



M-ASCEND High School Teachers Cancer Curriculum Program

The High School Teachers Program is a partnership between The University of Minnesota's Masonic Cancer Center (MCC) and the Medical School's Program in Health Disparities Research (PHDR). The purpose of this National Cancer Institute (NCI)-funded program is to assist teachers in developing cancer-related curriculum materials for high school students. The goal is to excite students about these topics and related career fields, ultimately increasing the diversity of the cancer research and care workforces by attracting students from communities that have been historically underrepresented in STEM fields.

The application ([linked here](#)) will open in January 2025 and close February 24, 2025.

Program Description

Who is this for?

- For the summer of 2025, the High School Teachers Program will admit up to six STEM and medical careers teachers from public high schools in Minnesota.
 - a. Participants should have at least two years of full-time high school teaching experience and be actively teaching courses in which the resources can be used.

What are the benefits of participating?

- Through participation in the program, teachers will learn about the latest topics and techniques in cancer, healthcare, and disparities research.
- Participants will receive a \$3000 stipend: half at the beginning and the remaining half when the work is submitted at the end of the summer.
- Participants will also receive a certificate for 40 hours of Continuing Education Units from the University of Minnesota.

What is the time commitment?

- The program consists of three components: the Summer Program, Fall Launch, and March Meet Up.
 - a. The bulk of the work will occur in a full-time (Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 3:00pm) two-week **Summer Program** on the Twin Cities campus.
 - i. **Week 1: June 23 - 27 Curriculum intensive** - Attend lectures by researchers, tour UMN facilities, and carry out high school-level laboratory work. Then incorporate the experiences into activities and curriculum changes to bring the concepts and skills to your students
 - ii. **Week 2: July 7 - 11 Career focus** - Shadow a research lab and prepare resources to help students learn more about STEM careers

- b. After the summer experience, we will meet for our ~2 hour **Fall Launch**. Teachers will present their curriculum materials and plans.
 - i. The date will be determined as a group based on availability of participants, some time in August or September.
- c. In the spring of 2026, we will meet one final time for our ~2 hour **March Meet Up**. Teachers will reflect on how the work went with their students and provide feedback on the program.
 - i. Former teacher participants are also invited to share and update on their work.

Program Expectations

Applicants accepted into the program must agree to the following:

- Attend all sessions in the program, including traveling daily to the Twin Cities Minneapolis campus (parking vouchers will be provided) during the Summer Program.
 - If you live more than 50 miles outside of the metro area, we may be able to provide two weeks of room and board on the UMN campus (fully paid for). Please contact us if this interests you!
- Develop, discuss, and deploy curricula for engaging students in cancer biology topics, developing the skills needed for scientific investigations, and considering careers in STEM fields.
 - Teachers will produce materials based on the experience they can apply in their classroom.
 - Materials may be shared publicly online for use by other teachers.
- Report on the effectiveness of their materials when used with their students throughout the school year.

Although not required, teachers are also encouraged to:

- Take advantage of available resources—for example, borrow lab equipment from the lending library or incorporate "job talks" from researchers (in person visit, Zoom, or video).
- If applicable, encourage students to take advantage of other [M-ASCEND](#) opportunities.
- Stay in touch to continue collaborating with the University of Minnesota!

Application

Please complete the application [linked here](#). In the application you will be asked for your personal information and basic details about your school community. In addition, we will ask that you upload a current resume as well as a brief personal statement (≤500 words) explaining how you will use the summer program to further your career development and to enhance your students' educational experience.

Questions?

Contact Dr. Christopher Pennell (Program Director) at penne001@umn.edu

Looking for resources to teach about cancer?

We have quite a few resources freely available on the [Masonic Cancer Center Education Resources page](#) as well as a [monthly newsletter Career Connections](#).