



**MN Child Welfare
Training Academy™**

IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

A Compilation of the first three years of the
Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy

JULY 2019 - JUNE 2022



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 2019, the Minnesota Legislature authorized funding to develop and implement a statewide training academy under a newly formed State-University partnership beginning in July 2019. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Regents of the University of Minnesota, on behalf of the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, entered into a Joint Powers Agreement and officially began working together in September 2019 to launch the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (MNCWTA).

Visit mnchildwelfaretraining.com.

A four-year implementation plan was created to manage the process of training continuation and improvement, evaluation and accountability, curriculum development, facilities and infrastructure, partnerships and training collaborations, budget and finances, communications, technology, and initiatives to address disproportionality in the child welfare system. This report captures the first three years of that plan, as well accomplishments, lessons learned, and plans for the future.

LEGISLATION PASSED MAY 2019



System Structure

- Regional Training
- State/University Partnership
- Interdisciplinary



Training

- Delivery Modality
- Audience: Frontline Workers and Supervisors, Private Agencies
- Foundation and Advanced Levels
- Focus on Disparity, Disproportionality and Implicit Bias



Training Enhancements

- Simulations
- Professional Coaching
- Mentoring



Evaluation / Accountability

- Frontline Worker Competencies
- Supervisor Competencies
- Certification
- Improved Training Evaluation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | | |
|-------|---|-------|---|
| 04 | Letter from Co-Directors | 19-21 | SSIS Collaborations SSIS Coffee Talk Series Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) |
| 05 | Academy Implementation | | |
| 06-10 | About MNCWTA Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Framework Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion History Tribal Training and Certification Partnership Budget and Finance | 22-24 | Curriculum Development Documentation and Process New Curriculum Developments |
| 11-15 | Training Courses Offered Specialty Courses Other Trainings Training Delivery Data Transition to Virtual Training Trainer Development | 25-29 | Academy Infrastructure Training Facility Development Capital Development Staffing Learning Management System |
| 16-17 | Evaluation and Certification Guiding Principles Evaluation Framework Development Certification Process Development | 30-32 | Communications and Marketing Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives Methods and Audience Development Engagement |
| | | 33 | Our Future |

LETTER FROM CO-DIRECTORS

During the summer of 2019, it all seemed to be coming together. Approvals were given, agreements were made, and we celebrated the beginning of a long process toward launching a new and improved training system for the child welfare professionals of Minnesota. We felt hope as we envisioned innovative ideas, such as improved learning technology, simulation experiences, coaching, regional learning centers, and more. We were ready to make it happen.

Who could have guessed what 2020 would bring? A global pandemic, reignited racial tensions, economic concerns, employment instability, disconnection... the list goes on. With so much uncertainty, it was difficult to guess what would happen next. We continued to move forward with our plans, and although there have been some delays and tough decisions, we could feel it coming together. Thanks to video conferencing technology, we moved ahead with an active training schedule, and even found ways that distance learning can benefit both learners and trainers.

We have just passed three years into the implementation of the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (MNCWTA), and our feeling of hope continues to grow every day. The workers and supervisors throughout our state have been generous with their questions and feedback, and we can sense a connection growing once again. We will continue our work to support Minnesota's child welfare professionals so they in turn can best support the children and families that need us most. There is still work to be done, but the future is bright, and we are excited to keep moving forward with the next stages of our implementation.



Tracy Crudo
Co-Director
tcrudo@umn.edu



Liz Snyder
Co-Director
snyde276@umn.edu



**The child
protection
system cannot
be created
overnight. It
must evolve.**

**—Governor's
Task Force on
the Protection of
Children, March 2015**



ACADEMY IMPLEMENTATION

The Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy was passed into legislation with a four-year, phased-in implementation period. Our primary implementation goals for the first three years included significant infrastructure and are represented below.

July 2019 – June 2020

Phase One

- Establish Joint Powers Agreement and confirm work plan for Phase One
- Hire first round of staff
- Establish communication strategy
- Create new ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) training partnership in consultation with ICWA Council and Center for Regional and Tribal Child Welfare (at U of M Duluth)
- Identify central training facility
- Expand New Worker “Foundations” Training
- Conduct listening sessions on New Worker Training (completed in Phase Two)
- Prepare requests for proposals (RFPs) for four Regional Learning Centers (delayed due to global pandemic; process began in Phase Two)

July 2020 – June 2021

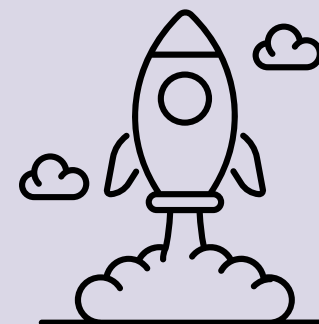
Phase Two

- Review RFP applicants for Regional Learning Centers, select sites, work with host sites to finalize training space
- Hire majority of new staffing members
- Develop and test new learning management system (LMS)
- Continue to engage stakeholders in all aspects of implementation
- Establish regional/statewide advisory councils
- Launch Regional Learning Centers (delayed due to global pandemic; Northwest Regional Learning Center identified)
- Introduce equity coaches/trainers
- Redesign evaluation practices and tools
- Begin comprehensive revision of new worker and new supervisor curricula

July 2021 – June 2022

Phase Three

- Launch new Learning Management System
- Begin New Worker Training redesign
- Create new Mandated Reporter Training
- Finalize regional Learning Center locations and hires
- Develop and implement advisory structure
- Launch new evaluation framework
- Develop initial certification frameworks



ABOUT MNCWTA

Our mission is to train, develop, and support the skills, expertise, and well-being of Minnesota's child welfare workforce while nurturing a commitment to equitable child welfare practice.

The Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Framework outlines the competencies required for quality practice among front-line child welfare professionals and their supervisors. The framework provides the foundation for our training and development opportunities. To support our framework and commitment to equitable child welfare practice, the Training Academy has been thoughtful and intentional about the ways we build diversity, equity, and inclusion in all elements of our partnership.

This commitment is reflected in:

- **our hiring practices** - actively recruiting talented and diverse applicants
- **staff development** - nurturing points of connection, learning opportunities, and personal growth, especially with regard to cultural awareness and intercultural understanding
- **communication efforts** - using inclusive images, plain language, and accessible formats
- **strategic decision making** - actively assessing and responsiveness in our practices
- **curriculum development** - adjusting and applying new information and resources
- **facility decisions** - improving access and accessibility through all-gender bathrooms; space for nursing parents, prayer, or reflection; and so forth
- **an evolution of our training** - developing innovative learning spaces and online learning and simulation opportunities

The Training Academy is a work in progress, one that is willing to grow and adjust to meet the needs of Minnesota's child welfare professionals. [Visit **mnchildwelfaretraining.com** to download the complete framework.](https://mnchildwelfaretraining.com)



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

DECENTERING WHITENESS

MNCWTA staff embarked on the facilitated process of decentering whiteness in early 2020. This journey included examining our own work of decentering whiteness from an individual, interpersonal, and organizational perspective.

The goal was to offer an opportunity to further our development as individuals and teams, and as an organization, on how we operate from the pervasive dominate culture in our unexamined language, traditions, practices, culture, and policies.

CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS USING THE IDI

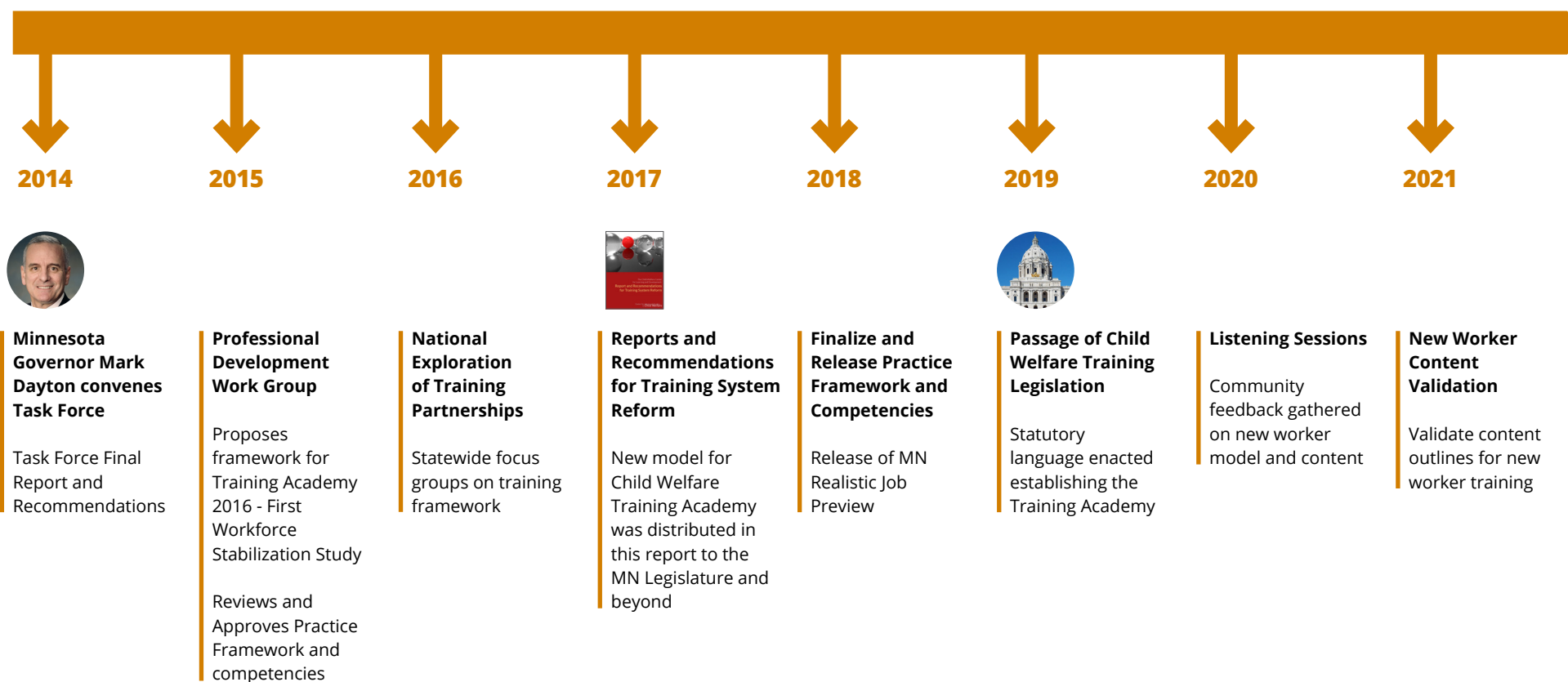
The Training Academy has been working with Interculturalist LLC (interculturalist.com) to incorporate the Intercultural Development Inventory (idiinventory.com) as part of our professional and personal development. Interculturalist LLC is a social enterprise that helps organizations create workplace efficacy and inclusion. Their work aims to enable organizations to thrive within diversity and help them create inclusive human environments. The IDI is an online, theory-based assessment of intercultural competence that provides profile results at an individual and organizational level. The results position the individual or organization along an inter-cultural development continuum indicating a target for the next stage of growth. This was an important pre-cursor to launching IDI debriefs and coaching with our learners across the state.



ABOUT MNCWTA

HISTORY

The idea for a State-University training partnership evolved over a number of years and involved significant community and partner input along the way. Below is a quick snapshot of our history and evolution. Visit mnchildwelfaretraining.com/about/history.



ABOUT MNCWTA

TRIBAL TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PARTNERSHIP

One of our primary partnerships is with University of Minnesota Duluth's Center for Regional and Tribal Child Welfare Studies (CRTCWS). While MNCWTA had planned for expansion of the training curriculum to promote competency in serving American Indian children and families, advocacy by CRTCWS resulted in shared funding to support the important formation of an autonomous training entity for tribes and tribal child welfare professionals, as well as to develop training content for county child welfare professionals across the state.



Tribal Training and Certification Partnership

In January 2020, with this new funding, the CRTCWS established the training and technical assistance center Aabinoojiiyag-Wakhanheza Un Thantanhapi - "For All the Children" Sacred Being: Tribal Training and Certification Partnership (TTCP). This partnership works on the development and delivery of Indian Child Welfare Training. A two-day training on the Indian Child Welfare Act and working with American Indian families is now a regular component of the New Worker (Foundations) training required of all new county workers.

Visit TTCP at cehsp.d.umn.edu/ttcp.

ABOUT MNCWTA

BUDGET AND FINANCE

The overall budget of MNCWTA draws from multiple funding sources and authorities, including the Minnesota Legislature, federal funding from Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, and Minnesota tribal and county contributions. Partner agencies of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the University of Minnesota divide the spending and budget responsibilities based on the activities each agency is responsible for carrying out while managing the overall budget jointly.

Expenditures in the first three years of implementation of the MNCWTA were spent primarily across two areas: Capital Development and Operations. Funds expended by the University of Minnesota during this time frame totaled nearly 10 million dollars (\$9,818,280). Expenditures included \$401,107 in capital expenses for the four regional learning centers (training room furniture, technology equipment, and renovation of existing space), as well as capital expense for the flagship training center located in Roseville, in addition to staff salary, development of the learning management system, and modest start up support for the Tribal Training and Certification Partnership (TTCP). Additional staff salary and support was expended by DHS for those employed by the State.

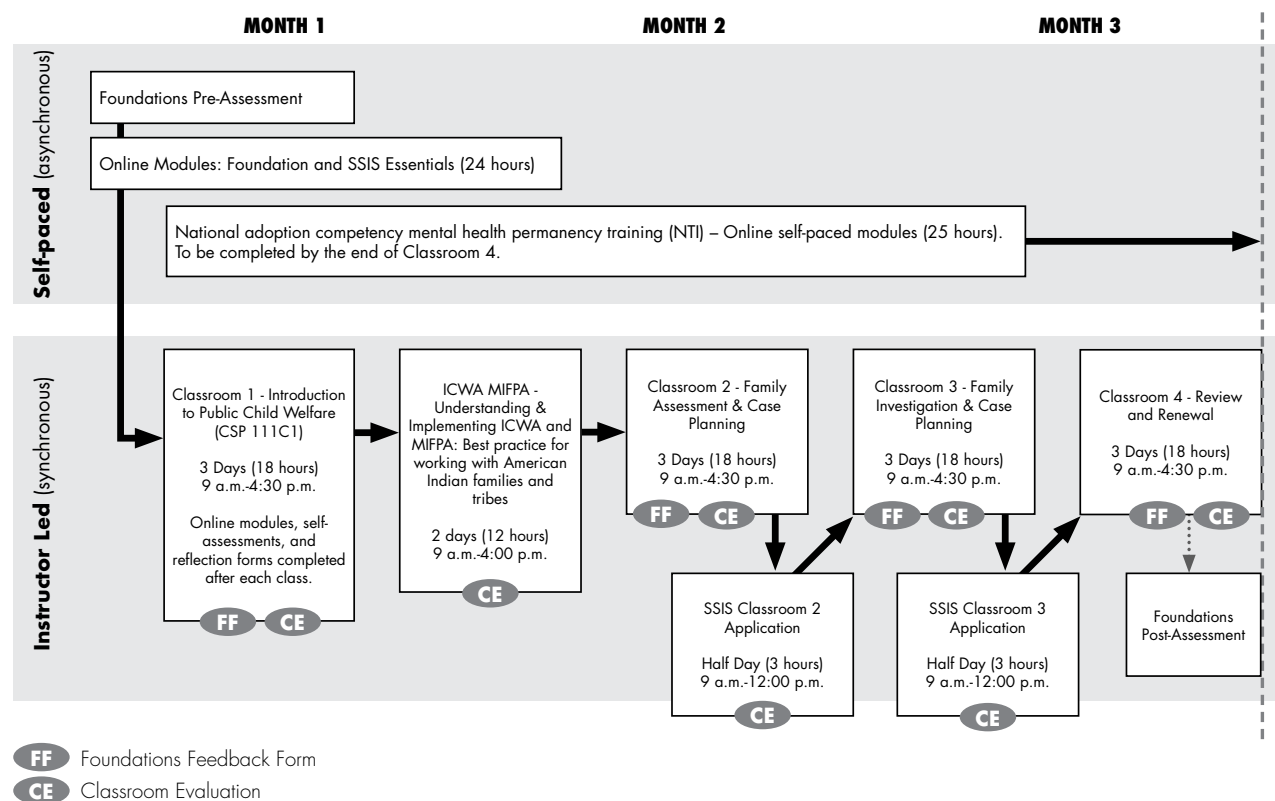


TRAINING

COURSES OFFERED

Currently the most frequent training provided by the Training Academy is the New Worker Foundations training for all new child welfare workers. Taking place over several months, trainees cover a broad spectrum of new worker content, learn how to use SSIS, and attend a two-day training on working with American Indian families.

NEW WORKER FOUNDATIONS TRAINING



TRAINING

SPECIALTY TRAININGS

- Responsive Child Welfare Practice with LGBTQ Youth
- Domestic Violence Co-Occurrence: Partnering and Engaging Parents
- Structured Decision Making
- Case Planning
- Legal Practice Skills
- Signs of Safety
- Signs of Safety Three Month Review
- Sexually Exploited Youth Overview
- Sexually Exploited Youth Human Trafficking Child Welfare Response
- Human Trafficking and Sexually Exploited Youth: Basic Training for Child Welfare
- Family Group Decision Making: Overview and Facilitation
- Collaborative Safety - Advanced Practice

OTHER TRAININGS

The following courses are not scheduled through our Learning Management System. Registration information can be found in the course descriptions.

- Foster Parent College
- Qualified Individual (QI) Training

Read full course descriptions at <https://mnchildwelfaretraining.com/course-descriptions>.



TRAINING

TRAINING DELIVERY DATA TOTALS



4,445

Total hours of training from January 2020 to June 2022



6,079

Total number of individual learning experiences from January 2020 to June 2022



563

Total hours of ICWA-focused training, as part of Child Welfare Foundations Training, provided by our training partner TTCP



67 | 4 | 38

Provided training to workers from 67 county agencies, 4 indian tribes, and 38 private agencies

TRAINING DELIVERY DATA BREAKDOWNS

| 2020 Training Delivery Data by Month | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|
| | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December |
| Hours of Training | 103 | 94 | 57 | 54 | 94.5 | 151.5 | 130.5 | 123 | 128.5 | 192 | 190 | 199.75 |
| Learners | 193 | 90 | 57 | 57 | 109 | 210 | 142 | 136 | 198 | 255 | 279 | 257 |
| Counties Represented | 38 | 31 | 25 | 19 | 32 | 40 | 37 | 35 | 40 | 45 | 44 | 44 |
| Hours of TTCP Training | 26 | 0 | 19 | 0 | 12 | 44 | 0 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 36 | 12 |

TRAINING

TRAINING DELIVERY DATA BREAKDOWNS continued...

| 2021 Training Delivery Data by Month | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|----------|
| | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December |
| Hours of Training | 181 | 136 | 186 | 140 | 174 | 168 | 88.5 | 148 | 140 | 258 | 198 | 103.5 |
| Learners | 218 | 186 | 278 | 155 | 257 | 245 | 84 | 179 | 174 | 306 | 249 | 187 |
| Counties Represented | 35 | 44 | 44 | 32 | 56 | 58 | 28 | 48 | 45 | 56 | 55 | 48 |
| Hours of TTCP Training | 24 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 24 | 66 | 0 |

| 2022 Training Delivery Data by Month | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|
| | January | February | March | April | May | June |
| Hours of Training | 205 | 202 | 202.5 | 130.5 | 136 | 130 |
| Learners | 301 | 348 | 356 | 191 | 195 | 187 |
| Counties Represented | 67 | 57 | 61 | 37 | 34 | 38 |
| Hours of TTCP Training | 12 | 36 | 24 | 12 | 12 | 36 |



TRAINING

TRANSITION TO VIRTUAL TRAINING

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an unexpected need to convert all of our training for online delivery in spring 2020 took a considerable amount of effort from the training delivery team. Due to the focus and efficiency of Academy staff, the transition to online training delivery was accomplished with limited disruptions to already scheduled training. Activities required for the shift to online delivery included:

- All Academy training staff learning the Zoom platform
- Developing resources and training for community trainers on using Zoom
- Adjusting classroom time frames and activities for virtual delivery

The Training Academy began transitioning back to in-person training in March 2022. Currently we are offering both in-person and online options for training.

TRAINER DEVELOPMENT

A set of competencies for trainers was developed to ensure consistent and high quality training delivery across all Academy trainers. These competencies will be used in trainer self-assessment, observation, and coaching to guide trainer skill and knowledge development.

Monthly Training of Trainers (TOT)/Training on Content (TOC) sessions were held to keep staff and community trainers up-to-date on new policy development, content updates, and facilitation of skill development. Some TOT/TOC topics have included:

- Comfort call requirement/foster care policy
- Updates to screening guidelines
- Brave space/safe space statement
- Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) content in Foundations
- Safety Practice Profiles
- Permanency and adoption updates



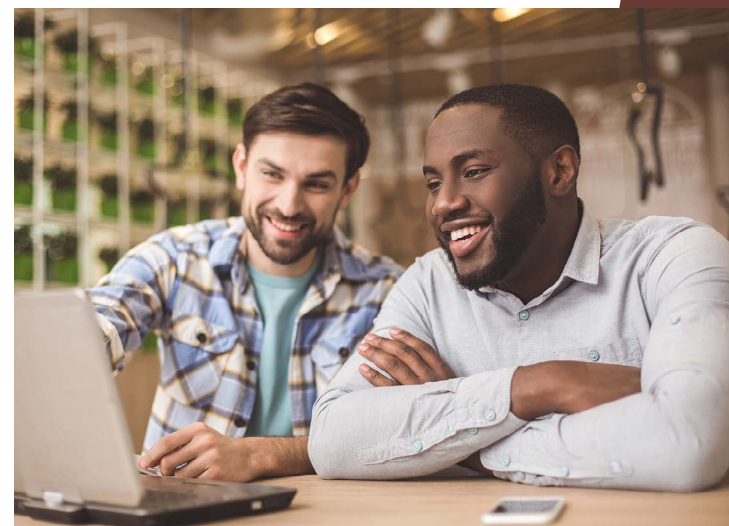
EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATION

The Evaluation and Certification Unit's accomplishments to date include generating guiding principles, developing an evaluation framework, and initiating the formation of a certification process.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In our evaluation work, we will:

- Collect information to explore answers to the evaluation questions posed.
- Use principles of universal design and culturally responsive methods to obtain information that will guide our continuous improvement work.
- Be planful about disaggregating data based on demographic information.
- Acknowledge the influence of context (learner, organizational, societal) on workers' ability to transfer learning to the job and to impact the children and families they serve.
- Utilize input from intended users and evaluation resources to guide evaluation design, data collection, analysis, reporting, and use of evaluation findings.

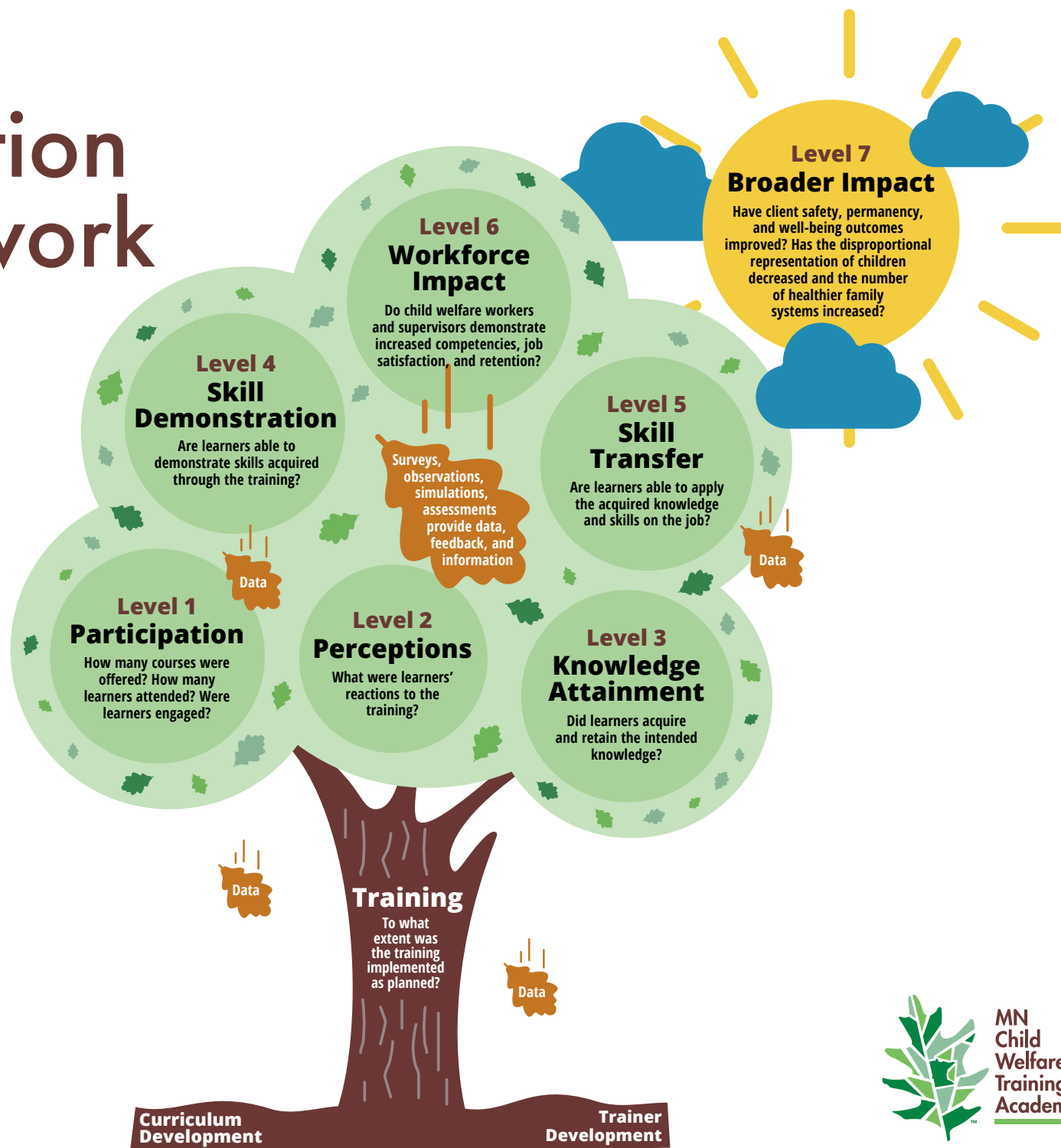


EVALUATION FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

We developed a comprehensive evaluation framework and plan for the Academy (shown on the following page). We use both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gather information that helps us improve our curriculum and training delivery and better understand if we are achieving our goals.

MNCWTA

Evaluation Framework



EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATION

CERTIFICATION PROCESS DEVELOPMENT

The legislation for the MNCWTA states that “each child welfare worker and supervisor must complete a certification, including a competency-based knowledge test and a skills demonstration...” Our charge is to develop that certification system so that it aligns with the Minnesota Child Welfare Practice Framework and so that child welfare workers and supervisors have the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for their work. During this time period, we:

- Conducted an overall scan of the child welfare training system for both new worker trainees and supervisors along with the certification process in five states – Pennsylvania, Colorado, California, North Carolina, and Georgia. From this, we identified the main steps and processes involved in the certification of new worker trainees in these states.
- Scanned literature to better understand the similarities and differences between certification in child welfare and certification in other fields, such as teacher education and nursing.
- Used feedback to begin to develop potential certification models for initial certification and for more advanced, annual re-certification. Similar processes are being developed for supervisors.

In our final year of implementation, we will seek more input throughout Minnesota on certification models before launching our final process statewide.



...each child welfare worker and supervisor must complete a certification, including a competency-based knowledge test and a skills demonstration...

—Legislation for the MNCWTA



SSIS COLLABORATIONS

The Social Service Information System (SSIS) is a data entry and case management system used by over 10,000 state and county workers in a variety of different human service program areas, including child welfare. The SSIS Training Unit partners with the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy to host informational sessions and to develop training opportunities and resources for workers in child welfare who utilize SSIS in their work.

The SSIS Training Unit reported to the Training Academy in the first three years of implementation, and recently their reporting structure has shifted back to DHS. MNCWTA continues to collaborate with the SSIS Training Unit.

Results from a survey administered during the early years of implementation found that, out of 143 Child Protection SSIS users, 50% wanted the Academy to develop online, instructor-led SSIS training versus 35% who wanted the Academy to develop online, self-paced, eLearning courses.



**Percentages in favor
of online instructor-
led training vs. self-
paced eLearning**

50%

Percentage requesting
online instructor-led training

VS.

35%

Percentage requesting
online self-paced eLearning

SSIS COLLABORATIONS

SSIS COFFEE TALK SERIES

In response to a need for more specialized training topics, the SSIS training team launched a series of webinars that blended policy information with SSIS data entry. The SSIS Training Unit consulted and partnered with subject matter and policy experts from the Division of Child Safety and Permanency to provide impactful webinar sessions regarding data entry and policy around the following topics:

- Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA)
- Minnesota Assessment for Parenting Children and Youth (MAPCY)
- Adult Protection Services
- Trafficking and Exploitation of Children
- Pre- and Post-Adoption
- Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

In addition to hosting these webinars, the Training Academy created a new page on the website for the recorded webinars and provided links to resources for workers who were not available for the live presentations.



SSIS COLLABORATIONS

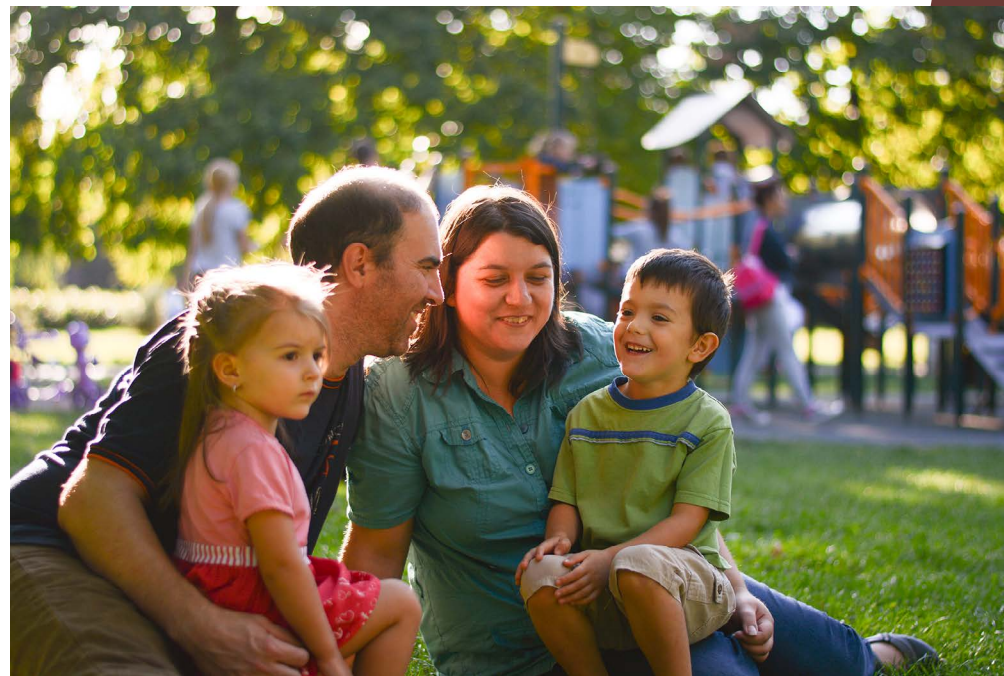
FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT (FFPSA)

The Training Academy partnered with DHS policy units to develop the required learning opportunities in the development and implementation stages of FFPSA. The Academy took part in workgroups, developed training plans, and supported technical presentations to enhance and maximize transfer of learning.

Visit mnchildwelfaretraining.com/ffpsa for more details.

Two courses were developed to support the implementation of FFPSA training needs: (1) Qualified Individual (QI) and (2) Human Trafficking and Sexually Exploited Youth: Basic Training for Child Welfare. You can learn more about these trainings in our course descriptions.

Read full course descriptions at mnchildwelfaretraining.com/course-descriptions.



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

DOCUMENTATION AND PROCESS

Processes were introduced and implemented to support the building of Training Academy curricula.

- **Change Request Form:** Used to monitor, respond, and track all incoming requests for curriculum changes
- **Workstream:** Documents change requests, new development requests, policy updates, and identification of subject matter experts
- **Workflow:** Documents how the Curriculum Team works with other academy groups, such as: Training Delivery, Evaluation and Certification, and the LMS team
- **Curriculum Templates:** Used for curriculum developers to add necessary content for building curriculum including, curriculum outlines, competency mapping, and facilitator guides
- **Project Charter:** Documents a new project from beginning to end; new projects are primarily new course developments
- **Family Profiles:** Used to support diversity, equity, and inclusion of meaningful characters and family status (married, single, divorced); in addition, these profiles promote transfer of learning using scenario and simulation scripts. All family profiles and stories are based on anonymous, but real statistics and evidence to support and inform learning.

Together, these processes and procedures are utilized for new, existing, and transitioning curriculum.



CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

NEW CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENTS

In December 2020, the Training Academy held virtual listening sessions to gather participants' feedback on the proposed new child welfare worker training models. In these sessions, we shared background information and presented possible models for new child welfare worker training in Minnesota.

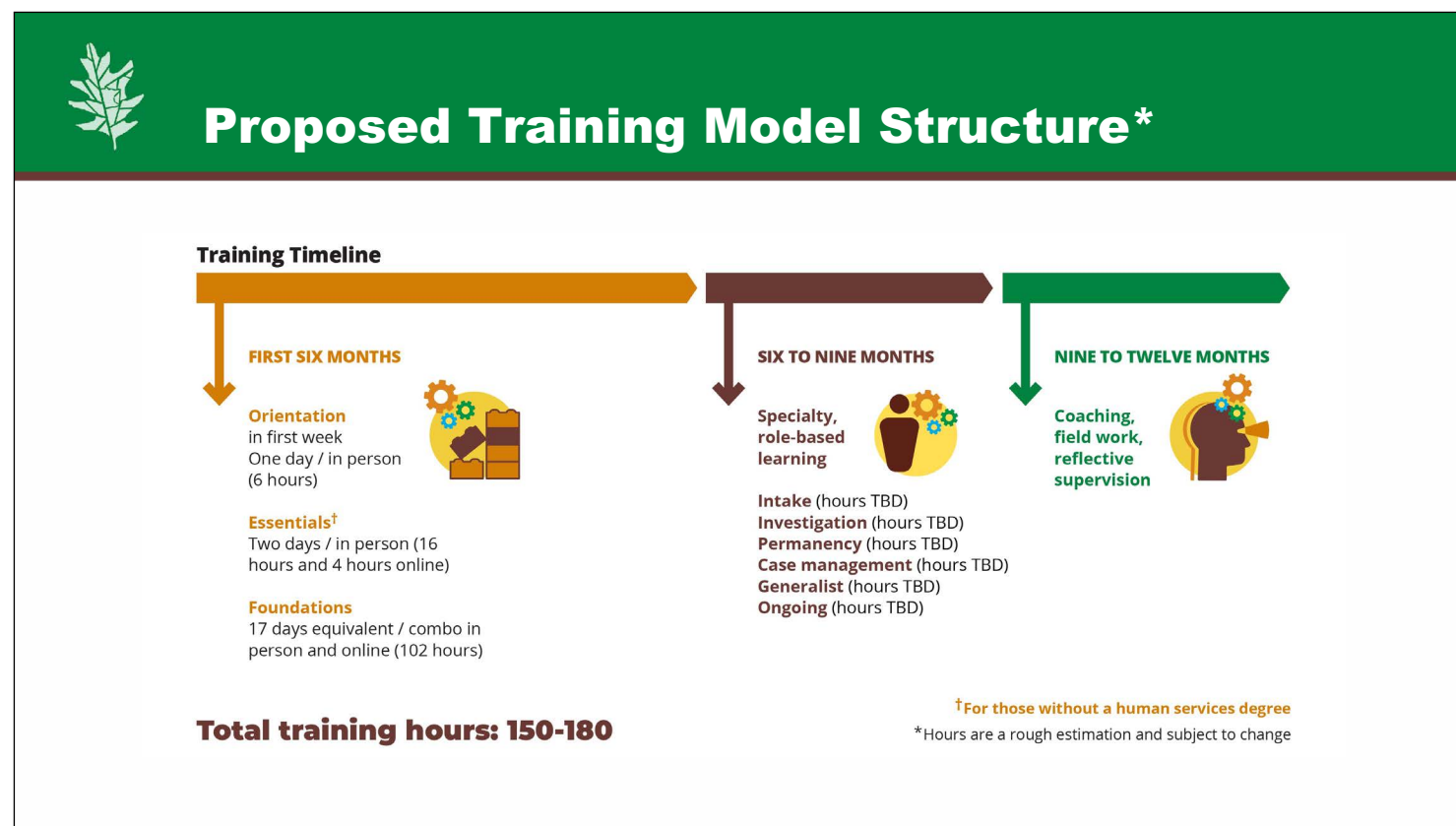


Figure above represents the final structure that was determined and presented.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The training model structure that emerged was presented at additional listening sessions in 2021. The purpose of these meetings was to validate a broad outline for new worker training content. Participants were asked to keep the following points in mind when reviewing the proposed training model structure:

- New Worker Training will not be able to cover all necessary content. The Academy will continue to host and build advanced training courses for the workforce.
- With a maximum of 180 hours allocated to new worker training, suggestions for adding content will mean that some other content will likely need to be removed or the time spent on it lessened.
- The Curriculum Team will build content in consultation with trainers, subject matter experts, workers and supervisors, and families/service recipients to the extent possible.
- Evaluation and feedback will be part of each element of this New Worker Training model structure.



Since these meetings, additional updates and modifications have been made to the New Worker Training curriculum. We continue to build important content that is responsive to best practice and policy updates, and anticipate having New Supervisor Training available as our next new offering in Year 4. Also coming in Year 4 is a new, asynchronous, free training on mandated reporting. This training will focus on building skills to promote decisions that are made with an understanding of racial disparities and disproportionality that exist in maltreatment reports.

ACADEMY INFRASTRUCTURE

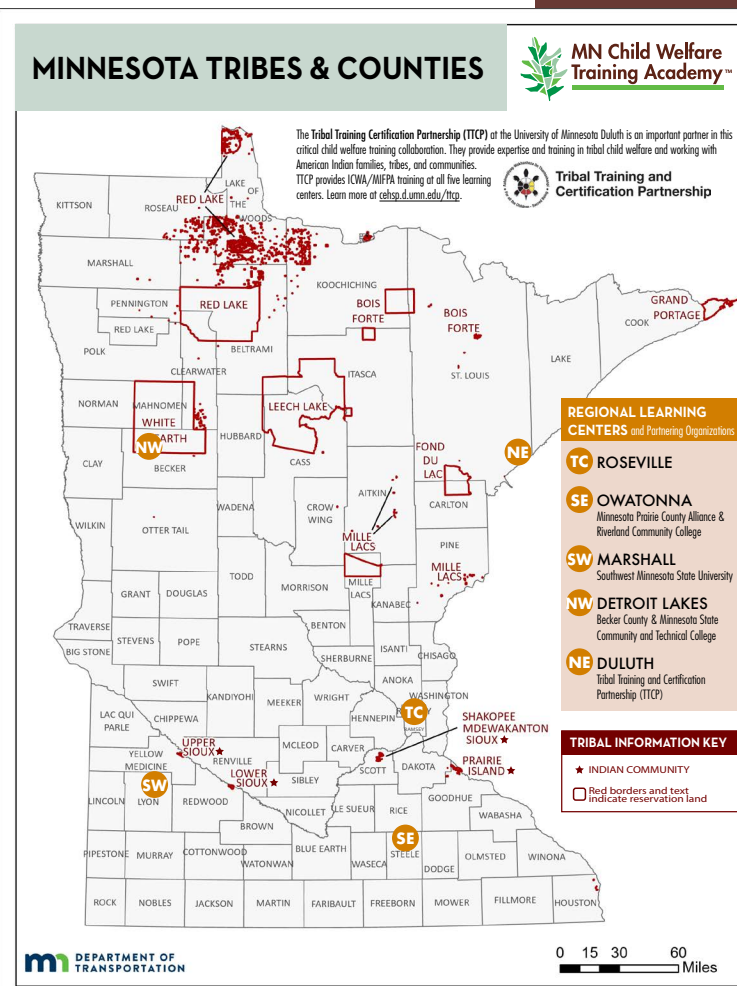
During the first three years of Academy implementation, time and resources have been invested in significant infrastructure, including the development of the training facility and a new Learning Management System (LMS), as well as increased staff capacity.

TRAINING FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

Creating comfortable and welcoming training spaces for the child welfare workforce has been a focal point for the first two years of implementation. In 2020, renovation was completed on the Twin Cities Metro training facility that also houses most of the Academy staff offices. This state-of-the-art training facility, located in Roseville, includes four training rooms, three conference/meeting rooms, and a variety of flexible use spaces for gathering and learning. The facility offers free, accessible parking and is located close to numerous hotels and restaurants. It is easily accessed from several major highways.

Four regional learning centers have also been created, and are in various stages of completion:

- NW Northwest Regional Learning Center** on the Detroit Lakes campus of Minnesota State Community and Technical College
 - SW Southwest Regional Learning Center** located on the Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) campus in Marshall
 - NE Northeast Regional Learning Center** in Duluth hosted by the Tribal Training and Certification Partnership (TTCP)
 - SE Southeast Regional Learning Center** located on the Owatonna Campus of Riverland Community College
- Regional trainers have been hired for three of the four centers.



ACADEMY INFRASTRUCTURE

Expenditures for remodeling included the creation of adequately designed training rooms, sufficient electrical and technological capacity, individual and all gender bathrooms, simulation training space, video studio, wellness space, nursing room, security, and accessibility.

Renovating these spaces took many months of cross-system collaboration. Some of the critical activities included:

- Working with University of Minnesota (U of M) leasing agents to tour potential sites and secure leases.
- Working with facility staff at both institutions to address accessibility and security requirements/protocol.
- Liaising with general contractors, architects, interior designers, and property management.
- Working with the classroom management staff at U of M to ensure optimal setup of learning spaces and technology.

Take a virtual tour of the Twin Cities Metro Academy building at mnchildwelfaretraining.com/metro-learning-center.

Information about of our learning centers can be found here: mnchildwelfaretraining.com/learning-center.

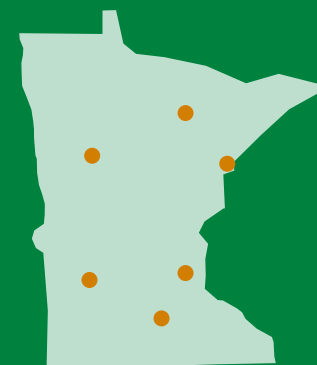


ACADEMY INFRASTRUCTURE

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

In fiscal years 2020-2021, approximately 2.3 million dollars were needed to complete the central training facility; in addition, some preliminary investments (such as in classroom technology) were made in the four regional learning centers for future implementation years. Funds from fiscal years 2021-2022, as well as a small amount of fiscal 2023 dollars, were used on the renovation and capital asset acquisition (technology, furniture, and renovation) for the four regional learning centers.

Additionally, once operational, each regional learning center receives a \$24,000 per year stipend for Academy priority use of training space and adjacent meeting rooms. Technology costs were around \$25,000, and furniture was about \$25,000. In total, the Northeast Learning Center cost \$85,982. The Southwest Learning Center cost \$87,672. The Northwest Learning Center cost \$58,842. The Southeast Learning Center is estimated to cost \$55,393 plus undetermined renovation costs.



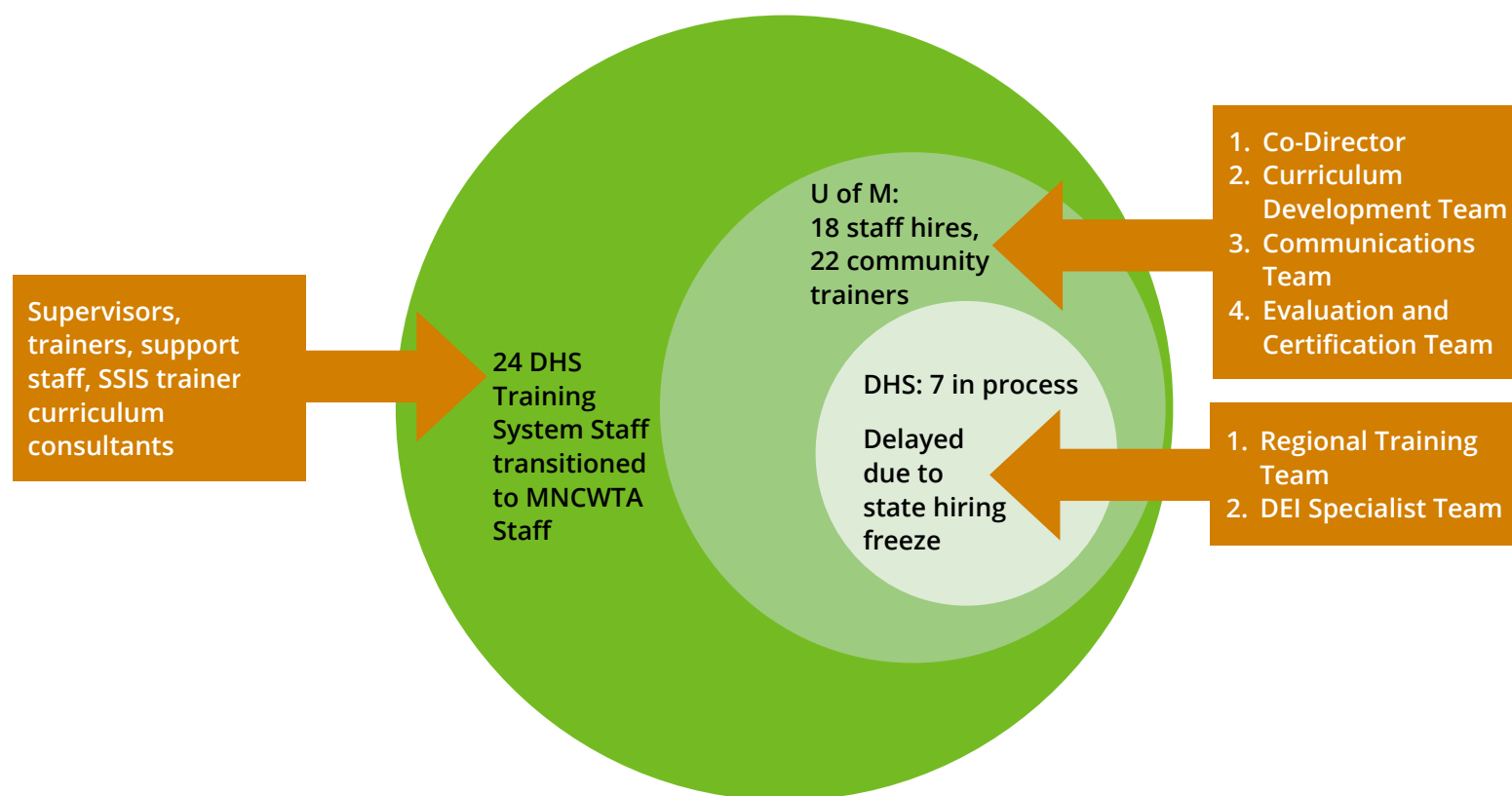
\$2.3 million

Approximate dollars used to complete the central training facility and make preliminary investments for the four regional learning centers

ACADEMY INFRASTRUCTURE

STAFFING

In addition to brick and mortar space, the most significant aspect of the first years of the Academy implementation was the development, recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and support of staff. Academy staffing required expansion across all teams including: training delivery, curriculum development, evaluation and certification, communications, operations, and leadership.



ACADEMY INFRASTRUCTURE

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

In addition to the capital projects and staffing, the Training Academy invested in innovation and technology improvements using dedicated funds for the development of a new website and Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS was developed in partnership with Educational Technology Innovations within the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota (U of M), with the recognition that a new solution for the learner experience (registration, course access, training record, etc.) was needed.

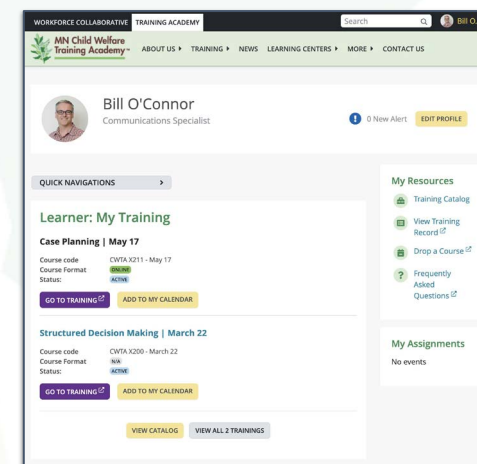
Various options for a new Learning Management System (LMS) were explored. Canvas was selected as the primary LMS with customization provided through a Training Portal developed with ETI. Migration of existing courses to the Canvas platform began in 2020, with the full transition to the Canvas platform completed in March 2022.

One of the primary objectives of the LMS team is to ensure the training system is designed to provide a positive learning experience for learners, trainers, and staff.

Learn more about ETI at eti.umn.edu.

Pilot and Launch of Training Portal and LMS

- Tested several courses in October-December 2021
- Launched to supervisors and tribal leaders in early January 2022
- Opened up to all child welfare and child protection professionals in February 2022
- Completed transition from Trainlink by March



COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

STRATEGIC PLAN

A communications specialist was hired in January 2020, and soon after that a Communications and Marketing Workgroup was formed. In 2021, a part-time graphic designer was added to the team. In 2022, a graduate assistant was hired to help with social media and copy editing. A communications strategy was created and implemented. The timeline was structured around the four years of implementation. The goals and objectives of this plan include:

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To **create a general awareness** of the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (MNCWTA) and an understanding of our purpose

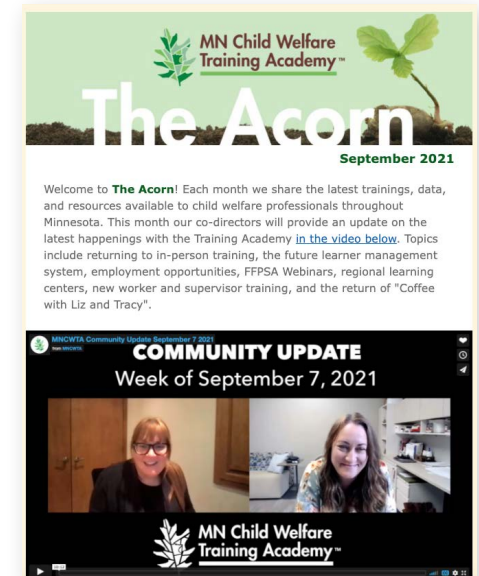
To **promote Academy offerings and trainings** to primary learners

To **assist with change management** by communicating with those directly affected (from System to Academy)

To share stories that demonstrate the benefits of MNCWTA and to **connect our work back to the Governor's Task Force recommendations**

To **be transparent with our external partners** about our work and what we provide

To **promote the efforts of our partners and other teams** (employment, initiative roll-out, new curriculum, legislature, etc.)



COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

METHODS AND AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Our audiences include child welfare professionals (current and future staff), families and foster care parents, Indian Tribes, community and training partners, media, peer organizations, the Minnesota Legislature, our staff and our parent organizations (DHS and CASCW at the U of M), and ultimately the general population. To deliver content and engage with our audiences, we launched a website, secured a marketing email application, and set up video hosting accounts with YouTube, Vimeo, and Mediaspace. We created social media accounts with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

We work closely with DHS Communications in order to maintain a current contact list for Minnesota supervisors, directors, and tribal leaders. We also have an opt-in list with over 600 active contacts, and we communicate directly with all new workers who are participating in Foundations training.

| MNCWTA Audience Development and Engagement | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| | Year 1 July 2019-June 2020 | Year 2 July 2020-June 2021 | Year 3 July 2021-June 2022 | Notes: |
| Website mnchildwelfare training.com | | 159 average monthly users | 1,188 average monthly users | Website launched summer 2020; website metrics became operational December 2020. |
| Blog Posts | 11 Posts | 37 Posts | 37 Posts | Launched in December 2019. |
| Email Marketing | 6 mailings (average of 448 recipients) | 47 mailings (average 692 recipients) | 53 mailings (average 876 recipients) | Email marketing began in April 2020. |
| Facebook | 100 Likes; 102 Followers | 159 Likes; 169 Followers | 190 Likes; 205 Followers | MNCWTA page created in April 2020. |
| Vimeo | Average 28 views per month | Average 91 views per month | Average 192 views per month | Account created in April 2020. |
| MNCWTA social media accounts also exist for Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Growth has been slow but steady. We will continue efforts to improve engagement through these accounts. | | | | |



COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

ENGAGEMENT

At the beginning of 2020, we began hosting listening sessions in-person to gather feedback on new worker training, but due to COVID-19 these sessions were shifted online. Initial engagement was lackluster, so we instead gathered feedback on how to improve the online experience, and relaunched the listening sessions toward the end of 2020. In early 2021, additional sessions took place to report back on the findings and to offer potential options to revise training. Final decisions were made, and a final public presentation was recorded and posted online.

In 2021, we also offered “Coffee with Liz and Tracy,” a monthly online meeting that any Minnesota child welfare professional was welcome to attend. Numbers were kept low for better engagement, and with no agenda, attendees had the opportunity to share, ask questions, and “chat” about the Training Academy.

We have sponsored and attended conferences with Minnesota Social Services Association and the Minnesota Supervisors Association, sharing Training Academy branded promotional items, information, and resources. We will continue to explore ways to connect and engage with all of our audiences.



OUR FUTURE

Now in our fourth year of implementation, we are excited to continue this important work of serving the child welfare workforce. Following are some of the projects underway:

- Our fourth and final regional trainer will be hired to represent the Southeast Regional Learning Center.
- The MNCWTA Advisory Network will begin recruiting members, hosting gatherings, and collecting important information and feedback from our constituents.
- Our new Learning Management System (LMS) is off to a great start, but additional functionality and integrations are coming soon. Improvements will be made to the user experience by conducting surveys and feedback.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) will continue to guide much of our work. A second DEI specialist will be joining our team, and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) will be incorporated into new worker training.
- Simulation will soon be part of New Worker Training.
- Supervisor Training curriculum is being developed and will be available soon.
- Input on certification models and processes will be sought and certification statewide will be launched in subsequent years.
- Supervisor coaching training for existing supervisors is being developed.
- Our technology team will continue to grow to help develop a meaningful user experience and additional learning modules.



The graphic above was created during a Training Academy staff meeting to reflect on accomplishments from early years of implementation.

The Child Safety and Permanency Division at the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (CASCW) at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities (U of M) have partnered to create the Minnesota Child Welfare Training Academy (MNCWTA). We provide training and professional development for Minnesota child welfare and/or child protection professionals.

Twin Cities Metro Learning Center

1711 West County Road B, Suite 200N
Roseville, Minnesota 55113
612-301-9792

Contact us anytime if you have questions or ideas for ways we can better support the child welfare professionals of Minnesota: info@mnchildwelfaretraining.com.



Center for Advanced Studies
in **Child Welfare**

