



Academic Health Committee

April 2026

April 9, 2026

Approximately 15 minutes following adjournment of Finance & Operations Committee

Boardroom, McNamara Alumni Center

AHC - APR 2026

1. Introduction of New Senior Leader Committee Liaison

Docket Item Summary - 3

2. Growing Minnesota's Nursing Workforce

Docket Item Summary - 4

Presentation Materials - 6



BOARD OF REGENTS DOCKET ITEM SUMMARY

Academic Health

April 9, 2026

AGENDA ITEM: Introduction of New Senior Leader Committee Liaison

Review

Review + Action

Action

Discussion

This is a report required by Board policy.

PRESENTERS: Regent Ruth E. Johnson
Carol Bradford, Interim Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and
Dean, Medical School

PURPOSE & KEY POINTS

The purpose of this item is to introduce the committee’s new senior leader liaison, Interim Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and Dean, Medical School Carol Bradford. In that role, Bradford will work to advance health affairs across the University, while helping connect and align the Medical School, clinical practice, and broader health system efforts. Bradford is a physician (ear, nose, and throat specialist) and an experienced academic health leader, most recently serving as Dean at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. She brings a strong focus on teamwork, transparency, and advancing both patient care and academic excellence.

After early conversations that have been positive and collaborative, Bradford’s initial goals for the Health Affairs Office include:

- Strengthen alignment between the Medical School, clinical operations, and system partners (e.g., hospitals and clinics).
- Support high-quality, accessible care for patients across Minnesota.
- Advance education and training for medical students, residents, and fellows.
- Promote research and innovation that improves patient outcomes.
- Ensure strong communication and collaboration across leadership, faculty, and care teams.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As established by Section V, Subd. 5(a) of Board of Regents Policy: *Board Operations & Agenda Guidelines*, “[t]he Board chair and president identify a senior leader for each committee to advise committee leadership on agenda content, assist in agenda development, prepare docket materials, coordinate presentations, and fulfill other duties assigned by the president.”



BOARD OF REGENTS DOCKET ITEM SUMMARY

Academic Health

April 9, 2026

AGENDA ITEM: Growing Minnesota’s Nursing Workforce

Review

Review + Action

Action

Discussion

This is a report required by Board policy.

PRESENTERS: Connie Delaney, Dean, School of Nursing

PURPOSE & KEY POINTS

The purpose of this item is to update the committee on the School of Nursing’s (SON) strategic initiatives and innovation framework designed to address Minnesota’s critical nursing workforce shortage.

Key points include:

- Growth of the School of Nursing’s enrollment and programs will contribute to the University’s achievement of the Elevate Extraordinary 2030 University Strategic Plan focus area to “expand the current healthcare workforce.” To combat a projected shortfall of 31,000 Registered Nurses (RN) and 34,000 Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN), the School is scaling its pre-licensure and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs, which currently rank among the top 10 nationally.
- To support this expansion and address the RN and Nurse Practitioner shortage as well as the 57 percent decline in LPN graduates since 2013, the University is pursuing a "Future-Ready" nursing model. This includes the development of a Nursing Workforce Virtual Reality (VR) Hub to enable schools across Minnesota to replace scarce clinical hours with high-quality simulation, leveraging the country's largest VR program of over 125 headsets.
- Given the urgent need to stabilize rural health and long-term care facilities, the SON is prioritizing 11 Academic-Practice Collaboratories and specialized pathways for Indigenous nursing. Despite the cancellation of Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) funding in 2025, continued strategic investment is required to maintain the SON’s position as a national leader in American Indian and Alaska Native doctoral enrollment and to bridge the \$55,000 annual salary gap currently hindering faculty recruitment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The committee previously discussed matters related to this topic at the following meetings:

- May 2025: *University Health Sciences Across the State: Undergraduate Programs*, Academic Health Committee

- December 2024: *Health Sciences Strategic Plan – Action*, Special Committee on Academic Health

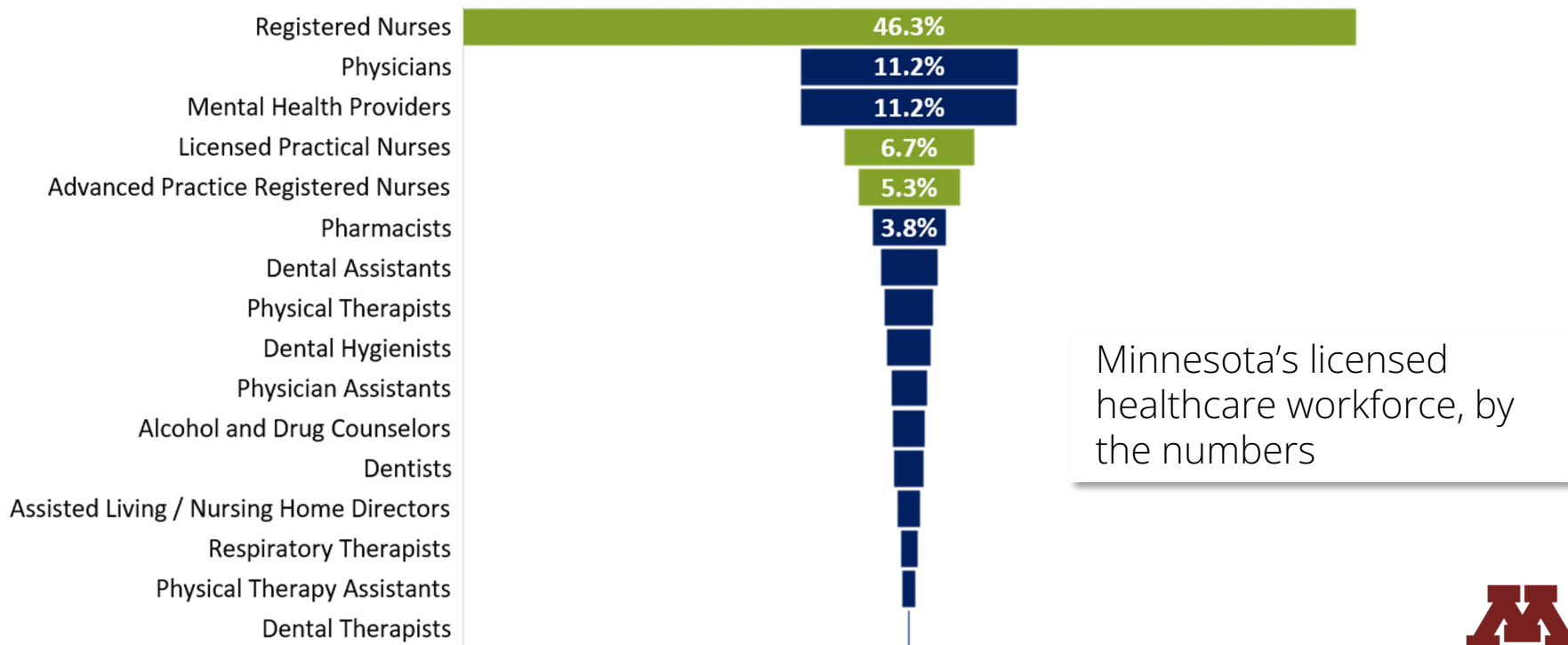
Growing Minnesota's Nursing Workforce

Board of Regents
Academic Health Committee
April 9, 2026

Connie White Delaney, PhD, RN, FAAN, FACMI, FNAP

Professor and Dean
UMN School of Nursing

Nurses comprise more than half of Minnesota's licensed healthcare workforce.



Minnesota Nursing Workforce Shortage: A Widening Gap in Care

- Minnesota will face a shortfall of over 31,000 Registered Nurses (RNs) and 34,000 Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs).
- Demand for RNs is growing at 6.6% annually, the supply is currently declining at a rate of 1.6%.
- Annual LPN graduates have declined by 57% since 2013 threatening the survival of long-term care and rural health facilities.
- Much of Greater Minnesota faces a significant Nurse Practitioner (NP) shortage, particularly for psychiatric mental health services, anesthesia, midwifery.



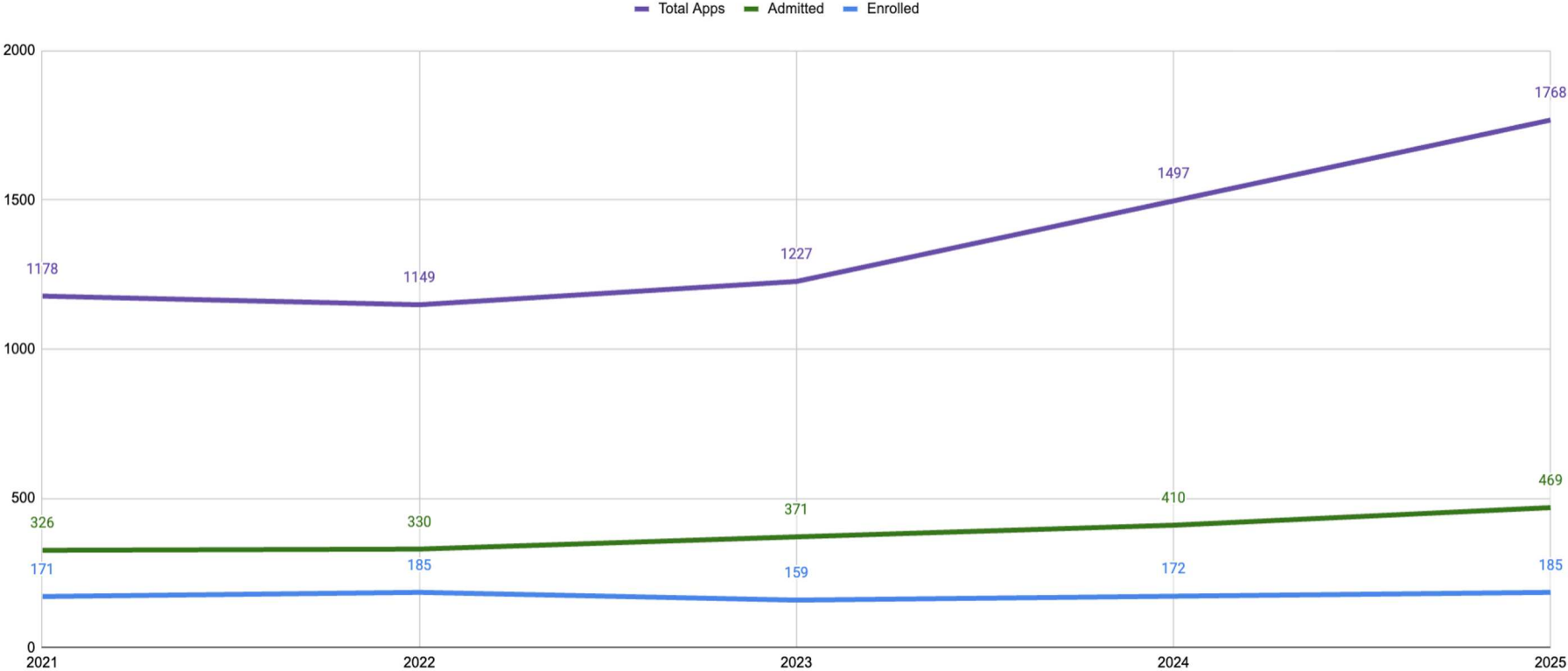
Schools Turning Future Nurses Away

Minnesota does not have enough nursing faculty and clinical opportunities to address the RN/LPN shortage.

- More than 2,000 nursing education program seats were left vacant or eliminated over the last three years, predominantly in rural areas, largely due to faculty shortages.
- More than one-third of nursing faculty are currently at retirement age.
- Nursing faculty require graduate-level degrees yet earn an average of \$55,000 less annually than their peers in clinical practice roles.
- Lack of opportunities/preceptors prevents schools with capacity to grow from being able to significantly increase enrollment.



Undergraduate (BSN) Applications



School of Nursing Collaboratories

Academic - Practice Partnerships



Center for Nursing Equity and Excellence (CNEE)

- Established in 2022 by the University of Minnesota School of Nursing and the Minnesota State HealthForce Center of Excellence.
- Engages every school of nursing in the state, health care providers, and others invested in improving health care in Minnesota.
- Mobilizes 80+ experts annually through the Nursing Workforce Summit to coordinate a unified response to the shortages.
- Minnesota's official nursing workforce center and serves as the state representative to the National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers, which includes 48 state organizations.



SCHOOL OF NURSING
AT A GLANCE

PROGRAMS AND ENROLLMENT:

BSN

Bachelor of Science
in Nursing

622

MN

Master of Nursing

126

DNP

Doctor of Nursing
Practice

306

PhD

38

Total degrees
awarded

333

Bentson
Scholars

80



TOTAL
ENROLLMENT:

1,149

TOTAL FACULTY:
(FULL TIME)

90

TOTAL STAFF:
(FULL TIME)

80

#4

DOCTOR OF
NURSING
PRACTICE
PROGRAM

#8

BACHELOR
OF SCIENCE
IN NURSING
PROGRAM

U.S. News and World Report



SCHOOL OF NURSING

We Are Minnesota's School of Nursing



Pre-Licensure Programs

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

- Delivered on both the Twin Cities and Rochester campuses.
 - Rochester cohort has grown from 32 in 2021 to 48 in 2025
- 100% of 2024 graduate respondents were employed in a field directly related to the BSN and 80% stay in Minnesota
- Top employers are Fairview, Mayo, Allina, Children's, and HealthPartners

Master of Nursing Program (MN)

- Accelerated (16 month) program for students with baccalaureate/masters/doctoral degree in non-nursing field.
- 100% NCLEX-RN pass rate and outstanding feedback from employers.
- Cohort recently increased from 64 to 84.



Doctoral Programs

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

- Ranked #4 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report
- One of the largest full-time DNP programs in the country
- Serves critical role in filling state's health care needs such as primary care, Nurse Anesthesia and Midwifery

PhD Program

- State's only PhD program
- Focuses on areas of science in which the health needs are greatest as described by AACN's strategic plan
- Strong need for PhD both for nursing faculty and within health systems to advance research and corporate leadership



Doctoral Education Pathway for American Indian/Alaska Native Nurses

- Launched five years ago with grant from HRSA
- The school leads the nation in Indigenous enrollment in a doctoral program the last three years
- Three doctorally-prepared AI/AN faculty
- Formal agreements with Indian health Services
- Program continuing despite HRSA funding cancellation in 2025



Immersive Virtual Reality

- Immersive Virtual Reality (VR) is reshaping how nursing education is delivered and students' capacity to address complex decisions in risk free environment.
- School of Nursing is a national and international leader in VR.
- The University currently sustains the largest VR program in the country with more than 125 headsets.
- Home to the Big 10 Practice-Ready Nursing Initiative funded through a grant from the American Nurses Foundation.
- Exploring Nursing Workforce VR Hub to enable other schools of nursing in Minnesota to leverage our expertise and switch more clinicals to simulation.
- VR Hub also has potential to aid health systems with nurse retention.



School of Nursing AI Framework: Head, Hands, Heart, Voice, & Wallet

- Launched Ethics of AI in Nursing initiative in 2023
- Concept: We are moving beyond teaching & tools; to building a holistic model.
 - HEART (Ethical): Using AI to uphold our values.
 - HEAD (Conceptual): Understanding what AI is and how it works.
 - HANDS (Operational): Using AI efficiently and effectively.
 - VOICE (Social): Advocating for the responsible use of AI.
 - WALLET (Stewardship): Stewarding our resources well to ensure AI provides a return on our investment.



Our role in addressing nursing shortages

- Strengths:
 - Land grant commitment
 - High Quality, High Demand
 - Leadership
 - Partnerships
 - AI, VR and Simulation
- Positioned for Expansion:
 - Continued expansion of BSN enrollment on UM-Rochester and UN-Twin Cities campuses
 - Leveraging of MOUs for MN programs with Duluth, Crookston, & Morris campuses
 - Leveraging DNP availability with Duluth, Crookston, Morris, and Rochester campuses
 - Expand rural immersion experiences
 - Expand Collaboratories focused on clinical experiences & rural health
 - Expand Native American Pathways program
- Establish Nursing Workforce Virtual Reality Hub at UMN School of Nursing



Our opportunities

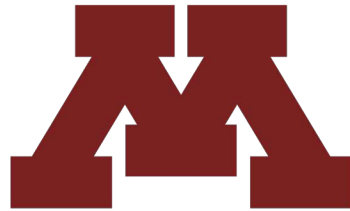
- Solidify funding then expand efforts of the Center for Nursing Equity and Excellence (CNEE)
- Establish the Nursing Workforce VR Hub at School of Nursing to support state's health systems and nursing schools
- Continuation and expansion of our efforts to address health disparities
 - Native American/Alaska Native Doctoral Pathways Program
 - Expand rural immersion experiences for students
 - Collaboratories focused on rural health
- Fully leverage existing MOUs for MN Program and promote DNP availability with Duluth, Crookston, & Morris



Our next steps

- Consultation with EVP Goldman and Provost Ritter on possible enrollment increases for BSN and MN programs
- Consultation with UMN leadership on CNEE's potential to address nursing workforce issues across Minnesota
- Complete updated BSN MOU with UM-Rochester (Consult with Provost Ritter, SVP Goldman, Chancellor Carrell)
- Finish review of student and support services at UM-Rochester by SON
- Continued conversations with Chancellors Holz-Clause, Nies and Rodriguez on fully leveraging existing MOU for MN program
- Further expand partnerships to facilitate the growth of AI/NA Doctoral Pathway Program and rural immersion experiences





Thank you