
MEMORANDUM

To: Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board

From: Dr. Yelena Bailey, Executive Director

Date: October 1, 2026

Subject: Elevate Teaching Update - Report

Background

In 2021, the Minnesota Legislature allocated \$500,000 to the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) to initiate a state Teacher Marketing and Outreach Campaign. The stated purpose of this campaign is to:

- Elevate the teaching profession, and
- Recruit teachers, especially teachers of color and American Indian teachers, high school and college students who have not chosen a career path, and adults seeking to change careers.

From the initial 2021 allocation, \$485,000 was awarded to one contractor, Plum Blossom Strategy, to execute work from 2022 through 2024. Plum Blossom Strategy, led by Dr. Rose Wan-Mui Chu, initiated foundational statewide strategy and community engagement to elevate public narrative and candidate recruitment.

In 2023, the legislature allocated additional funds to PELSB—\$500,000 each year (totaling \$1,000,000)—to continue this work. PELSB contracted with two vendors, Plum Blossom Strategy and Collectivity. They have been charged with designing a website, printed materials, and marketing materials to reach potential teacher candidates and guide them towards appropriate pathways to become teachers. Together, this collaborative partnership established the Elevate Teaching campaign (<https://www.elevateteaching.us/>).

In 2025, the legislature provided another two years of funding for this work. Plum Blossom Strategy and Collectivity last reported to the Board on their work in June 2026, at which point the board asked that they return in the fall to share additional information and context. They are presenting today to provide an update on the results of their past work, as well as plans for the next stage of the campaign.

Request

The Board will be joined by Dr. Rose Wan-Mui Chu (Plum Blossom Strategy) along with Scott Cole and Shehla Mushtaq (Principal Consultants on behalf of Collectivity).

The presenters will share information on the current phase of their collective work to provide context for board members as to how their efforts are meeting the goals of this initiative.

Options

This is a report. No action is needed.