



## 2025-2026 Academic Year

### High School Nandagikendan (Seek to Learn) Academy Report

The 2025-2026 Academic Year High School Seek to Learn Academy included the ten schools that participated in the previous academic year:

- Barnum High School
- Carlton High School
- Cloquet High School/Cloquet Area Alternative Education Program (CAAEP)
- Denfeld High School
- Fond du Lac Ojibwe School (FDLOJS)
- Hinckley-Finlayson High School (HFHS)
- McGregor High School
- Proctor High School
- South Ridge High School
- Wrenshall High School

However, due to scheduling, student attendance, and limited school staffing, only nine of the ten schools were able to engage with the program. Cloquet High School was one of the engaged schools and was only able to schedule an on-site session for its students. The Cloquet Area Alternative Education Program (CAAEP) did not participate due to low attendance from students. Proctor High School also did not participate due to limited staffing and low interest from students. The goal was to have each school participate in four independent trips after data from last year's academic year program showed that even when schools partnered, the average number of trips taken was four trips. Providing individual trips versus partnered trips meant schools could invite more students to participate. A future challenge to this is that with more spots available for schools, they tended to recruit more students from 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade, meaning that by the time those students enter 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, they will have less interest in the Seek to Learn Academy and therefore there will be fewer participation in the coming years. A potential solution to this would be to reduce the number of trips per school per academic year and to continue to recruit additional schools as outreach increases through social media updates. This year's academic year Academy had 215 students participate in Academy events with students attending an average of 1.71 trips and schools having an average of 3.2 trips, however, when

Cloquet High School is excluded from the average, the average number of trips students attend is 1.74 and schools would then have an average of 3.5 trips. The average number of students per trip is 12.7 students with a maximum attendance for an individual trip being 33 students. Figure 1 illustrates the number of attendees per school, with South Ridge High School having the highest participation at 43 students and Cloquet High School having the lowest participation with 8 students that participated in the program. The total average of student attendance per school was 24 students.

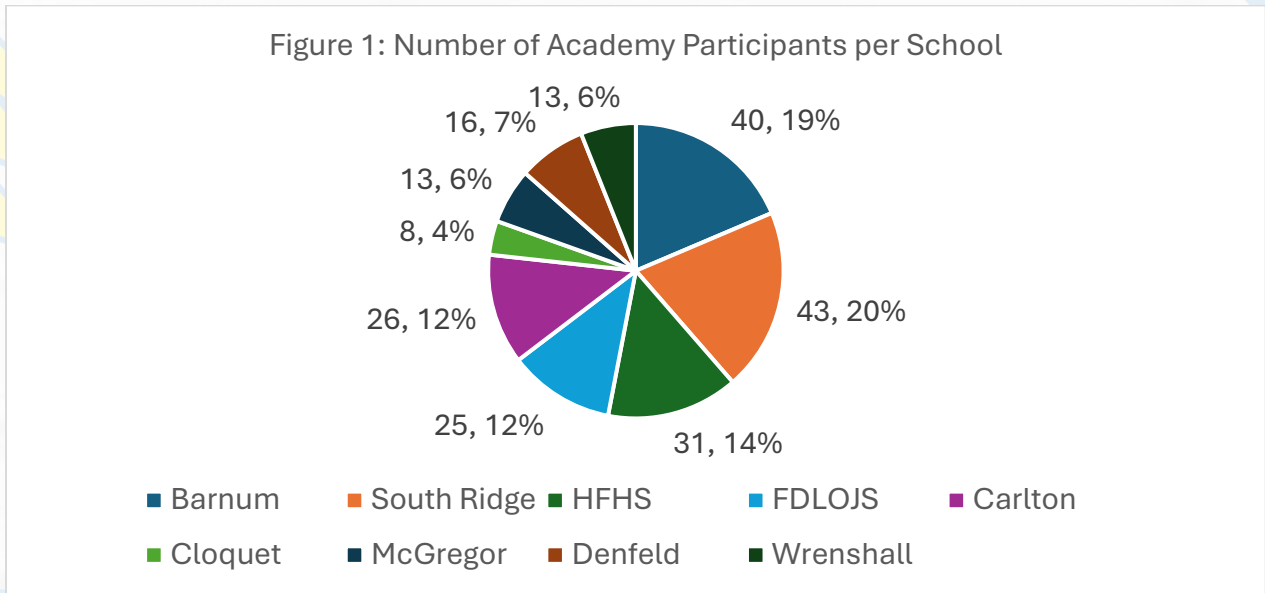


Figure 1: The number of students that participated in the Academy per school.

At the start of the academic year, teachers were encouraged to recruit eligible and interested students in grades 10-12, though exceptions were made to include some 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to start promoting the Academy to more students. Most participants were seniors (33%) and juniors (30%), though 26% were sophomores and 9% were freshman. The 2% of unknown grade level of participants were from the on-site session at Cloquet High School where students attended and left as needed to attend regularly scheduled classes.

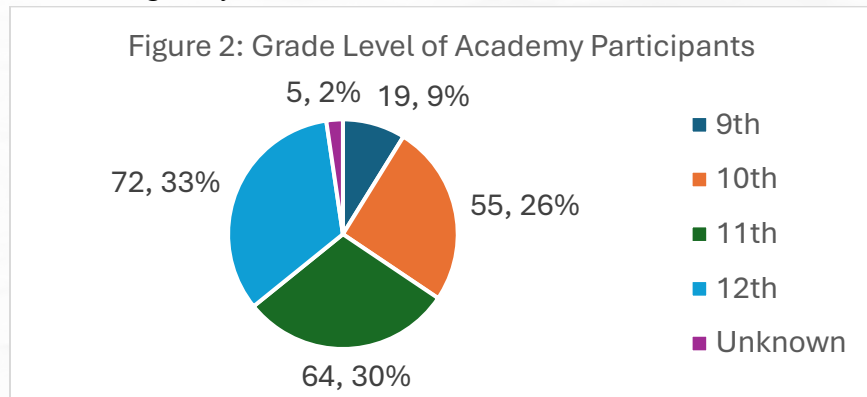


Figure 2: Grade Level of Academy Participants for the '25-'26 academic year.

Figure 3 illustrates the number of participants per grade level per school, in which Barnum High School had primarily students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade attend while schools with a smaller cohort of Native American students, such as Wrenshall High School, had students from grades 9-12. Schools with a smaller cohort of Native American students will most likely see a “break” from the program, just as Cloquet/CAAEP have had, as the students from 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade will be recruited and have less interest in the program by the time they enter their 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years. However, this does provide opportunities to recruit more schools and increase outreach by the Academy. With the increased outreach efforts through social media posts, schools and students have shared the posts and increased visibility, which has resulted in schools reaching out to inquire about the Academy.

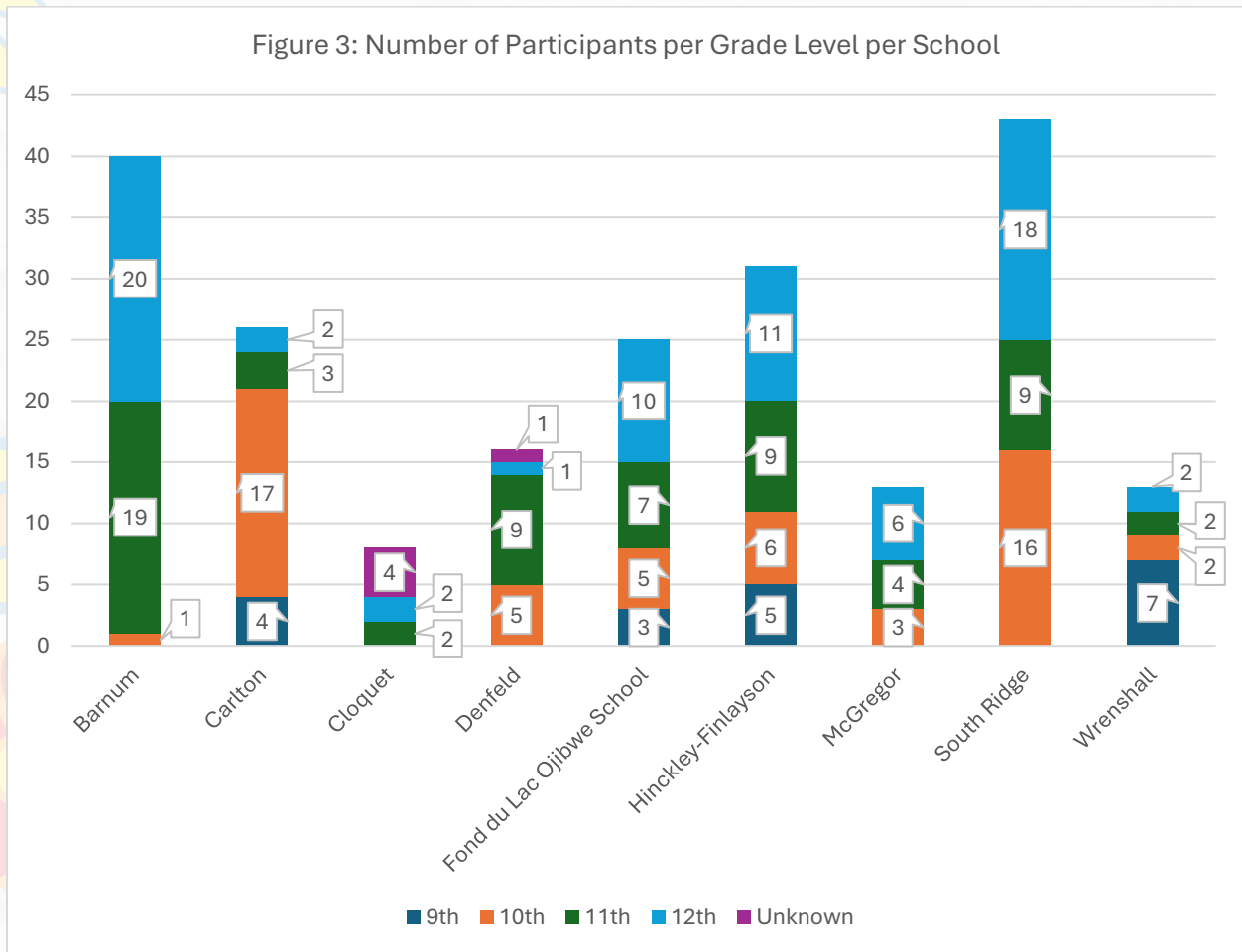


Figure 3: The number of participants per grade level per school that participated in the 2025-2026 academic year Academy.

Although last year’s cohort of students last year focused primarily on two-year colleges, this year’s cohort focused primarily on four-year universities. As more students are beginning to take advantage of College in the Schools (CITS) and Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) opportunities, they are seeking to transfer to a four-year university shortly after high school and the completion of an associate degree. For Figures 4 and 5, Table 1 details the acronyms used.

Campus	Acronym
Century College	Century
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College	FDLTCC
MN North College-Itasca	MNN-Itasca
Lake Superior College	LSC
Northwood Technical College	NWT
Bemidji State University	BSU
College of St. Scholastica	CSS
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University	LCOOU
St. Cloud State University	SCSU
University of Minnesota-Duluth	UMD
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	UMTC
University of Wisconsin-Superior	UWS

Table 1: The campus name and corresponding acronym, as used in Figures 4 and 5.

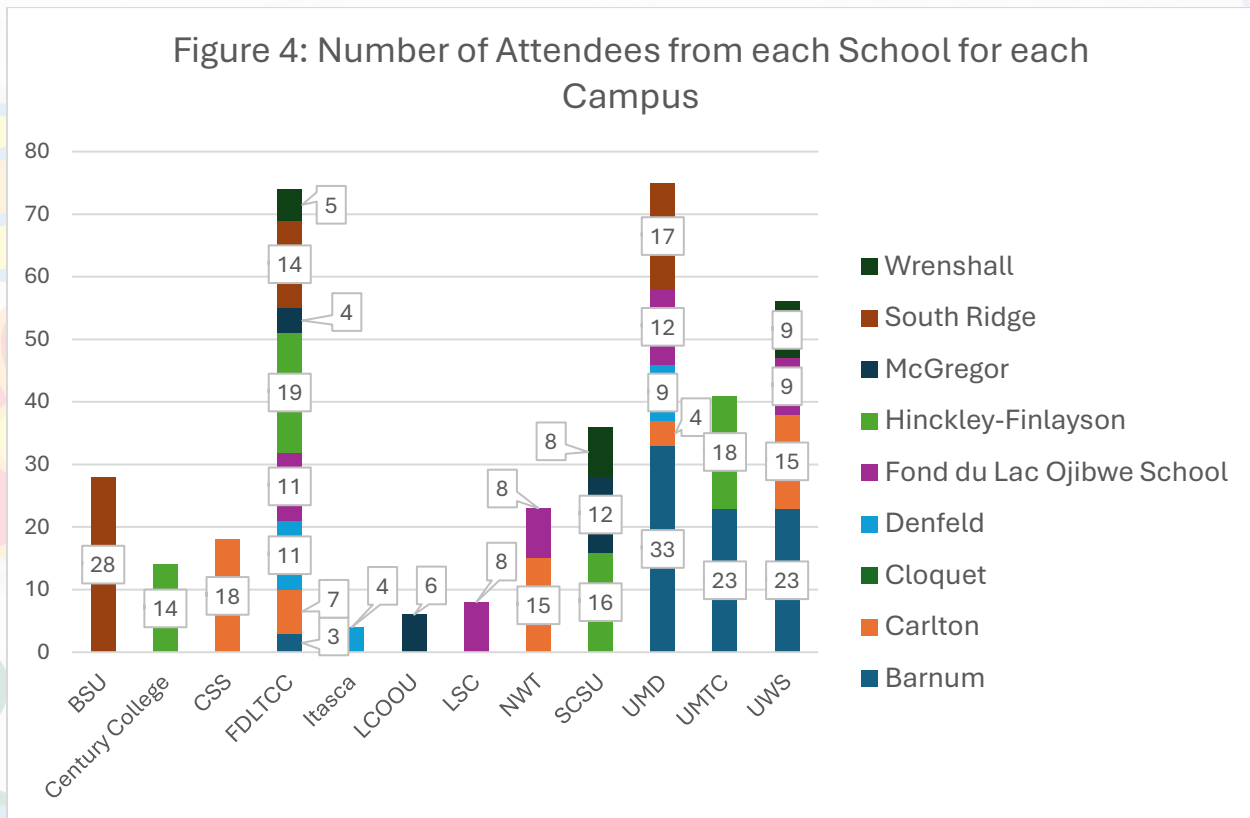


Figure 4: The number of attendees from each school that visited each campus.

Schools are increasing the opportunities for students to visit and explore local campuses, and therefore students tended to seek campuses that were further away for the Academy events. However, a visit to the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College is required to provide mock classes, career exploration curriculum, and information about college readiness to meet the goals of the Seek to Learn Academy program. Figure 4 displays the percentage of student visits by a breakdown of institution type and campus.

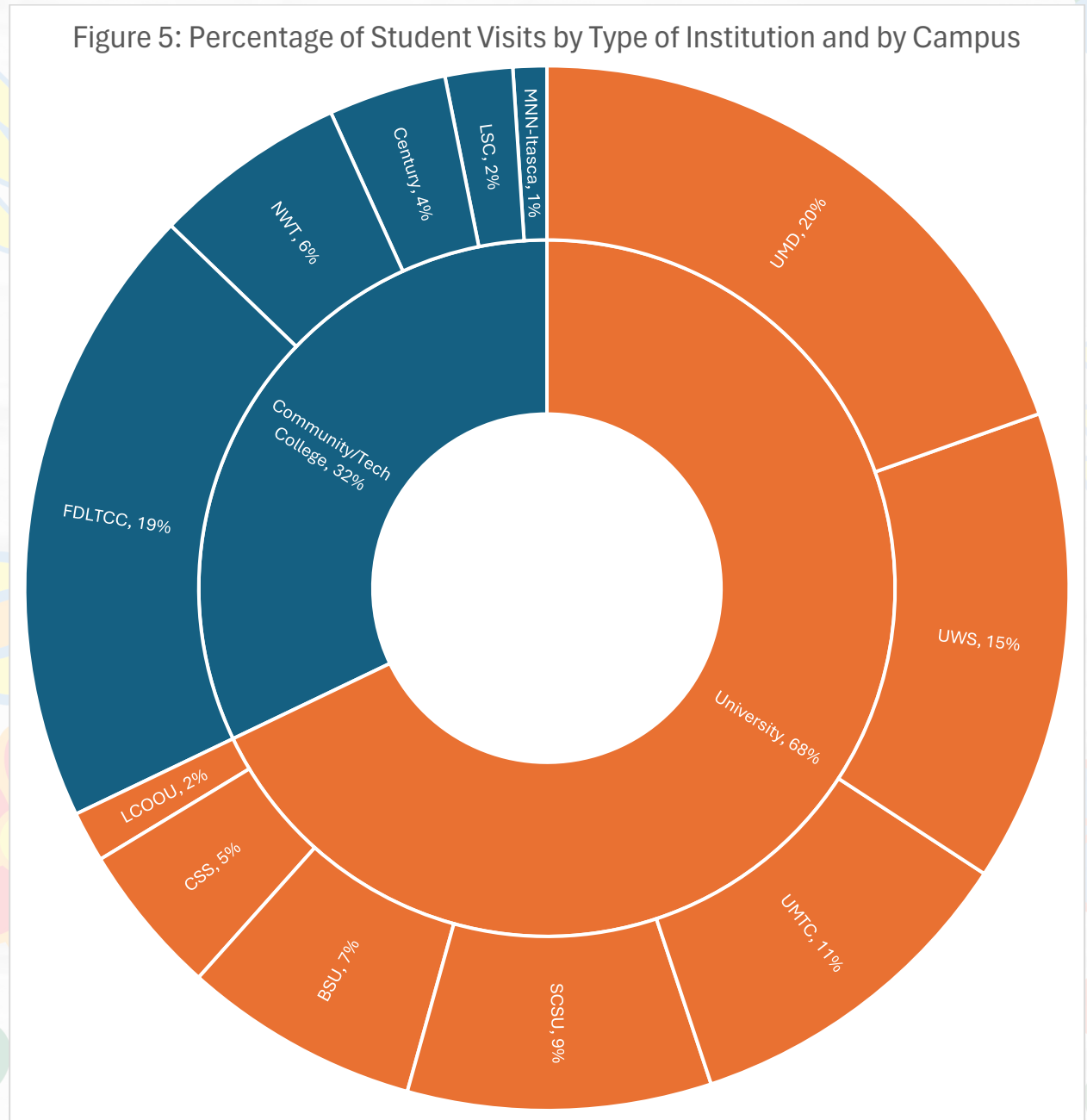


Figure 5: The percentage of student visits by type of institution and by campus. 32% of visits were to 2-year institutions while 68% were to 4-year institutions, the exact opposite of last year.

Although the number of Academy participants that have Tech IDs is comparable to last year’s cohort, more students are in active status of being CITS, PSEO, or undergraduate enrolled, as seen in Figure 6. The percentage of students having a Tech ID increased from 49% (’24-’25 cohort) to 50.2% (’25-’26 cohort). Last year’s cohort of students with Tech IDs had 42% being of “no status”, meaning that they are not enrolled as CITS, PSEO, or undergraduate. This year’s cohort had only 29.5% of the students that were not enrolled, and the largest increase was the number of students that were enrolled as CITS. This year’s cohort are taking advantage of the opportunity to take college classes while in high school, which means they are using the Academy to explore transfer options. There is also an increase in opportunities for students to explore higher education through their school programming, which may lead to a decrease in participation in the Academy of long-standing partnering schools. However, this will provide the opportunity to expand outreach and inclusion of other local area high schools into the Academy program.

Figure 6: Student Status of Tech IDs for Academy Participants

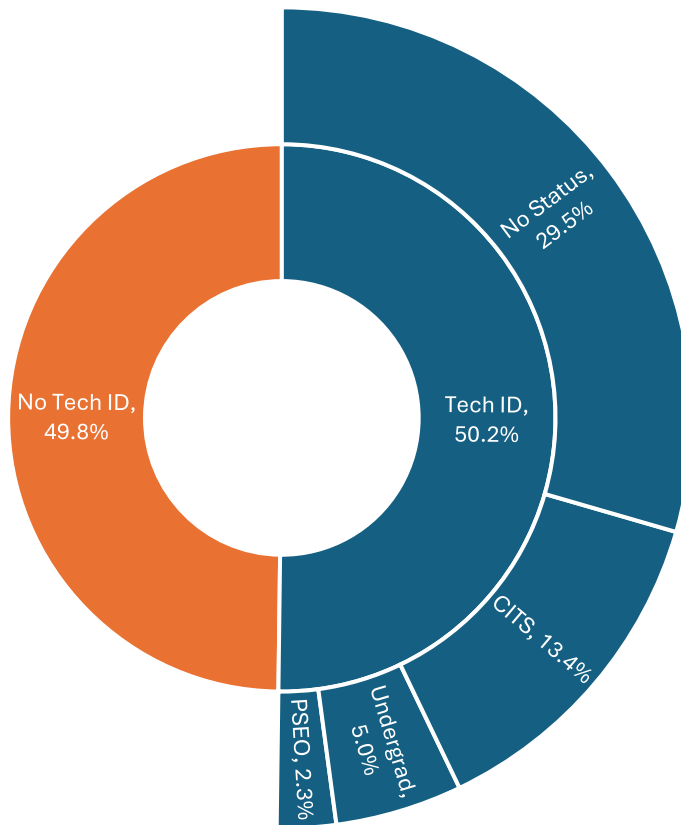


Figure 6: The Tech ID status of Academy participants. 50.2% of Academy participants have Tech IDs and only 29.5% of those with a Tech ID are not enrolled as CITS, PSEO, or undergrad. 13.4% of Academy participants with a Tech ID are enrolled as CITS while 5.0% and 2.3% are enrolled as undergraduate students and PSEO, respectively.

Of the 215 students that participated in the Academy, 108 have Tech IDs and of those with Tech IDs, 21 are enrolled at the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College. Figure 7 illustrates the student enrollment status by school while Figure 8 illustrates the student enrollment status by grade level. Approximately half of the Academy participants enrolled at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College attend South Ridge High School (ten students) and 23.8% of Academy participants enrolled attend Carlton High School. Approximately half of the Academy participants enrolled are in 11<sup>th</sup> grade while 1/3 are in 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

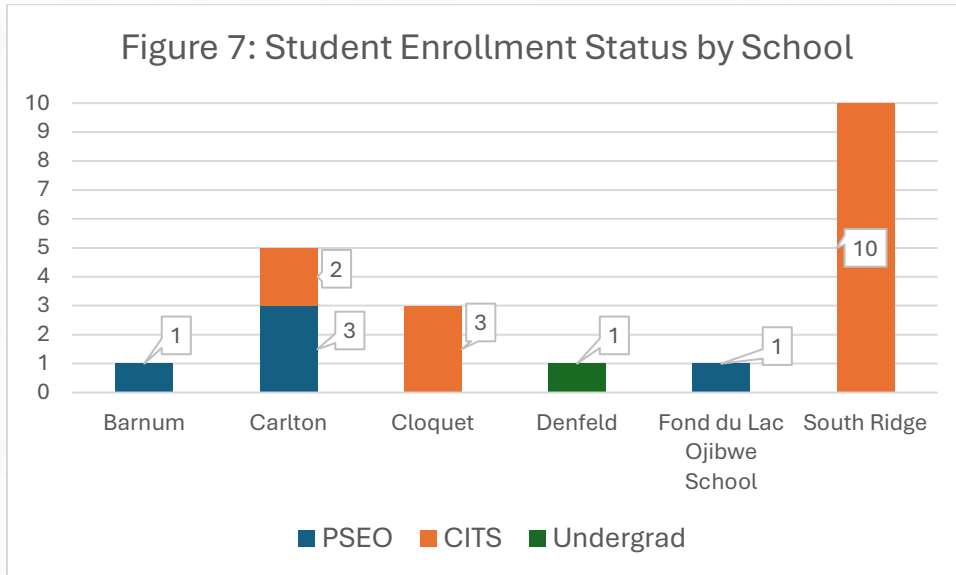


Figure 7: The Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College enrollment status of 2025-2026 academic year Academy participants by school.

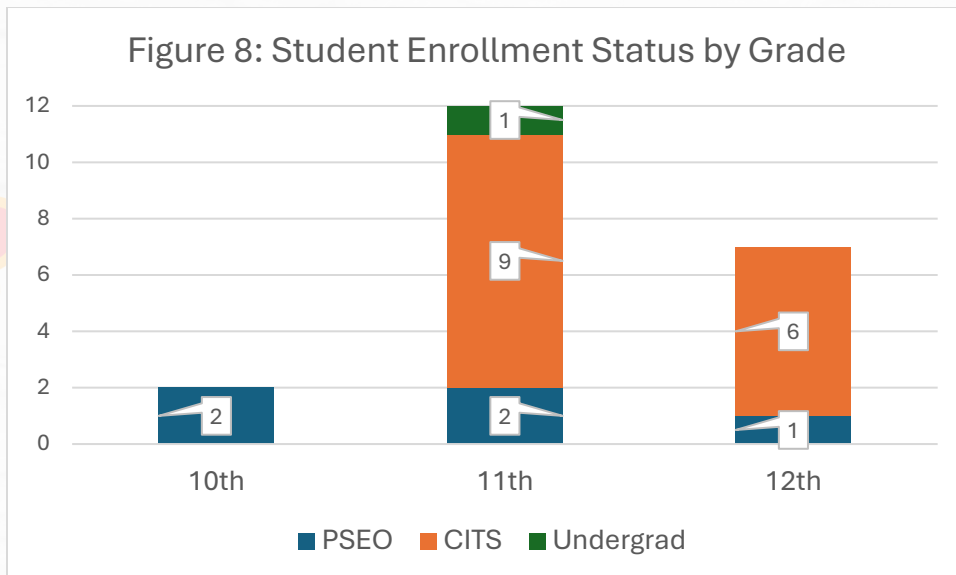


Figure 8: The Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College enrollment status of 2025-2026 academic year Academy participants by grade level.