



# **MOVING BEYOND THE PILOT:**

## **Sustaining the Success of the Transforming Lead Teacher Preparation Programs Through Multi-Partner Innovation Grant**

**SEPTEMBER 2024**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ***Grantees***

**Grantees included the following institutions of higher education (IHEs) as principal investigators (PIs), along with several state and local partners:**

California State University, Sacramento, Dr. Pia Wong;  
College of Menominee Nation, Dr. Kelli Chellburg;  
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University of Nebraska, Dr. Julia Torquati and Lisa Knoche

## ***About School Readiness***

The Beyond the Pilot report was prepared by School Readiness Consulting (SRC). As a consulting firm focused exclusively on children from birth through third grade, SRC partners to develop and implement strategies that improve outcomes for children in school and life. SRC believes that improving early childhood and affirming the right for all children to thrive represents the greatest opportunity to create a just society.

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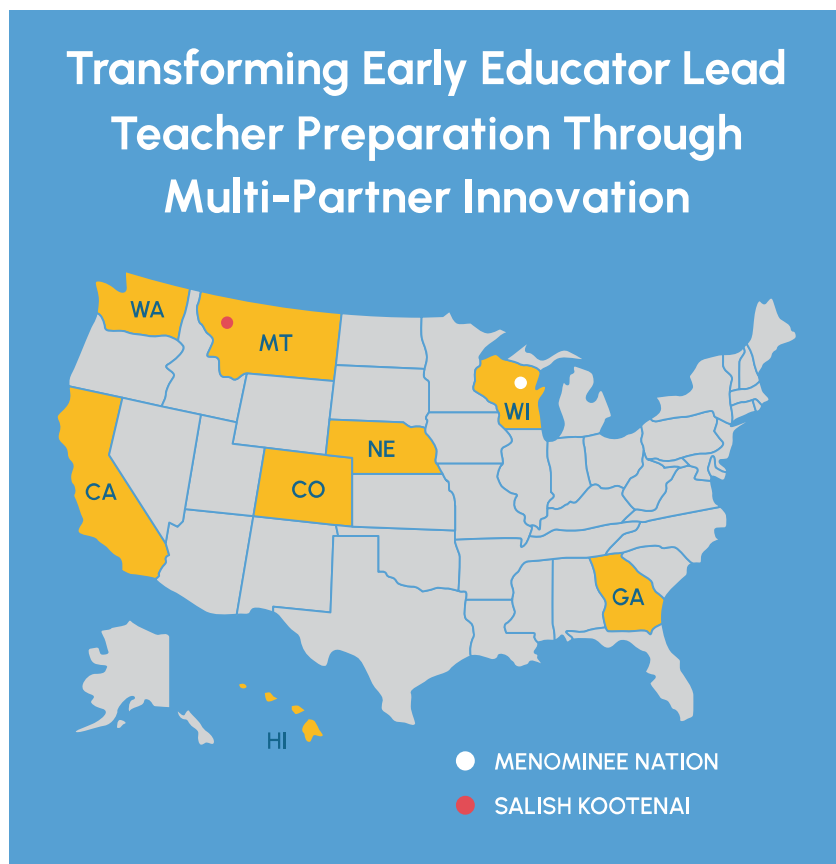
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In 2021, the Early Educator Investment Collaborative (The Collaborative) awarded eight partnership teams the Transforming Early Educator Lead Teacher Preparation Programs Through Multi-Partner Innovation grants. Grantees led innovation pilots focused on partnerships and activities that enable recipients to overcome systemic barriers in creating and strengthening opportunities for students in their early care and education (ECE) educator preparation programs. The Collaborative subsequently partnered with School Readiness Consulting (SRC) to lead a learning and technical support community for grantees. The grantees have achieved significant milestones in their innovation pilots during the three years since this opportunity began. Now, The Collaborative, SRC, and the grantee partners reflect on the lessons learned and their implications for the broader field.



With growing national concern regarding the shortage of high-quality early educators, it is crucial to recognize the role of teacher preparation programs. Early childhood education preparation programs not only address the immediate needs of the ECE field but also have the ability to lay the foundation for a more inclusive and diverse ECE workforce. By examining the key accomplishments, innovations, and lessons learned in the pilot innovations, we can elevate strategies that remove barriers to degree completion, enhance the preparation and support of our future educators, and ultimately ensure a well-equipped workforce ready to implement high-quality and culturally sustaining experiences across the country.

**Teacher preparation programs are part of the solution to the shortage of high-quality early educators.** The nation’s teacher shortage is real and growing. The early childhood field faces big challenges in changing the factors that impact the ability to attract and retain excellent teachers, such as low wages, limited ongoing professional development opportunities, and inadequate resources in classroom settings.<sup>1</sup> Although it will take a collective effort to solve these complex issues, institutions of higher education (IHEs) are at the nexus of educational advancement, preparing future teachers to provide high-quality, culturally relevant instruction. Grantees and their partners have developed and refined strategies tailored to the diverse cultural populations of their students. IHEs are uniquely positioned to strategically advance a future teacher workforce that represents the diversity of classrooms across the country. By prioritizing culturally responsive and sustaining education in teacher preparation programs, IHEs can ensure that future teachers are supported and equipped to meet the needs of the students, families, and communities they serve.<sup>2</sup>

1. Alban, C., Belyakov, C., Decker, C., Lawrence, N., & Snyder-Fickler, E. (2024). *The Seeds of Success: Investing in Early Childhood Workforce* [Research brief]. Duke Sanford Center for Child & Family Policy. <https://childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/01/Seeds-of-Success-Research-Brief.pdf>

2. D’Andrea Martínez, P. (n.d.). *Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education*. NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/ejroc/culturally-responsive-sustaining-education>