

PATHS FORWARD ON EDUCATION AND ECONOMICS

SEE US. UNDERSTAND US. ACT WITH US.



COALITION OF
ASIAN AMERICAN LEADERS





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A thriving democracy embraces diversity and strives to achieve equity for its entire people. These are shared values widely held by many with good intentions.

Today, the Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL) supports achieving racial equity that moves beyond good intentions. This means leaders can no longer accept generalizations about Asian Americans, or any populations of color, that have only created invisibility and division, but has not created better solutions. For Asian Americans, two enduring stereotypes – being perceived as perpetual foreigners, and seen as the model minorities – have pigeonholed the community, leading to misunderstanding, lack of investments, and exclusion.

As a coalition of leaders, we believe we cannot achieve racial equity until we dive deeper, understand nuances in data and stories, and create more meaningful and relevant solutions in programs and policies.

CAAL engaged over 350 Asian American leaders from across ethnicities, sectors, and age groups to inform our strategic direction. Two work groups dove into the quantitative data and guided key informant interviews to help us understand the nuances within Minnesota's Asian American population. The community's voices and collective leadership now set the paths forward on education and economic issues.

We are mindful that several larger state trends make our work even more urgent:

- The Asian, Latin@, and Black Minnesotan populations tripled in number from 1990 to 2013; youth of color now represent the greatest growth in the workforce population. In addition to those born here, we will need more newcomers (from other states or countries) to make Minnesota home if we are to keep up with labor force needs in the next several decades.
- Minnesota Compass data shows that Minnesota consistently ranks at the top on well-being indicators in the country when compared to its counterparts, but have some of the largest and most persistent disparities between Whites and all populations of color. For Asian Minnesotans, the Twin Cities ranks 20 out of 25 of its counterparts in the largest US metro areas.
- Minnesota is aging. Our State Demographic Center indicates that by 2035, older adults (65+) will eclipse the child (0-17) population for the first time in our state's history. As one of the state's youngest populations, Asian Americans' ability to fully achieve will matter greatly.

Our paths forward put those who are most impacted front and center, ensuring Asian Minnesotans are seen and heard, so that there can be concerted systemic investments in short and long-term solutions created by the community and for the community.

Achieving prosperity for all Minnesotans means making all communities seen and understood. Leaders cannot afford to perpetuate a race to the bottom for people of color if our ultimate goal is racial equity. CAAL exists to harness the collective leadership that is demanded of all of us if we are to realize this shared goal, and we invite your partnership.

Bo Thao-Urabe

Director, Coalition of Asian American Leaders

SEE US

ASIAN MINNESOTANS ARE DIVERSE, GROWING, AND UNITED

“We’re all each other’s allies. We all have uniqueness and talents that we combine together to create something useful and helpful for our community.”

–1.5 generation Lao American

“Within the unity, there are nuances. We have power as a group. We gotta work together. We have to see each other as part of a community. Learning from each other and advocating for ourselves.”

–1st generation Chinese American

“Instead of being comparative or talking about deficits or being disparaging toward other communities, how can we learn from other communities? It’s all about relationship building, standing in solidarity, being side by side.”

–1st generation Korean American

“I feel I’m dying to have more conversations with other Asian leaders and bring the communities together. Relationship building among communities of color is significant.”

–1st generation Indian American

“It’s really necessary to create this cross-ethnic coalition to build power... we are becoming the majority... we can really begin to demand change and we can only do that if we are in an organized community.”

–2nd generation multiracial Asian American

We are: **256,000** and growing

Since 2000, the Asian American community has been one of the fastest-growing communities of color in the U.S. (63% growth) and in Minnesota (76% growth)

More than half of Minnesota’s Asian population is Southeast Asian, compared with approximately one third nationally

Young

Median age

Asian MN	29 years
All MN	38 years
All U.S. Asian	34 years



NEARLY 50%

Half of all Asian Minnesotan K-12 students are elementary-aged (K-5)

More than 1 in 5 (21%) of Asian MN children are living below the poverty level



Income

Per capita personal income for Asian Minnesotans (\$38,000) is higher than that for all Minnesotans (\$33,000); however, income for South-east Asian Minnesotans (\$22,000) is dramatically lower.

more than 40 cultural communities



10 largest groups:



Household size

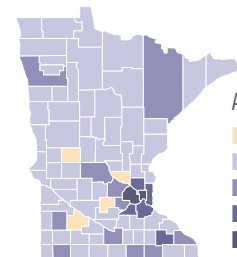
Asian MN households



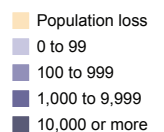
All MN households



Population change (2010-2014)



Asian Minnesotans



DATA SOURCES

256,000 and growing – 2014 American Community Survey and 2000 U.S. Decennial Census

Median age – 2014 American Community Survey

Elementary age – Minnesota Department of Education, 2015

Child poverty – 2010-2014 American Community Survey

Map – MN Compass, 2014

“more than half of MN’s Asian population...” – 2014 American Community Survey

Household size – 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Income – 2008-2012 Integrated Public Use Microdata Series from the U.S. Census Bureau

UNDERSTAND US

EDUCATION

“I think most of the time, our Karen students... they're being pushed out of the system... they are graduating [high school], but graduating without having much ability to move on to community college or a four-year college.”

–1st generation Karen American

Navigating the system

“Sometimes it's even hard for me to navigate the system, even if I'm an educator. If I'm facing these roadblocks, I can only imagine what roadblocks parents can go through.”

–1.5 generation Hmong American

“Asian kids are very invisible. Many of them are hungry [for] role models... Asian students are not included in so much of the curriculum.”

–1st generation Chinese American

Invisible in core curriculum

“A lot of the things I learned was in my own personal study because it is an interest of mine... to know where you're going you have to know where you came from. To me that wasn't necessarily available.”

–2nd generation multiracial Asian American

“People do not tend to see their home language as an asset... this is an injustice. There's a disconnect there... that's an asset!”

–1st generation Chinese American

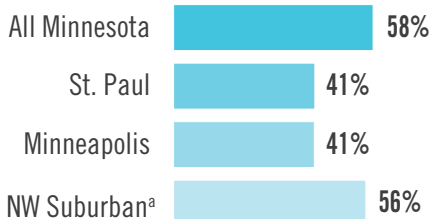
Language as an asset

“I was not really encouraged to honor my language. That encouragement was coming from my family members, but it wasn't coming from my schools... I believe that our young people need to see themselves in their education.”

–2nd generation Vietnamese American

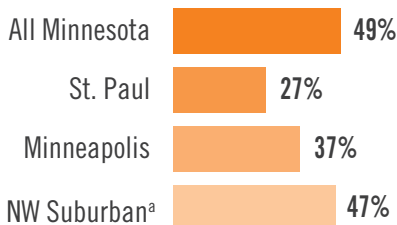
3rd grade reading*

All Students



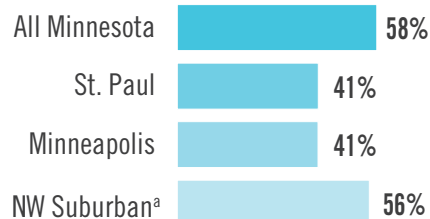
St. Paul ELL 24%

Asian Students



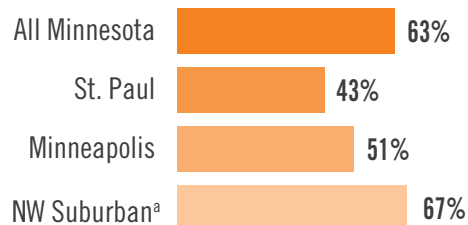
8th grade math*

All Students



St. Paul ELL 25%

Asian Students



Importance of educator diversity

“The African American teacher really made me think... if she can be a teacher, maybe I can too. She was the first black teacher I saw... she was my role model in accomplishing my education goals and career goal of becoming an educator and that there was [a] variety of jobs people can do and that I could. I don't think I would do as well as I did if I did not see her.”

–1.5 generation Hmong American



ONLY 2.5% of K-12 teachers in Minnesota are Asian American

1 for every 70 Asian teacher Asian students

ZERO Asian Americans in CABINET LEVEL positions in SPPS LEADERSHIP

1 for every 11 White teacher White students

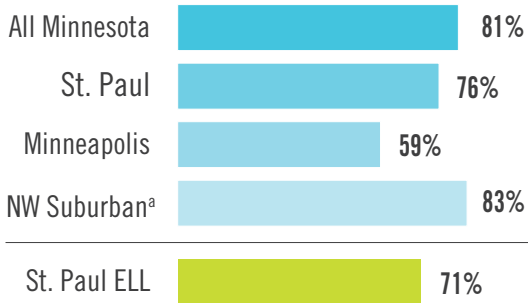
“At the end of the day, it helps kids almost more than anything to have somebody in front of the classroom that looks like them or understands their experiences... it's not getting special attention. It's giving recognition to the unique circumstances and cultures and responsibilities... it encourages the kid to perform better, study harder.”

–2nd generation multiracial Asian American



On-time high school graduation rate*

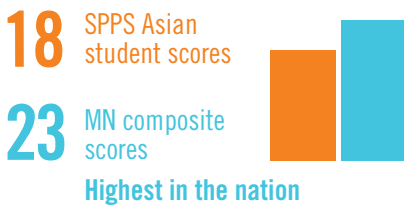
All Students



Asian Students



College readiness: Average ACT scores



“My worst memory is the feeling of how I couldn't articulate discrimination. I couldn't describe it. I knew sometimes things were not fair, but I didn't know why. I didn't know the context of marginalization. I felt I did the same as other students in high school, but got treated differently.” –1.5 generation Hmong American

Student engagement and social isolation

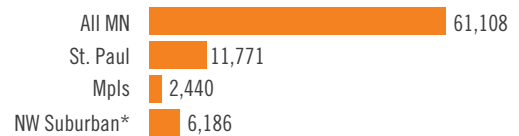
“I feel they don't pay attention as much because [my son] is Asian. I can feel it. I can feel they don't pay attention [to] them as much as the other white kids... the tone of the teacher is different. The way they talk to my kids and other kids is different. Do not say that there is no discrimination. I try to raise my son not to bully... and when somebody [bullies] my son, I don't know how to react... when that happened, he was scared to tell the teachers and the teachers did not see that.” –1st generation Khmer American



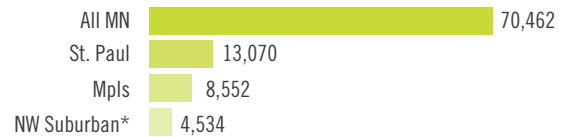
Publicly available Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) student and assessment data are not disaggregated beyond the label "Asian"—education data for specific Asian American communities are not collected.

Enrolled K-12 students in MN

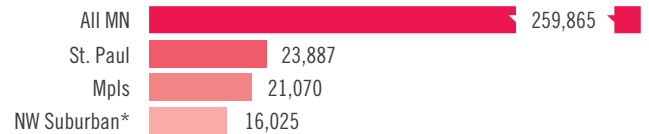
Asian students enrolled



LEP (ELL) identified^b



Free/reduced lunch^b



“The school district needs to ensure that ELL parents understand their rights... if I speak another language other than English, then automatically my children are coded as ELL. To get them out of that track is challenging. Even if... we refuse these services, the education system keeps testing them in ELL and it's a waste of time.” –1.5 generation Hmong American

Race-based ELL placement in Saint Paul Public Schools

“I don't think a child should be placed in ESL just because of their name or the way a child looks.” –1.5 generation Lao American

DATA SOURCES

HS Grad, 3R, 8M - Minnesota Department of Education, 2014

ACT – Saint Paul Public Schools, 2015, MN 2015 Office of Higher Ed

Teacher diversity - MDE Teacher Supply and Demand Report, 2015

K-12 enrollment data – Minnesota Department of Education, 2015

^a NW suburban districts include Anoka-Hennepin Public Schools and Osseo Public Schools

^b These figures represent all students

* Quantitative data were collected over the course of 2014 and 2015 with Wilder Research through an iterative process involving data reviewed by work groups. The indicators that appear here are a subset of the data gathered, and selected by these work groups.

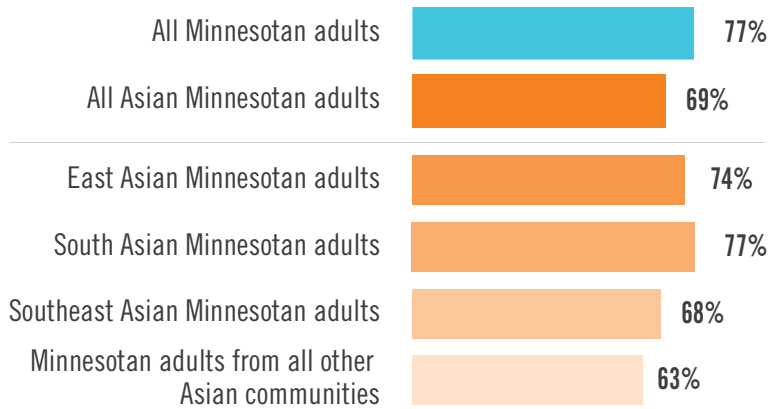
Baseline key informant interviews were conducted in Fall 2015 with community members by the Coalition of Asian American Leaders and Wilder Research. This qualitative data uplifts nuance, depth, and context for our benchmark indicators.

UNDERSTAND US

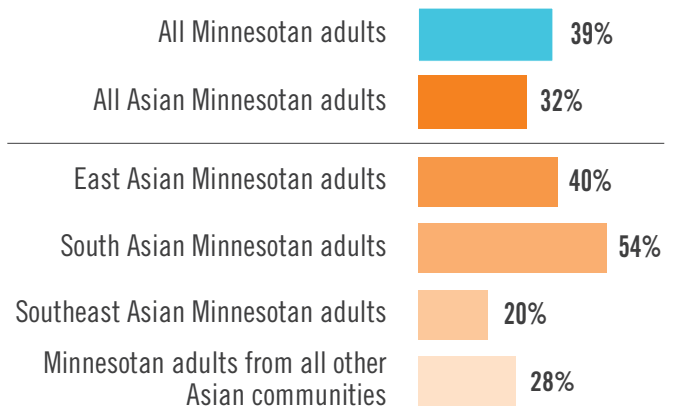
ECONOMICS



Employment*



Living wage*



Asian American businesses in MN



15,553



of Employees

27,255

Average annual sales



4,163,621



Annual taxes paid

614 million

In Minnesota, the hourly wage required to workers to meet basic needs ranges from \$10.65/hour for a single adult to \$35.70/hour for a single adult with three children.

“ People buy our [food], it’s delicious, and it’s also very cheap because Asian labor isn’t as valued as white labor. So if you want to talk about living wage, providing everybody with living wage jobs, that means that we have to be prepared to pay more for the products that come out of Asian vendors.” –2nd generation Vietnamese American

Perceptions about Asian businesses make it hard to grow

“ We only make so much money... like if I’m not here, I’m not making any money, so it’s hard to build up enough savings to remodel... just to do it out of pocket is really hard... banks are really hard on people now. It’s really hard to get a loan... it takes a lot of money to run a business and my family doesn’t get a lot of help. A lot of the burden falls upon the business owners and that’s a narrative that I don’t think gets highlighted a lot... there’s a lot of expectations placed on the businesses. A lot of assumptions... but nobody knows the story behind how hard it is to run a business.”

–2nd generation multiethnic Asian American

DATA SOURCES

Employment – 2008-2012 Integrated Public Use Microdata Series from the U.S. Census Bureau (full citation in endnote: Steven Ruggles, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Schroeder, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010. <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/>)

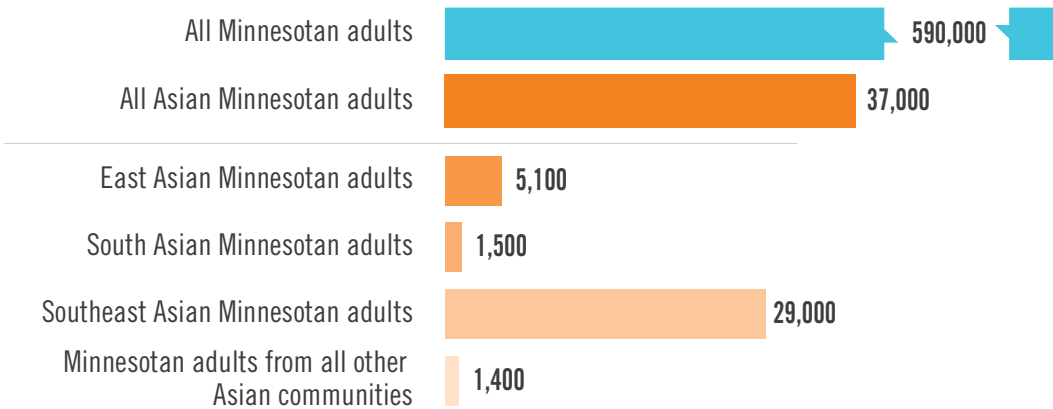
Asian American businesses in MN - www.ethniccapital.com, calculated using ACS 2012 data

*Adults’ refers to the working-age population ages 16-64

* Quantitative data were collected over the course of 2014 and 2015 with Wilder Research through an iterative process involving data reviewed by work groups. The indicators that appear here are a subset of the data gathered, and selected by these work groups.

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Poverty*



Asian American purchasing power

 **4 billion**

Homeownership rate

All Minnesotan households  **73%**

Asian Minnesotan households  **57%**

Familial money sharing

“My mom doesn’t have a huge family... most of them are here [in the United States]. But whoever’s over there, she does help... when they’re here. The best she can offer them is obviously a job here and then get them on their feet if they want to do that... otherwise house them.” –2nd generation multiethnic Asian American

“It’s just an expected cost to help each other... of course grandpas and grandmas... aunts and uncles... you just know that every week you are going to be supporting a family member in doing something and also knowing that my family will help with me... so often it happens where it’s a multigenerational home. You’re expected to open up your home to somebody that might have lost their job, they’re in between something, they might be visiting for a few months. That creates an unexpected economic burden that you might not plan for that’s just an expected part of culture.” –2nd generation multiracial Asian American

Asians are not seen in terms of class differences. Asians are stuck in the model minority myth. There are so many Asian workers who are struggling in poverty.” –1st generation Indian American

The model minority myth and the American Dream

“Refugee programs are not really designed to help [our community] thrive. The programs are just there to meet a quota and to just say, “Why are you complaining?” Our aunts and uncles are still in these assembly lines... they are super smart, but the refugee programs here do not prepare them for thriving in this society. They are simply left with these mundane jobs in the factories. That needs to really change.” –1.5 generation Lao American

DATA SOURCES

Living wage – 2008-2012 Integrated Public Use Microdata Series from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey; Dr. Amy K. Glasmeier and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Living Wage Calculator. (full citation in endnote: Steven Ruggles, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Schroeder, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010. <http://usa.ipums.org/usa/>)

Family-sustaining wage estimates: Glasmeier, Amy K. Living Wage Calculator. <http://livingwage.mit.edu/>

Homeownership rate – 2008-2012 Integrated Public Use Microdata Series from the U.S. Census Bureau

ACT WITH US

PATHS FORWARD ON EDUCATION AND ECONOMICS

EDUCATION

BOTH

ECONOMICS



1. INCREASE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND MEET THE NEEDS OF ASIAN AMERICANS. POTENTIAL ACTIONS INCLUDE:

- Fund partnerships between communities and school districts to develop and integrate Asian cultural and language programs
- Grow more Asian American teachers and educational leaders

- Create a capacity building fund that strengthens Asian American community and other community of color led organizations
- Develop and build an arts and culture and business incubator
- Incentivize programs/products that help Asian Americans build credit worthiness or access economic mobility



2. COLLECT BETTER DATA ON RACE, ETHNICITY, AND LANGUAGE THAT CAN BE DISAGGREGATED AND SHARED PUBLICLY. POTENTIAL ACTIONS INCLUDE:

- Enrich quantitative data by supporting community research that lifts up the voices and experiences of parents and students

- Review data gathering systems to identify how they can be re-designed for better data collection with Asian Americans
- Advocate for data disaggregation initiatives at the state and federal levels

- Research the barriers that prevent Asian owned businesses from growing



3. ADVOCATE FOR POLICY THAT INCLUDES ASIAN AMERICAN PRIORITIES AND VOICES. POTENTIAL ACTIONS INCLUDE:

- Increase transparency about the educational outcome for Asian multi-language learners
- Ensure the implementation of Minnesota's Learning for English Academic Proficiency and Success (LEAPS) Act includes Asian American voices

- Increase academic and career support for first generation Asian American students

- Address the persistent poverty experienced by Southeast Asian Americans
- Create welcoming environments to retain highly skilled workers and their families
- Make greater efforts to use Asian-owned businesses in public procurement, especially professional services firms



4. GROW CIVIC LEADERSHIP OF ASIAN AMERICANS. POTENTIAL ACTIONS INCLUDE:

- Create opportunities for Asian American educators to share with each other and lead in creating equity solutions
- Support parents and students in asking for what they need from education systems

- Advocate for institutional accountability with implementation of racial equity programs and policies
- Support empowerment and development of authentic and effective leadership for Asian Americans

- Support Asian American entrepreneurs and artists with access to funding (e.g. Arts Cultural and Heritage Fund)
- Expand the potential of leveraging cultural assets as an economic development strategy (e.g., Little Mekong)



COALITION OF
ASIAN AMERICAN LEADERS

Mission

Harnessing our collective power to advance equity to improve the lives of Asian Minnesotans

Vision

CAAL envisions a State where all Minnesotans, regardless of background, are actively engaged and can achieve prosperity

For more information

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