updates at the federal level**



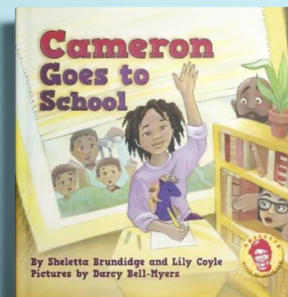
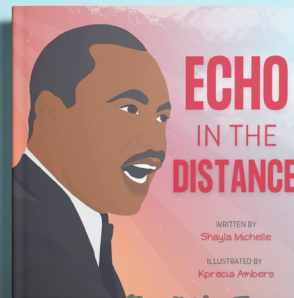
**Listen and subscribe to amplifiED**

## A Chapter of Growth for "For the Love of Reading" Book Club

Our "For the Love of Reading: A Book Club for Kids" celebrated its 1-year anniversary in 2025 with strong attendance growth and expanded locations. This free book club lays the groundwork for kids to become changemakers by connecting them with authors and books that promote a positive self-identity. Authors such as Shayla Reeves, Sheletta Brundidge, Triasia Yun-Robinson, and Mercedes Yarborough read books that addressed the impact of civil rights leaders, the experiences of students diagnosed with autism in school, and more! 🏡



Authors Sheletta Brundidge and Mercedes Yarborough were featured Book Club authors in 2025



## Data-Driven Advocacy: Supporting Good Policy with High-Quality Research

EdAllies produces timely, digestible research and resources that empower partners and community members with the information they need to advocate for change. In addition to our monthly Research Rundown, we also released two original reports on critical issues facing Minnesota students: *The State of Education in Minnesota: A Policy Roadmap for Student Success* and *Indigenous Voices ElevatED*.

**State of Education in Minnesota: A Policy Roadmap:** This marquee report took a big-picture look at how Minnesota students are doing and what we must do to build a long-term statewide framework for student success. The report provided a comprehensive examination of the latest education data, highlighting where the system is falling short and what bold actions are needed to ensure every student can thrive. We released the report at a July event featuring a panel of local and national leaders reflecting on the state of our schools and how we come together to drive change.

**Indigenous Voices ElevatED:** How are Indigenous students faring in Minnesota and how can we build an education system that truly meets their needs? We partnered with Jill Greendeer PhD, MA, MS to explore these questions through data and lived experience, culminating in the release of *Indigenous Voices ElevatED: The State of Indigenous Education in Minnesota—A Call for Representation, Narrative Change, & Justice* at the Minnesota Indian Education Association's annual conference. The report explores Native student academic progress, graduation, attendance rates, and mental health. Dr. Greendeer provides a framework for understanding the most significant barriers and areas for action to elevate Indigenous voices and improve inclusion, representation, and visibility in Minnesota K-12 education. 🏡



➔ Read the **State of Education in Minnesota** report



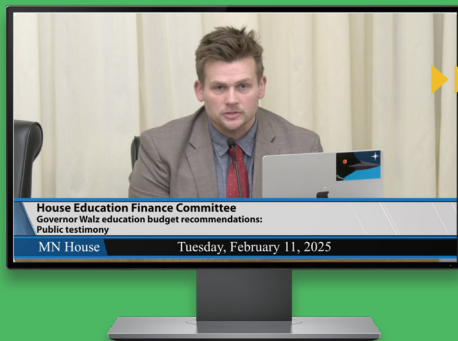
➔ Read the **Indigenous Voices ElevatED** report



## Pushing to Fund and Support Better Reading Outcomes

It's been two years since the passage of the Read Act—Minnesota's landmark literacy law—and EdAllies worked hard behind the scenes with a dedicated coalition to ensure effective implementation and ongoing policy refinement. For example, educators and districts now have clearer guidance on literacy training requirements for licensure and re-licensure, along with an expanded pool of approved providers able to deliver that professional development, and local literacy plans will be more detailed and transparent.

We also led the charge to push for long-needed changes to the Literacy Incentive Aid formula. Our analysis helped shed light on the inequities baked into the current funding formula, and our advocacy built growing consensus around a more equitable alternative, setting the table for future policy change. 🏠



"We have one ongoing funding stream dedicated to the implementation of the READ Act: Literacy Incentive Aid....If you look at the distribution, the formula rewards big districts and penalizes small districts. It give schools less money to provide literacy supports for struggling readers because they have so many struggling readers."

—Matt Shaver, Senior Policy Director, EdAllies



**Watch the House Finance Committee recording**

### SPOTLIGHT

#### Viewing Literacy Best Practices in Action

Pushing strong literacy legislation is key to transforming our state's literacy proficiency, but implementing these best practices is equally important. Throughout the year, EdAllies coordinated visits with education experts, policymakers, and community members with two schools in the Twin Cities—Monroe Elementary and Wildwood Elementary—to see high-performing literacy instruction in action.



## Building Safe & Welcoming Schools

Over the past two years, significant state legislation has been passed to make school climates more supportive than punitive, providing students with long-term tools rather than ineffective short-term interventions. In 2023, we successfully advocated to put guardrails on the use of suspensions and ban seclusions for students in grades K-3. In 2025, legislators heard proposals to roll back the limits on K-3 dismissals and made a focused effort to repeal the K-3 seclusion ban. Strong community advocacy, in the form of a Capitol press conference, legislator outreach, testimony, and media stories kept the proposals from advancing. However, legislators agreed to create a Seclusion Working Group in the interim, which we worked to monitor and educate the public about. 🏠

Community members hold a press conference at the Minnesota Capitol to stand against a repeal of the K-3 seclusion ban



### SPOTLIGHT

#### EdAllies responds to the Annunciation School tragedy

Just as students were heading back to school in the fall of 2025, a gunman opened fire on the Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis, killing Fletcher Merkel and Harper Moyski and wounding thirty others. The shooting shattered our communities and brought up calls for a special session addressing gun violence in schools. EdAllies called on lawmakers to come together for common-sense gun violence prevention and serious mental-health supports. A promised special session never materialized, and we began planning for a 2026 project to co-create a report on student safety with a cohort of high school students.



Read Josh Crosson's statement on the Annunciation Catholic School shooting



## Making School Funding More Equitable

Minnesota's system for directing funding based on need to students in poverty is outdated and increasingly inaccurate—relying on a combination of cumbersome annual school meal forms and federal program eligibility that is quickly eroding under new federal policy. Addressing this issue was a key priority for EdAllies during the 2025 legislative session.

While we saw a step back in guardrails around how much revenue must stay at the site where it is generated, we saw a step forward in the creation of a Compensatory Revenue Task Force, charged with reviewing the formula—including its purpose, funding levels, distribution method, allowable uses, and how outcomes are measured. EdAllies was appointed to the task force and will partner with legislators, school leaders, and education experts to develop recommendations for reform, with a report expected in 2026. 🏡



**EdAllies was appointed to the newly-created Compensatory Revenue Task Force in 2025**



**Visit the MDE's Compensatory Revenue Task Force page**



## Getting All Students Ready for College & Career

Every student in Minnesota deserves to graduate from our K–12 system equipped with the skills and preparation needed to succeed in college and pursue a fulfilling career. Yet that promise remains out of reach for too many young people, especially students from historically underserved communities.

Research consistently shows that automatically enrolling students in rigorous coursework helps close gaps in access to AP, honors, and concurrent enrollment by removing subjective barriers around who is encouraged—or allowed—to participate. Expanding access to advanced coursework has long been a priority for EdAllies, and this session our focused advocacy led to a meaningful step forward: districts that adopt automatic enrollment policies are now eligible for the state AP & IB STEM Grant. With this new incentive, districts are beginning to pilot the model, laying the groundwork for statewide adoption.

We also pushed for statewide adoption of Direct Admissions, a program that proactively notifies eligible high school seniors of the colleges they've been admitted to and invites them to apply at no cost. We made progress by expanding awareness of its effectiveness, building widespread bipartisan support to build on in the coming years. 🏡

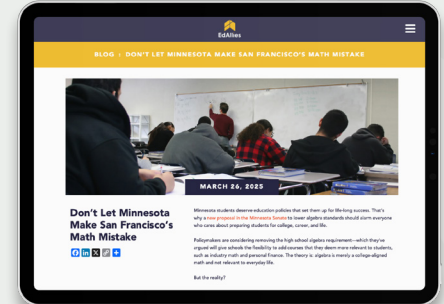


“Eliminating high school algebra standards sends the opposite message: that we expect less from our students. It assumes that Minnesota students—especially those from historically underserved communities—can’t handle rigor. That’s not fairness or “local control.” That’s condescension and an abdication of our duty to prepare every student for any post-secondary path they choose.”

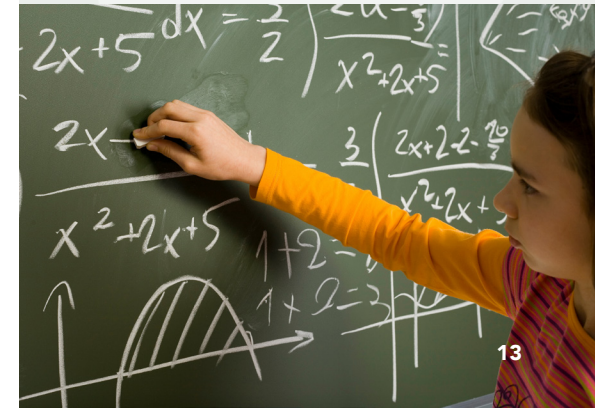
—Josh Crosson, Executive Director, EdAllies

### SPOTLIGHT

## Defending High Math Standards



The Minnesota Senate considered a proposal that would have repealed the state Algebra II requirement. Because most colleges require Algebra II for admission, removing it from graduation requirements would have weakened college readiness for many Minnesota students. EdAllies spoke out with our concerns and raised the alarm bell with partners. Our community advocacy raised questions that resonated with lawmakers, who removed the provision before final passage and set the stage for a more holistic conversation about math policy in Minnesota.



## Pushing Forward in an Era of Federal Policy Change

In 2025, massive shifts in federal education policy and social service funding directly affected state policy, causing confusion for schools, students, and the broader community.

Our team jumped into action on three fronts: analyzing the local impact of federal policy change, advocating for state responses that preserve critical programs and funding streams—coming together in coalition with partners to ensure a coordinated response—and educating leaders across the education ecosystem to help make sense of rapid change. We worked with federal education experts to break down new developments in-person through our State of Education event, on our podcast—featuring Dan Gordon of EducationCounsel and Spencer Sherman of Education First—through our blog, and by adding a new section to our email newsletter, EdLines, that highlights notable developments month-by-month. We’ve worked hard to cut through the noise and ensure the public has a solid analysis of changes that will have a direct impact on their lives. 🏡

### SPOTLIGHT

#### The Push Forward Coalition

Because civil rights and race equity in education face unprecedented threats from the federal government, EdAllies helped co-found the Push Forward Coalition, bringing together nearly 30 education and youth-serving nonprofits to defend principles of equity and proactively advance student-centered education policymaking. From codifying the right to an education for immigrant students, to holding students harmless amidst dramatic funding shifts, the coalition is working toward shared goals and creating space for information and resource sharing.



EdAllies hosts a State of Education event to discuss how federal and state policies impact Minnesota students



## Opening Pathways to the Classroom

Minnesota has seen a nearly doubling of teachers of color in recent years, but we still lag far behind other states in our teaching force reflecting the diversity of our student body.

Minnesota teachers from all backgrounds deserve clear, accessible pathways into the profession, from a flexible tiered licensure system to robust supports along the way. In 2024, EdAllies leveraged our Community Action Team report—co-created with aspiring teachers of color—to successfully advocate for an expansion of paid student teaching. In the 2024–2025 school year, we saw the impact of this work, with stipends going to 773 candidates—up from 119 in the initial pilot. In 2025, we kept a drumbeat going to call for further investment.

During the 2025 legislative session, prospective and current teachers also gave impactful testimony in the Senate on the need for improved pathways into the profession and on how licensure requirements affect teacher supply and recruitment. While proactive efforts to reinstate the Tier 2 experience pathway ultimately failed, EdAllies joined with partners to protect current pathways. 🏠



## Foundations & Corporations

3M  
 Archie D & Bertha H Walker Foundation  
 Ciresi Walburn Foundation  
 Damus Award – University of St. Thomas  
 ECMC Foundation  
 Emma B. Howe Memorial Foundation of the Minneapolis Foundation  
 Frey Foundation  
 General Mills  
 GHR Foundation  
 Great MN Schools  
 Greater Twin Cities United Way  
 Harvard Club of Minnesota Foundation  
 Hubbard Broadcasting Foundation  
 Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation  
 Joyce Foundation  
 Joyful Noise Charitable Foundation  
 McKnight Foundation  
 Mortenson Family Foundation  
 Sauer Family Foundation  
 The Graves Foundation  
 The Lillian Wright & C. Emil Berglund Foundation

## Families and Individuals

### \$10,000+

Daniels Family Fund  
 Douglass  
 Brandenburg Family Foundation  
 JAB Foundation  
 Piper Family Fund II  
 Smikis Foundation  
 The Julie and Doug Baker Jr. Foundation

### \$5,000–\$9,999

Brown Family Foundation  
 Anne Mahle & David McCarthy  
 Remele Family Fund of The Minneapolis Foundation  
 RWC Foundation  
 Soran Foundation  
 Tankenoff Families Foundation

### \$1,000–\$4,999

Albright Foundation  
 Arend Family Impact Fund  
 John Bellaimey and Lynnell Mickelsen Fund  
 Ian Black  
 Paul Gunderson  
 Dave & Barb Henderson  
 Jenifer Loon  
 Bayla McDougal  
 Daniel Sellers  
 Karen & Richard Sellers  
 Ben & Mary Whitney

### \$500–\$999

Zachary Abrams  
 Alan Alvarez  
 Virginia Davis  
 Karn Engelsgjerd  
 Finch Farm Fund  
 Ann Johnson  
 Gabriel Sandholm  
 Meghna Sohoni  
 Oron Stenesh

### Up to \$500

Ricky Austin  
 Fatimah Burnam-Watkins  
 Evan Cauble-Johnson  
 Cheryl Coombs  
 Joshua Crosson  
 Laura Delventhal  
 Patricia Haasch  
 Matthew Hager

Troy Haugen  
 Daniel Hodges  
 Anil Hurkadli  
 Mona Hurkadli  
 Krista Kaput  
 Katherine Mahle  
 Sue Mahle  
 Lauren Clyne Medley  
 Andrew Minck  
 Carolyn Reed  
 Josh Reimnitz  
 Andrea Roethke  
 Meredith Samuelson  
 Katy Schultz  
 Jill Stever-Zeitlin  
 Marcia Swinney-Shay  
 Patricia Tollefson  
 Natalie Trevino

### What Partners Are Saying About EdAllies

▶▶▶ “EdAllies has continued to be a resource that helps break down barriers for those who are not as political savvy nor understand how to make their own individual impact.”

—Response from Annual Partner Survey

▶▶▶ “EdAllies is a reliable partner. I need their partnership to help navigate and understand the complexities of education.”

—Response from Annual Partner Survey



## Staff

**JOSH CROSSON**  
Executive Director

**ANDREA ROETHKE**  
Managing Director of Strategy & Operations

**MATTHEW HAGER**  
Director of Communications & Advancement

**MEREDITH SAMUELSON**  
Operations Manager

**MATT SHAVER**  
Senior Policy Director

**MADIE SPARTZ**  
Senior Policy & Research Analyst

**MARGARET SULLIVAN**  
Programs & Outreach Manager

**NATALIE TREVINO**  
Development Operations & Stewardship Manager

**DEVYN WHITE**  
Advocacy Programming Manager

**JOEY GEBIN**  
Capitol Pathways Intern

## Board

**ANNE MAHLE**  
Chair  
Teach For America

**JANE MCDONALD BLACK**  
Treasurer  
JAB Foundation

**JAVARIS BRADFORD**  
Great MN Schools

**GINYA DAVIS**  
Governance Chair  
Minnesota Department of Education

**DIARRA BROOKS**  
Community Impact Chair  
GreenLight Fund Twin Cities

**JOSHUA FUCHS**  
Red Wing High School

**ANIL B. HURKADLI**  
Wet Cement Education Strategies

**JENIFER LOON**  
People Reaching Out to People (PROP)

**ISABELLANICOLE NDIDIAMAKA EFETOBORE OJOTANE**  
University of St. Thomas

**RICA SILVEY**  
WeWork

**GABRIEL SIMS**  
Medtronic

**MEGHNA SOHONI**  
TNTP

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,144,277</b>
<b>Current assets</b>	<b>\$3,142,458</b>
Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,270,917
Pledges receivable	\$546,081
Prepaid expenses	\$28,573
Right-of-use asset (Lease)	\$296,887
<b>Property and equipment, net</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$3,144,277</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>\$309,513</b>
Accounts payable & accrued payroll	\$4,754
Fiscal sponsees	\$646
Deferred lease liability	\$304,113
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>\$2,834,764</b>
Without donor restrictions	\$1,424,346
With donor restrictions	\$1,164,845
Board designated for operating reserve	\$245,573

## ORGANIZATIONAL EXPENSES

<b>SALARIES AND BENEFITS</b>	<b>\$1,028,242</b>
Salaries	\$811,561
Employee benefits	\$147,495
Payroll taxes	\$69,186
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$287,989</b>
Fees for services	\$59,853
Office expenses	\$43,509
Information technology	\$26,679
Advocacy and promotion	\$18,958
Occupancy	\$66,242
Travel	\$21,354
Conferences and meetings	\$10,135
Insurance	\$3,742
Other	\$4,165
Depreciation	\$33,352



## FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	Program	<b>73%</b>
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	Administration	<b>14%</b>
<span style="color: green;">■</span>	Fundraising	<b>13%</b>

## STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

### SUPPORT AND REVENUE \$1,979,552

Contributions	\$1,909,778
Program revenue	\$1,140
Investment income	\$67,871
Other	\$763

### EXPENSES \$1,316,231

#### Program \$964,350

#### Supporting services \$351,881

Administration	\$185,349
Fundraising	\$166,532

### NET ASSETS

Change in net assets	\$663,321
Beginning of year	\$2,171,443
End of year	\$2,834,764



To learn more, get involved, or make a contribution  
to support our work, please visit [edalliesmn.org](https://edalliesmn.org)