



# MINNESOTA EDUCATOR

A publication for the members of Education Minnesota

April 2017



## Community schools grow, see results

Grant funding approved by the Minnesota Legislature in 2015 has allowed more districts across the state to implement the full-service community school model. Rochester and Deer River are just two examples of how financial support from the state has translated into better support for students in the classroom. The Legislature is considering additional funding this session to continue the grant process. Read about what these two districts are doing to support all students' needs on **Page 3**.

## Legislative session continues with education bills

The 2017 legislative session has reached its halfway point and education and union rights have been at the center of many bills presented so far.

Two of the biggest topics gaining traction in both houses of the Legislature are about seniority language in layoffs and tax credits for private school tuition, or "neovouchers."

The leadership of the Minnesota House brought its first education bill, HF1478, of the session to the floor on March 16, a measure to remove anti-discrimination protections for teachers during layoffs and mandate a round of time-consuming

and expensive negotiations to replace them. The bill passed 71-59 and now heads to the Senate.

Local unions and school boards can currently negotiate any system of teacher layoffs they choose, or they can use a default system in state law based on seniority and licensure area. The Legislature created the fallback system to protect teachers from arbitrary or vindictive layoffs, such as for giving low grades or speaking out about conditions in a school, or even because of the faith the teachers followed, their sexual orientation or their race. HF 1478 would

eliminate the default language and compel districts to agree on their current language or negotiate a new system. The bill does not affect statutory language that explicitly gives districts the authority to terminate teachers for poor performance.

"This bill is a waste of time and a distraction from the significant challenges facing Minnesota students and educators," said President Denise Specht. "Go talk to students who are struggling with untreated mental illness, or educators who can't afford health insurance, or administrators who can't fill open jobs in rural schools.

None of them are calling for new layoff rules."

Legislation that would give tax credits for private school tuition is also moving through both the House and Senate. Corporations and wealthy individuals also could get tax breaks for donating to private school scholarship funds.

Supporters of the bill say that giving more choice in schools will help close the achievement gap. Research shows these tax breaks are just another name for vouchers, which have been proven to reduce access to high-quality education, because private schools have

little to no oversight and can turn students away.

Education Minnesota members have been at all of the committee hearings on these bills, speaking out against them. Members have shared concern for English language learners and special education students, who might be turned away or not receive the appropriate resources at a private school. They argued what the state needs to do is invest money in proven solutions for closing the achievement gap.

Members from across the state have been attending

**Session, page 9**

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Read the article about full-service community schools. Then answer the question, "What would you like to see your school do (or what is it already doing) that fits into the full-service community school model?" and send it to us via email, Twitter or Facebook to be entered into a drawing for a \$25 Target gift card.

Email us at [educator@edmn.org](mailto:educator@edmn.org) or post on Twitter or Facebook using #MNEducator. Find us on Facebook at Education Minnesota and on Twitter @EducationMN. Answers will run in next month's Minnesota Educator.

Congratulations to last month's contest winner, **Jill Nysse** of Winona. See a selection of answers to last month's question on **Page 2**.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

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# Speak up to fix problems, defend good solutions

We don't really need more evidence that bad things can happen when the people in power make decisions about education policy without consulting actual educators, but plenty of new proof has appeared in the past few weeks.

It's important to point out what annoys and frustrates us about our work because those things can affect the students we educate. When that happens, it's our responsibility to organize and fix the most common problems.

For me, the first new proof of the problem started with a small reminder a few weeks ago while sitting with 250 other educators taking some union-led professional development for re-licensure. The instructors were excellent and a group of culinary students prepared the best tomato basil soup I have ever eaten.

However, some lawmaker prescribed the content areas, which are not connected to the individualized growth plans Minnesota teachers receive under the Teacher Development and Evaluation law.

Wouldn't our students benefit from a tighter connection between the two systems of professional



Denise Specht, president

development—one a top-down requirement from the state and one developed with individual educators in their own districts?

The misuse of standardized testing is another area ripe for reform. Last year, Education Minnesota lobbied for an audit of testing in Minnesota schools. The Office of the Legislature Auditor released its report in early March.

The news coverage of the audit didn't surprise many educators. The auditors found, "Minnesota schools spend a considerable amount of time and resources on state standardized tests, but their usefulness is limited."

Well, yea.

The news reports also said teachers were "unprepared"

to use data from the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments in their practice, but those same reports didn't refer back to the section of the audit called, "Usefulness," which contains classic instances of what happens when educators are ignored.

For example, in 2013 the Legislature passed a law saying the Minnesota Department of Education must use testing data to calculate the college and career readiness of students in grades 3 to 7, and share those projections with parents and schools. The MDE put this estimate, for the first time, on the 2016 MCA reports to families.

The problems were obvious. Tests are a just snapshot and everything from luck, to motivation, to a cold virus can affect scores. Students' brains develop at different rates. Long-range predictions are usually wrong.

A national testing expert who advised the MDE told the auditors, "scores should probably show 5 percent of students are on track for college readiness, 5 percent being off track, and 90 percent categorized as 'I don't know.'"

Nonetheless, the MDE complied with a dumb law

and sent these essentially meaningless guesses to unsuspecting parents and guardians of elementary and middle school students.

The educators interviewed by the auditors were not "unprepared" to use MCA data, we just know better than to try.

Now consider health insurance. When the Legislature listened to educators in 2014, it passed the Health Insurance Transparency Act, or HITA, which gave public school educators access to the giant insurance pool used by state public employees.

The advantage was simple. The costs in large insurance pools fluctuate less than smaller pools. Many Education Minnesota locals have decided to join the pool. Some locals lowered their health insurance costs, but all gained stability for an expense that can explode from year to year.

Now the 2017 Minnesota Legislature wants to repeal HITA. The move starts with ignoring educators like Caledonia education support professional Deb Cody, who recently drove to St. Paul to testify that there was a time when none of her colleagues could afford the district's health insurance.

The union found the large pool for public employees was a better solution for their group. Many ESPs can now afford insurance for the first time, but just barely. Cody said after paying for her family plan, there's less than \$20 left in her paycheck.

If Minnesota is going to get the most out of its public schools, it has to listen more closely to its educators. Re-licensing can more responsive to individual needs. Through ignorance or malice, state and federal lawmakers have broken the testing system. Healthcare costs are driving out good educators at a time when our schools desperately need to recruit and retain more of them.

The changes won't come unless we speak up and demand to be heard. It's clear to anyone who follows the news, the current majorities in the state house and Congress won't seek out our opinions, so we must bring it to them in a loud, clear voice.

I know we can do it, if we work...

Together,

Twitter: @DeniseSpecht

# What can be done to help solve the teacher shortage crisis and improve recruitment and retention of educators?

In last month's Minnesota Educator, we continued the "we want to hear from you" contest and received responses from all over the state via email and Twitter. Here is a selection of the answers. Look on page 1 for this month's question and how to submit an answer. Your answer enters you into a drawing for a \$25 Target gift card!

"One: Adopt the college faculty model and promote both part-time subject experts for specialty courses and offer subject-or-grade-specific education training. Two: Recruit from afar; hire from places with an abundance of trained and experienced teachers—both in the U.S. and abroad." *Donovan Jackman, Minnesota State College Faculty*

"A law respecting prior continuing contract status from neighboring states would help attract some good teachers." *Todd Mensink, Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota*

"Support for new and existing teachers is so important. Mentoring programs can help new teachers feel the support needed to get through those tough decisions, tough days and tough students. Existing teachers need to also feel supported or burnout can occur quickly and zap the energy needed on a daily basis to create the dynamic lessons and make connections that can change students' lives." *Jodi Prchal, New Prague Education Association*

"Raise salaries to be competitive with other industries." *Laurie Meyers, Minneapolis Federation of Teachers*

"Teacher wages are generally lower than those of other professions that require a similar level of education. One way to help improve recruitment and retention of educators is to increase funding so districts are able to offer a more competitive wage for teachers." *Melissa Williams, Education Richfield*

"I don't think there is one single answer to solving the teacher shortage crisis, but better pay would be a good start." *Jill Nysse, Winona Education Association*

"This may be wishful thinking, but the number at the upper left of any district's salary schedule should be about \$60,000, and the one at the lower right somewhere north of \$100,000. That would bring more candidates to teaching, help relieve financial stress, enhance retention rates and, maybe most importantly, come closer to paying teachers what they're actually worth." *Mark Brandt, Education Minnesota Retired*

"I am certain most of my colleagues would agree with: better pay; lighten caseloads or number of students per class; quality professional development; and decreased paperwork." *Jane Greco, Education Minnesota Retired*

## MINNESOTA EDUCATOR

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# Rochester, Deer River begin building full-service community schools thanks to state funding

The districts were able to start programs after receiving the state grants approved by the Legislature in 2015. The Legislature is considering a bill to continue those funds this session.

Deer River kindergarten teacher DeAnna Hron heard about Duluth’s Myers-Wilkins full-service community school and immediately was interested in learning more.

“The needs of our students are growing,” she said. “I thought this would work for us. In fact, we were already doing pieces of it.”

Hron started conversations with other educators and administrators, all of whom were interested in the concept.

After the Legislature allocated \$500,000 for two years of grant funding to help support the effort in 2015, Deer River was all in. They applied for the first round of grants but did not receive any money. Then last year they applied again and received an implementation grant.

“Even though we didn’t get that first round of grants, we continued to move forward,” Hron said. “We added mental health and nutrition services and an after-school program.”

With the grant funds, the district has hired Chad Evans as a site coordinator and is starting the community needs assessment process.

“The social and emotional needs of our students are important,” Hron said. “We will bring in the community, have a meal and talk about what those needs are. Then the site coordinator will go out and start putting those things in place.”

Evans is already working on improving what programs the school currently has in place.

“We have a food shelf in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank, but we can make it better,” he said.

The focus of the needs assessment and their planned implementation process is to ensure families and the community feel connected.

“The school is the hub of our community,” Evans said.

The district spans 500 square miles, located between the Leech Lake Reservation and the Iron Range, and has 70 percent of students participating in free and reduced lunch.

“We have issues connected to rural and poverty needs,” Evans said. “Some students need someone else besides a parent to fill these roles. We need to close the opportunity gaps, which will then close the achievement gap.”

A lot of what schools across the state are currently doing is part of the community school model, said Evans.

“This just takes it one step further by creating more meaningful connections in the community,” he said.

“The solutions to these problems are already around us, we just need to find them. And if we don’t have the tools, then we build them.”

“I see the unmet needs of students in the community and then I am looking at my classroom and am trying to meet their needs there,” Hron said. “My kids need these things, but I can’t do it all. That’s where the community school model comes in.”

The same passion for students and meeting their needs is what got Rochester teacher Julie Ruzek interested in the full-service community school model.

“Seven years ago, I went to a national community schools conference and it was the most impactful conference I have ever been to,” Ruzek said. “I realized that we’re doing a lot of this work already, but our systems, work and teams haven’t been aligned with each other.”

Ruzek took charge and received grant funding for 11 people from the district, including the superintendent, to attend the next national conference.

The superintendent was on board and at the end of 2014, the district announced that two of their elementary schools would become community schools.

“We applied for state grants for both schools in 2015 but only got funding for one,” Ruzek said.

That is when the district got the United Way of Olmsted County involved.

“I knew the United Way support the movement nationally,” Ruzek said. “We realized it would be a good partnership here.”

Last summer, the partnership agreement was finalized, and the United Way is now helping the district with data, funding and finding additional partnerships.

“We work with community organizations to align strategies and monitor process through data,” said Chad Campbell, vice president of community impact at the United Way of Olmsted County. “We bring the lens of relationship building with nonprofits and government agencies in Olmsted County. We have access to philanthropic efforts that schools wouldn’t have. We are largely behind the scenes doing partnership resourcing and administrative support for the effort.”

“Yes, we may receive some financial support from United Way but it’s much bigger than that,” said Ruzek. “The whole part of this was to talk to all stakeholders,



(Above) Rochester’s full-service community schools feature an enrichment day full of engaging activities for all students.



needing to get the voice of our community partners. Having this team that we’ve built has been very beneficial to the work that we do.”

The district reapplied for the state grant last year and received funding for two additional sites. The district now has three community schools: Gage Elementary, Riverside Central Elementary and the Rochester Area Learning Center.

All three schools have site facilitators, and Ruzek is on special assignment as the district’s Family and Community Engagement facilitator and volunteer coordinator.

“We meet with all of the facilitators as a professional learning community,” Ruzek said. “We talk about things site specific and districtwide. We’re allowing some opportunities at sites

to be organic and some are districtwide.”

Gage Elementary was the first site to be up and running with the first state grants funds.

The site now hosts a variety of grade-level and building-wide events for families, has built an outdoor classroom and garden, has one-to-one iPads and focused art activities, integrates community service projects, works on STEM and Humanities curricula, has a Spanish Immersion program, hosts a food and clothing pantry, has increased mental health supports and is growing medical supports.

And even in the short timeframe, they are seeing evidence of progress.

The school has seen 108 parents attend academic-focused family events, all second- and third-graders

involved in enrichment opportunities, 96 percent of students express interest in continued arts enrichment, positive feedback from all 18 partners involved in enrichment day, 56.2 percent of families attend extra events beyond conferences, over 100 students see a dentist on site and more.

At the time of the school’s needs assessment, only 10 community partners responded. Now the school has more than 25 partnerships in place, with 100 percent of the partners desiring a deeper partnership.

“Community schools are working to address barriers in a student’s school career and their life outside of school,” Campbell said. “We’re using evidence-based strategies that move students forward.”

## WHAT IS A FULL-SERVICE COMMUNITY SCHOOL?

A full-service community school welcomes community members as partners in school improvements, brings community services into the school and empowers the people closest to students to examine disparities. They put social, medical and before- and after-school academic services and enrichment activities where they are most accessible—on the school campus.

### What programs and services might a full-service community school offer?

- Childcare, adult education, early childhood education, medical clinics, mental health services, food shelves and family literacy classes.
- Programs that help parents and community members develop deep involvement and leadership in their school.
- High-quality before- and after-school tutoring, college application help and specialized training and professional development for educators.
- Services that improve school climate and health, such as using restorative justice tactics, training teachers in social and emotional learning and offering school-based health centers.

### What is the Legislature proposing to support full-service community schools this session?

Bills to appropriate \$20 million, \$10 million each year, from the general fund to help support full-service community schools are in both the House and the Senate. They are being laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus bill.

Learn more about full-service community schools by reading Education Minnesota’s Educator Policy Innovation Center report at [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/Educator-Policy-Innovation-Center/EPIC-reports](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/Educator-Policy-Innovation-Center/EPIC-reports).



# TRA board members answer frequently asked questions about pensions, their purpose, their future

### What is a pension?

A pension is a regular payment made during one's retirement. While working, employers and employees contribute to the retirement fund, the Teachers Retirement Association (TRA). In Minnesota, the State Board of Investment takes those contributions and invests them in the market. The result is that 73 percent of fund revenue comes from investment income, while just 27 percent comes from direct contributions. The fund then pays out that revenue in the form of monthly retirement checks.

### What is TRA?

TRA is a statewide public pension fund that provides retirement, disability and death benefits to Minnesota public school teachers, administrators and college faculty.

### What does the TRA Board of Trustees do?

The board works with TRA administration and staff to monitor operations and set direction for the fund. In Minnesota, since most guidelines about how the fund works and how benefits are determined are set in statute, the board is continuously working to understand, evaluate and make recommendations to improve these laws. Most recently, the TRA board proposed a package to the state Legislature to ensure that TRA will continue to be healthy for many generations.

### Why is a pension an important benefit? How does it help with recruitment and retention, especially when our state is facing a teacher shortage?

TRA is the best benefit no one thinks about. Early in our careers, our focus is on learning the craft of teaching and doing our absolute best for our students. As our



Mary Broderick

careers continue, the value of our TRA benefit emerges. Less than 50 percent of private sector employees have any pension at all. As TRA members, we have the security of a guaranteed pension, paid monthly, for the rest of our lives. No teacher should ever have to worry about how to make ends meet in retirement, and the TRA defined benefit pension helps our members retire with dignity.

It's a fact that teacher salaries are much lower when compared with other careers requiring advanced degrees. We also know that teaching is a highly stressful job. Our pension provides a tangible, guaranteed, future benefit, and that helps attract and keep high-quality teachers in the profession.

### What is the difference between a defined benefit and a defined contribution?

The basic, and most important, difference between a defined benefit (DB) and a defined contribution (DC) pension plan has to do with how you are paid in retirement. With a DB plan, like TRA, your benefit is defined by a formula based on salary and years of service and is paid for the rest of your life. With a DC plan, like a 403(b), 401(k) or IRA, the benefit is not based on a formula.



Marshall Thompson

Your benefit depends on how much money there is in your account, and how long it lasts. Your benefit is not guaranteed by the plan to be paid for the rest of your life. In fact, with a DC plan, you may outlive your pension savings.

Both DB and DC plans include employer and employee contributions, but the ways the funds are handled are very different. With a DC plan, the individual employee controls the investment choices and bears the risk.

In a DB plan, the contributions of all included employees and employers are invested together by the plan. The plan bears the investment risk, and this risk is pooled over many generations. This generational risk pooling, along with lower overall fees, allows DB plans to take full advantage of upswings in the market where DC plans can't. The result is a robust plan that pays benefits for your entire post-retirement lifetime.

### What do active teachers need to understand about their plan?

We are very fortunate to have a DB pension plan in Minnesota. Policymakers in every state are being pressured to move toward DC plans, and many states have eliminated or lost their DB plan in the last few years.

It is important to be aware of rising pension issues and to fight to preserve a strong TRA DB plan going forward.

Retirement may seem far away, but you and your employer contribute money toward your retirement throughout your entire career. Although the benefit structure may get tweaked over time, after three years as an active member of TRA, you are guaranteed a pension at retirement.

TRA is a system that is designed to provide for teachers who have already retired, those currently teaching and those yet to be hired in the future. When people talk about "unfunded liabilities" or changes needed to improve the funded status of TRA, they are looking out 30 to 50 years.

### What do teachers nearing retirement need to understand about their plan?

Anyone thinking about retirement is encouraged to set up an individual meeting through TRA to explore their personalized options. Service credits, survivorship, acceleration—it can all be very confusing. Our counselors have a deep knowledge of what our plan has to offer, as well as how it might interact with other retirement benefits you might be expecting.

### What changes to the plan are being discussed at the Legislature this session?

As a normal course of our work, the board of trustees examines trends that might affect the long-term health of the fund. The recent low-inflation environment and relative health of Minnesota teachers (second only to Hawaii in life span) has prompted us to put forward a package to the Legislature to ensure TRA's viability for future generations. The board has proposed a lower cost-of-living adjustment

(COLA) and an increase to employer contributions, offset by an increase in the funding allocation from the state.

At this point, it's up to the Legislature to do what they think is best. Some have suggested increasing the retirement age to 67 or lowering the base multiplier for calculating benefits. There is also a conversation about permanently lowering the assumed rate of investment return to 7.5 percent (the 30-year average is 8.7 percent). The board does not support these changes, but they are part of the conversation and may be enacted into law. It is important to understand that if changes of this type are made, they are often phased in or are set to apply to teachers hired in the future.

### Why are TRA and Education Minnesota defending the plan and making suggestions on the changes?

Just as we negotiate other compensation like salaries and health care contributions, our pension is a benefit for which we need to fight. TRA gets input from many stakeholders, including Education Minnesota, and works to create a package with as much buy-in as possible. Both TRA and Education Minnesota work hard to make sure members (retired, active and future) are treated justly and fairly. Our pension is a huge part of that.

*Mary Broderick is vice president of the TRA Board of Trustees and president of the St. Cloud Education Association.*

*Marshall Thompson is a member of the TRA Board of Trustees, an instructional coach in Osseo and a member of the Education Minnesota Governing Board.*

## Representative Convention plans come together

The 2017 Education Minnesota Representative Convention will be held April 21-22 in Bloomington, Minnesota. Plans are in place for the event, which will focus on "The Power of We!" The theme was chosen to demonstrate and celebrate our collective strength and wisdom as Education Minnesota and its members, as we plan our work going forward.

Delegates will be discussing and voting on proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. Proposed amendments are available to view on Education Minnesota's

website, under the member portal's Representative Convention section. You must be logged in to see this content.

Read about what action was taken at the RC in the May issue of the Minnesota Educator.

### Event app launched

Delegates to the RC can access the event's schedule, speaker information and documents and stay up-to-date with notifications throughout the weekend on the event app.

To download the app, find it in your app store by searching "edmn." If you already have the Education Minnesota

event app, click on the upper left menu icon, then click the gear in the upper right corner. Click on "Back to All Events," and the RC should automatically load. You will need to enter a password, which will be sent out to delegates in the RC Update e-newsletter. Delegates can also access the event app information online at <https://event.crowdcompass.com/edmnrc>. The password will also be needed to access the information online.

### Food shelf donations accepted

The Education Minnesota Community Outreach Committee is accepting

donations for Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People, an organization that serves local children and families in need, and monetary donations for Second Harvest to benefit people statewide. Locals can organize a food drive and have your delegates bring it with to the Representative Convention.

Donations of food, cash or checks can be brought to the dropoff location outside the hotel ballroom. The Education Minnesota Community Outreach Committee seeks to foster a culture of giving by sponsoring a variety of donation opportunities at

major Education Minnesota events during the year.

### NEA RA delegate meeting after RC, April 22

Delegates to the National Education Association Representative Assembly should plan to gather April 22 after the RC for a caucus meeting, tentatively from 3 to 5 p.m., at the DoubleTree Bloomington hotel.

Education Minnesota will provide funding for delegates to attend and delegates should look for an email with specific information soon.



# New “Believe in ‘We’” campaign debuts with TV ads

Education Minnesota’s new TV ad theme, “Believe in ‘We,’” debuted during the broadcasts of the Minnesota State High School League tournaments in March, and another new ad in the campaign debuted on statewide broadcast and cable television March 22.

One of the core purposes of the “Believe in ‘We’” campaign is to emphasize how our members and the Minnesota public share the same values for our students—fairness, freedom, opportunity, equity, inclusiveness, excellence—and that we must all speak up for these values.

“Believe in ‘We’” also will help us express the value of belonging to Education Minnesota and the power we have when we speak with a united voice.

The campaign calls on everyone—educators, students, parents, employers, school administrators and board members—to speak up for the one place that welcomes, embraces and helps students from all walks of life find their voice: public schools.

From the lifelong boost that students get from pre-kindergarten to the well-rounded education they get from extracurricular

activities, “Believe in ‘We’” champions the issues that public schools face in brightening not only our young people’s futures, but all of Minnesota’s.

The tournament ads celebrate the values of a well-rounded education that access to extra- and co-curricular activities provides. The statewide TV ad shows the need to support public schools, the place where all students are welcome and celebrated and where their dreams can take flight.

As the campaign moves forward, “Believe in ‘We’” ads will address other issues, such as the teacher shortage and the need for equitable resources for public schools.

The new campaign website, BelieveInWeMN.com, has also launched. The website includes more information on the campaign and the issues it discusses, ways to speak up to lawmakers and others about our values and a method to stay connected with us as the campaign moves forward.


Add your name to our list of supporters at BelieveInWeMN.com and you’ll get updates and alerts from Education Minnesota on important legislation as it happens, the latest education

news and exclusive video stories from your colleagues that highlight the educator perspective on the crucial issues facing public education.

View the ads on our YouTube page, [www.youtube.com/EducationMinnesota](http://www.youtube.com/EducationMinnesota). Share the ads using the hashtag #BelieveInWeMN.

Megan Marsnik, a Minneapolis high school English teacher (top right), and Julie Beaver, a Zimmerman middle and high school math teacher (bottom right), film the spot for the new “Believe in ‘We’” campaign.






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# Education Minnesota candidates' election statements

At the 2017 Representative Convention, delegates will elect the leaders for Education Minnesota. Positions to be filled are: NEA director (one position), governing board at-large (election zones 1-8), governing board at-large vacancy (two positions), governing board ESP (two positions), and governing board higher ed/statewide affiliate (one position).

All candidates had the opportunity to submit a statement and/or photograph. These statements and photos appear here in the Minnesota Educator and on the Education Minnesota website. Members may view the statements online by going to [www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org), signing in and then clicking on the Elections tab.

## CANDIDATES FOR NEA DIRECTOR

### John Austinson

*Byron Education Association*  
I have been a teacher and coach for 25yrs and been President, VP, and Teacher's Rights for my association. I recently ran for House District 26B and was EdMn endorsed. I feel I have the leadership savvy, mindset, and motor for the position and would be honored if you voted me your next NEA Director.



### Nancy Cordes

*Robbinsdale Federation of Teachers*  
We all have our reasons for volunteering for extra responsibilities outside the classroom and mine is probably no different. I recognize that not everything can be addressed during the school day, which is why I began to advocate for students outside the normal school hours.



### Linnea Hackett

*Minneapolis ESP*



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ELECTION ZONE 1

### Maureen Morrow

*Deer River Education Association*  
➔ELECTED



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ELECTION ZONE 2

### Heidi Morris

*Education Minnesota Duluth Clerical*  
➔ELECTED  
As a member of the Governing Board, I remain I will continue in my commitment of reaching out to members, listening to concerns and ideas, and being a productive and supportive voice for teachers and ESPs. By building relationships, listening to all voices and working collaboratively, our organization will remain strong as we work for the benefit of our members, our schools and our students.



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ELECTION ZONE 3

### Ryan Fiereck

*Education Minnesota St. Francis*  
Education Minnesota Executive Committee, Governing Board; IO:Metro Area Council Vice President; St. Francis: Vice President, Negotiator, K-5 Computer Technology Teacher, Husband; Father of 3. Goals: Engagement with locals in new At-Large Structure, Support Locals with resources towards local needs.



### Minda Henjum

*Education Minnesota New London-Spicer*  
If re-elected, I will continue to bring a voice from Greater Minnesota to the Education Minnesota Governing Board. Our union must continue to work together as the voice for excellence in education. Together we are stronger. I respectfully ask for your vote.



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ELECTION ZONE 4

### Heather Bakke

*Gibbon, Fairfax, Winthrop Education Association*  
➔ELECTED  
In the fall I was elected to the Governing Board to fill a vacancy. In my short time on the board, I have seen the dedication of my fellow union members. We are working together to make this our union. I am able to bring light to the unique needs of the students and teachers of greater Minnesota.



# Education Minnesota candidates' election statements

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## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ELECTION ZONE 5

### Stephen Cade

*Northfield Education Association*  
Please consider voting for STEPHEN CADE. I teach Spanish in the small community of Northfield. Previously taught inner-city NYC. VP- Local level, MRA, Health Care advisory, Political Outreach, School Board endorsement chair, EdMn Outreach, EdMN Legislative Policy, NEA RA- various years.



### Joe Cerar

*Education Minnesota Plainville-Elgin-Millville*  
DIVERSITY.ENGAGEMENT.UNITY.COLLABORATION.PASSION. EXPERIENCE.These words define my candidacy and priorities if re-elected to the Governing Board. I am a voice from Greater Minnesota with the understanding, perspective and leadership experiences to be a true advocate for all of Education Minnesota.



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ELECTION ZONE 6

### Kate Schmidt

*Dakota County United Educators*  
➔ELECTED  
I have been a member of the Governing Board since 2009 and a member of the Executive Committee since 2014. Please vote for me so I can continue to help make Education Minnesota an even stronger union that advocates for public education, students, and teachers.



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ELECTION ZONE 7

### Delene Thomas-Sanders

*North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Education Association*  
➔ELECTED  
WORKING HARD FOR JUSTICE FOR ALL It is with humility that I ask for your vote for Education Minnesota Governing Board. I seek this office to listen to you, to respond to you and to serve you. Delene Thomas-Sanders



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ELECTION ZONE 8

### Nick Faber

*St. Paul Federation of Teachers*  
Our union faces new serious challenges ahead. We need bold leadership who can bring parents and community together with our members to fight back those who want to cripple our union and destroy public education. I have a track record of doing that at SPFT and I will bring those skills to our board.



### Scott Schaefer

*Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota*  
It's an honor to serve on Education Minnesota's Governing Board. I'm committed to our students and schools. Continued member communication is a priority. Given our political landscape we need all members involved, students to retired and we need to build and strengthen these relationships.



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE VACANCY

### Jamie Alsleben

*Eden Prairie Education Association*  
I would appreciate your vote for re-election to the Governing Board. I believe in advocacy, balance, collaboration and dedication to all members. We need to continue to be engaged and united from greater Minnesota to the metro. Together we can!



### La Shawn Hankton

*Minneapolis ESP*  
In 1998 I joined MPS as a Child Care Worker for the Mpls Kids Program. Eager but new to MPS I was very much up for the challenge just as I am today now being MFT L59s' 2nd VP and pursuing EdMN Governing Board seat. Building internally and externally is what makes me a progressively stable educator.



### Al Helgerson

*Albert Lea Education Association*  
A little about me. I am President of our local, a member of the Council of local presidents, negotiator, involved with member's rights, and board member of our I.O. I believe I have the experience and ability to help the governing board navigate through the rough waters ahead. Thanks,



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## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE ESP

**Michelle Dennard**  
*Education Minnesota Osseo ESP*  
Passionate, dedicated, committed to serve all in public education is my priority. I want to continue to help build a strong union and be the voice for all educators and students. Vote for me Michelle Dennard for ESP at Large.



**La Shawn Hankton**  
*Minneapolis ESP*  
While I am also vested in making sure collaboratively that all employees are advocates on contract and MPS policies as L59 2nd Vice President, I continue to build stable relationships with K thru 8th grade students while pursuing professional growth.



**Brenda Johnson**  
*Minneapolis ESP*  
It is with Great Honor as I reflect on the work that my fellow Sisters and Brothers near and far are doing for such a time as this in education, My name is Brenda Johnson Transition Specialist at Stadium View School/Juvenile Detention Center in Minneapolis. I have over twenty five years in education,



**Tyia Patnaude**  
*Education Minnesota Detroit Lakes ESP*  
Hello! My name is Tyia Patnaude and I am entering my ninth year as an Education Support Professional. I have enjoyed being a SPED para, general education para and a library assistant. I have proudly served my local union on the negotiations team, as vice-president, and am currently the president.



**Sue Snyder**  
*Saint Paul Federation of Teachers ESP*  
These are challenging times. We need to work together to ensure better outcomes for our students: pre-kindergarten to higher ed. Our future depends on it. ESPs and teachers make education work for all students regardless of ability, race, or geography.



## CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNING BOARD AT-LARGE HIGHER ED/STATEWIDE AFFILIATE

**Bety Rios-Christensen**  
*State Residential Schools Education Association*  
**➔ELECTED**  
My name is Bety Rios-Christensen. I am happy to be nominated as member of the Governing Board At-Large Higher Ed/Statewide Affiliate. I came to the United States from Peru when I was a young adult. Presently, I am a vocational instructor at Lino Lakes Correctional facility.



## AFT TEACH conference to be held July 20-22

The AFT TEACH Conference, a biennial event devoted to professional development, will be held July 20-22 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C. All local presidents should receive an information packet from the American Federation of Teachers that includes a tentative schedule and hotel and conference registration forms. The AFT plans to begin mailing the packets in mid-April, so local presidents who have not received information by May 1 are asked to contact Laura Brown at AFT at 202-393-6389 or [lbrown@aft.org](mailto:lbrown@aft.org). For more information about the conference, go to [www.aft.org/teach](http://www.aft.org/teach). Education Minnesota will provide funding for one member from each election district, as well as one statewide/higher education member and one education

support professional member, to attend the AFT TEACH Conference. Local members who would like to apply for state funding should complete the state-funded participant form using the link found in the box on this page by Friday, May 5. The selection of state-funded participants will be made on Monday, May 8, and those awarded funding will be notified and sent the necessary information. Priority will be given to first-time attendees. Funding includes payment of conference registration, reimbursement for airfare, one-half the cost of a double room and meals. All members are welcome to attend at their own expense. If you have questions, contact Wanda Cone at 800-652-9073 ext. 4822, 651-292-4822 or email [wanda.cone@edmn.org](mailto:wanda.cone@edmn.org).

## 2017 AFT TEACH CONFERENCE

July 20-22, 2017 — Washington, D.C.

To be considered for a state-funded delegate position, please fill out the State-Funded Participant Interest Form at <http://bit.ly/edmn-aftteach17>.

Forms must be submitted by Friday, May 5 2017.

Selection will be made Monday, May 8, 2017.

If you have problems with the online form, please contact Jessica Schmidt at [jessica.schmidt@edmn.org](mailto:jessica.schmidt@edmn.org) or 651-292-4871.



Session *from page 1*

lobby days, meeting with legislators back in their districts and sending emails and making phone calls to their representatives. Stay up-to-date with what is happening at the Legislature and how you can get involved by visiting [www.educationminnesota.org/policyactioncenter](http://www.educationminnesota.org/policyactioncenter).

Other education and union-related bills being discussed, as of press time, include the following:



St. Louis Park elementary teacher Penny Dupris testifies against a Senate bill that would financially penalize districts for having students opt-out of tests.

Senate bill would penalize districts for testing opt-out

A bill that would financially penalize schools for MCA opt-outs is being discussed in the Senate. School districts that have opt-out rates of 5 percent or higher wouldn't receive all of their per-pupil

funding under SF1475. The district would receive a percentage of the formula allowance increase equal to its testing participation rate.

St. Louis Park teacher Penny Dupris testified against the bill saying, "Punishing schools because students believe they have more important and significant tests to focus on is wrong."

House bill would strip unions', districts' rights to bid for health insurance

A bill that would strip away many of the benefits of the Health Insurance Transparency Act is being discussed in House committees. HITA passed three years ago and has helped school employees across Minnesota get more affordable, quality health care by increasing competition and transparency in the insurance bidding process.

HF 1558 includes provisions that would undo much of the progress made. It removes the requirement that school districts get bids from the Public Employee Insurance Program. It also eliminates the right of the bargaining unit to choose PEIP.

Members testified against the bill before the House State Government Finance committee March 15 and in the House Education Finance



Members of the Minnesota School Social Workers Association prepare for meetings with legislators.

committee March 21.

Aaron Janssen, a teacher from Fillmore Central, shared that his district doesn't actually use the PEIP plan, but the competition of having private companies bid alongside PEIP has helped keep their costs down.

"HITA has lowered our costs by being able to get bids from PEIP," he said. "It creates more transparency at the district level and more competition."

Funding for full-service community schools hopefully included in omnibus bills

Both the House and Senate have held hearings on new funding for full-service community schools to be included in their respective

omnibus bills. The bills would allocate \$20 million over the next two years in state funding for districts that want to create full-service community schools in their areas. Read more about full-service community schools on Page 3.

Budget bills being released, voted on soon

Gov. Mark Dayton released his supplemental budget recommendations at the end of March after a new budget forecast predicts Minnesota's surplus will increase to \$1.65 billion over the next two years. He is now asking for a \$709 million increase in public education funding over the biennium. That includes \$371 million for a

2 percent annual increase in per-pupil funding, \$175 million to expand voluntary pre-K and \$2 million for full-service community schools.

As of press time, Republican leaders in the House and Senate had started putting their budget proposals together, but no details had been released on how money would be spent. Senate Republicans said they plan to use a big chunk of the surplus—\$900 million—on tax cuts and about \$300 million in new spending for schools. House Republicans announced March 20 that they want to increase school funding by \$258 million and spend \$1.3 billion on tax cuts.

## 2017 April Financial Planning Workshops

To meet the needs of Education Minnesota members, free workshops designed just for you, are planned for April. REGISTER TODAY!

### Financial/Retirement Planning Essentials

#### METRO (weekday):

**Tuesday, April 4**  
Anoka Technical College,  
Anoka, MN

**Tuesday, April 25**  
Dakota County Technical College,  
Rosemount, MN

4:15-4:45 p.m. –  
Registration/Exhibits  
4:45-7 p.m. –  
Workshop/Dinner/Prizes

#### GREATER MN (Saturday):

**Saturday, April 8**  
Rochester Community and Technical  
College, Rochester, MN

**Saturday, April 8**  
Lake Superior College, Duluth, MN

**Saturday, April 29**  
MN State Community and Technical  
College, Detroit Lakes, MN

9:30-10 a.m. –  
Registration/Rolls-Juice-Coffee  
10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. –  
Workshop/Boxed Lunch/Prizes

### Topics Include:

#### Pension

- ▶ Understanding your pension
- ▶ Pension fund performance

Presented by: Chuck Elliott, Education Minnesota ESI Retirement Consultant  
Lyle Nelson, Education Minnesota ESI Retirement Consultant

#### Planning

- ▶ What can you expect from Social Security?
- ▶ Tax-deferred and tax-free savings, asset allocation/management/diversification/performance 403(b) match and severance payment options

Presented by: EFS Advisors

#### Protection

- ▶ What is your financial vulnerability with long-term illness?
- ▶ How can you protect your assets and savings?

Presented by: Educators Lifetime Solutions

### Financial Planning for Beginners and NextGen

#### Tuesday, April 4

Anoka Technical College,  
Anoka, MN

4:15-4:45 p.m. – Registration/Exhibits

4:45-6:15 p.m. – Workshop/Dinner/Prizes

### Topics include:

**How can you manage your paycheck to have the money you need today and plan for a secure future?**

- ▶ Managing your paycheck
- ▶ Learn the importance of budgeting and smart debt management techniques
- ▶ How much will a \$50 per month contribution amount to in 30 years?
- ▶ What is a 403(b) and why should you contribute to one? What is a Roth IRA?
- ▶ How does a Roth work, and is it the best for you?
- ▶ Learn the value of your defined benefit pension and how much of your income it can replace when you retire

### LIMITED SEATING, RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

RSVP to Deborah Skog at 651-292-4856 or [deborah.skog@edmn.org](mailto:deborah.skog@edmn.org). Please leave your name(s), phone number and which session you would like to attend. Spouses/Guests Welcome.

Paid for by ESI, not by dues. ESI is self-supporting; revenues provide benefits, service and consumer education for members. What do YOU want to know? Send questions to [esi@edmn.org](mailto:esi@edmn.org). EFS Advisors is the exclusive marketing agency for the ESI financial services program. Securities offered through Advanced Advisor Group, Member FINRA & SIPC. Investment Advisory Services offered through Educators Financial Services, a Registered Investment Advisor, 440 Emerson St N Ste 4, Cambridge MN 55008 (877) 403-2374. Advanced Advisor Group and Educators Financial Services are affiliates under common control D/B/A EFS Advisors. EFS Advisors is not affiliated with Education Minnesota ESI.





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- Teacher Coordinator of Work-based Learning



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# Working to address teacher shortage, student outcomes

*“Diversity in the world is a basic characteristic of human society, and also the key condition for a lively and dynamic world as we see today.” – Jintao Hu*

Minnesota, like many states in the U.S., is struggling to close an academic gap that exists between white students and students of color and American Indian students. One way to combat this issue could be by creating a pipeline of diverse teacher candidates. There is increasing research that finds that all students benefit when they have teachers from varied backgrounds. In particular, students of color and American Indian students are said to graduate at higher rates and do better in school if they have teachers with backgrounds similar to their own.

In the 2015-16 school year, the American public school population became majority nonwhite for the first time in history. Minnesota has seen a steady and consistent increase in its student of color population; in some districts, student demographics reflect national data, with the enrollment being majority nonwhite. However, the teaching ranks do not reflect that diversity.



Cedrick R. Frazier

Minnesota’s teachers are 96 percent white despite the increasing diversity of the student population. In addition, Minnesota is also dealing with an overall teacher shortage issue. This makes for a difficult task of recruiting and retaining educators that reflect the increasing diversity in our classrooms.

Education Minnesota has taken steps to empower its members to address this pipeline issue through the Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee. Through these efforts, Education Minnesota has also sought to build coalitions with other movements that have focused on developing policies that will help create a pipeline for teachers of color. One

such coalition that Education Minnesota has joined is the Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota.

The coalition’s specific short-term goal for Minnesota is to double the percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers from 4 percent to 8 percent by 2020, and increase the state’s total of racially, ethnically diverse candidates in teacher preparation programs from 9 percent to at least 20 percent.

This year, the coalition has endorsed a proposed bill that will help achieve these goals—the Increase Teachers of Color Act 2017. Some key provisions of the act are:

### Expanded pathways to teaching

The bill would expand funding for “Grow Your Own” programs throughout the state to recruit racially and ethnically diverse paraprofessionals, cultural liaisons and secondary students into teaching, and support the expansion of concurrent enrollment “intro to teaching” college-in-schools courses.

It continues current collaborative urban educator (CUE) program at four Twin Cities area private colleges and

universities—the University of St. Thomas, Hamline University, Augsburg College and Concordia University, St. Paul. It further expands to include Greater Minnesota and other metro-area institutions by offering competitive grants for recruitment and retention efforts.

It also increases the current appropriation for American Indian teacher preparation by 30 percent.

### Financial incentives and support

The bill clarifies that the Alternative Teacher Pay System may include signing bonuses for teachers from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to work in Greater Minnesota, tribal schools and the metro area. This has shown the ability to have an impact on closing the achievement gap.

It also increases the amount of student loan forgiveness from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year for each year of licensed service in Minnesota (up to five years) for teachers in shortage areas, including teacher diversity.

### Induction and retention support

The bill appropriates funding for induction, residency, mentoring

## LEGAL BRIEFS

and other professional development programs to retain effective teachers of color and American Indian teachers.

There are many factors that have created a shortage of teachers of color, but this proposed bill will go a long way to help create a pipeline to resolve the shortage. In addition, it could help Minnesota decrease the nagging academic disparities that continue to plague our students of color and American Indian students. Although this bill emphasizes the recruitment of teachers of color and American Indian teachers, the overall impact will undoubtedly help Minnesota deal with its overall teacher shortage issue as well.

For more information about the bill, go to [www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/status\\_search.php?body=House](http://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/status_search.php?body=House) and enter the bill number “2077.”

♦ Cedrick R. Frazier

*Frazier is a staff attorney for Education Minnesota.*

## MEMBERS WANT TO KNOW

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS RETIRING THIS YEAR!

#### Register now for Education Minnesota Retired

Retired members help build unity and increase the power of Education Minnesota to represent educators and advocate for stronger public education. Now’s the time to encourage the retiring members in your local to register for Education Minnesota Retired membership. For members who meet the following criteria, there will be no additional cost for this great program.

1. Retire after September 1, 2015 (must be age 55)
2. Have been a member of Education Minnesota for at least 10 years (do not have to be consecutive)
3. Eligible to receive a pension

#### Retired members will have access to the benefits of retired membership, including:

- ▶ Continued access to Economic Services Inc. (ESI), NEA and AFT member benefit programs
- ▶ Staying connected with other retired colleagues through newsletters, regional events, and annual meetings
- ▶ Participating in Education Minnesota political action and legislative efforts on such important issues as pension benefits and retiree medical insurance
- ▶ Maintaining Educators Employment Liability Insurance (EEL) coverage when teaching as a day-to-day substitute in all public school districts in Minnesota.

#### And the benefits work both ways. Retired members help Education Minnesota by using their experience in education and their flexible schedules to build power in the union by:

- ▶ Volunteering and recruiting other members to engage in Education Minnesota campaign activities
- ▶ Serving as ambassadors for educators and the union with community service groups
- ▶ Covering hearings and lobbying for Education Minnesota’s legislative agenda
- ▶ And much more!

Have your retired or retiring members register today! For questions regarding Education Minnesota Retired membership, contact Matt Blewett at ESI via email or at 651-292-4877 or 800-642-4624.



ESI

41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103 651-292-4856 800-642-4624 [esi.educationminnesota.org](http://esi.educationminnesota.org) [esi@edmn.org](mailto:esi@edmn.org)

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# EDUCATION MINNESOTA OPPORTUNITIES

## MEMBER-LED SESSIONS WANTED FOR SUMMER SEMINAR

Education Minnesota is looking for members to submit proposals for sessions they would like to lead at the 2017 Summer Seminar.

Summer Seminar is part of the Minnesota Educator Academy and offers high-quality professional development, leadership training and networking opportunities. It will be held July 31-Aug. 2 at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota.

Members are invited to submit a session idea regarding professional practice. Potential topics could include culturally responsive teaching, curriculum and assessments, school climate and learning communities, technology integration or student engagement. Sessions run an hour-and-a-half.

Last year, Education Minnesota members taught their colleagues best practices for one-to-one iPad/ChromeBook classrooms, how to earn grants to fund innovative classroom instruction, best practices in technology integration and more. All of us have things we excel at in the classroom—from managing student data to performance assessments to best practices in restorative justice—so please, consider sharing your skills with fellow educators at Summer Seminar.

If selected to present, Education Minnesota will cover the cost of the presenter’s attendance at the other sessions offered during Summer Seminar, double-occupancy lodging accommodations, meals and mileage to and from St. Ben’s. That equals three days of professional development for free.

If you are interested in presenting, go to <http://bit.ly/sumsem17member> and fill in your session title, description, objectives, intended audience and more. Please submit your session idea by April 28 to be considered.

Registration to attend Summer Seminar opens May 5. Information on attending the event can be found at [www.educationminnesota.org/events/summer-seminar](http://www.educationminnesota.org/events/summer-seminar). A poster with course offerings will be mailed to school sites in May.

## ABOUT THIS PAGE

The Minnesota Educator provides opportunities listings on this page as a member service, highlighting the free and low-cost professional development the union provides. The page also lists conferences, training and resources of possible interest. Readers interested in pursuing an opportunity should check it out carefully. The Educator tries to include only legitimate, useful opportunities that support education practice.

**To submit an opportunity:**

- Send a complete description of your opportunity to [educator@edmn.org](mailto:educator@edmn.org).
- Send your item by the first Friday of the month to be considered for the next month’s Opportunities page. Include daytime contact information.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### St. Paul relicensure workshop day

The St. Paul Federation of Teachers is hosting a professional development day. The workshop will take place April 15 from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Education Minnesota’s St. Paul office. Breakout sessions include positive behavior intervention strategies, English language learners, reading seminar, accommodations/modifications, student mental health, technology/digital learning strategies and strengthening school-home partnerships. Participants can register for three sessions. A light breakfast, lunch and continuing education credits will be available. The registration fee is \$15 for full members of SPFT, the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Metro Area Council. Other educators can attend for \$59.

For more information or to register, go to [www.spft.org/professional-development-2/professional-development](http://www.spft.org/professional-development-2/professional-development).

### Digital learning day from TIES

TIES, the Minnesota technology collaborative owned by 48 districts, is hosting a new workshop, the Digital Learning Day. The workshop will take place April 22 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the TIES Event Center in St. Paul. Participants will explore gamification, content creation and app smashing. The workshop will feature hour-long breakouts or full-day sessions on Raspberry Pi or Minecraft. The registration fee ranges from \$49 to \$218 and includes a lunch session featuring presentations from Minnesota students.

For more information or to register, go to <http://events.ties.k12.mn.us/digital-learning-day>.

### Students’ self-motivation workshop

Synergy and the Minnesota Department of Education are offering a workshop on fostering students’ self-motivation. The workshop will take place at the MDE conference center in Roseville on April 25 from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The workshop will look at practical steps and strategies to explore intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation, school and classroom culture, discipline, building a climate of trust, respect and autonomy and developing students’ social and emotional competencies. The workshop cost is \$25, which includes lunch and materials.

For more information or to register, go to [www.eventworksmn.org/Reg\\_Calendar.asp](http://www.eventworksmn.org/Reg_Calendar.asp).

### Free classes from mental illness alliance

The National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota chapter hosts free classes on various subjects relating to mental health, including ones for caregivers of children. Upcoming workshop topics include children’s challenging behaviors, understanding early episode psychosis and helping students succeed through the special education process. Workshops take place in April and May in various locations throughout the state.

For more information or to register for a class, go to [www.namihelps.org/classes.html](http://www.namihelps.org/classes.html) and find the “For parents and caregivers of children” section.

### Training for emerging union leaders

Education Minnesota’s Emerging Leaders Program is accepting registrations for its summer session until April 30. The program is designed for union members who are interested in becoming leaders within their profession and will focus on identifying aspects of quality leadership, one-on-one conversations, managing conflict, leading educators to face the issues of tomorrow and knowing the issues educators have faced in the past. The training takes place June 13-15 at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota. Registration is free, but space is limited.

For more information or to apply, go to [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/Union-U/emerging-leaders-program](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/Union-U/emerging-leaders-program).

### Science Museum professional development

The Science Museum of Minnesota’s Science House is now accepting applications for its five educator programs, most of which take place or start in the summer. Science House’s professional development approach empowers formal and informal education professionals to create inclusive environments, eliminate disparities and broaden participation in STEM. The programs available are Addressing Disparities in STEM Education, Race Institute for School-Based Teams, STEM Equity in the Classroom, Student Engagement in the Elementary Classroom and Custom Institutes for Your School or District. Most programs cost \$950 per person, but subsidies may be available.

For more information about the programs or how to apply, go to [www.smm.org/educators/professional-development/summer](http://www.smm.org/educators/professional-development/summer).

## CLASSROOM RESOURCES

### Glogster multimedia resources, tools

Glogster is a tool for making interactive posters, or glogs, containing pictures, text, video, links and animation. A glog on “To Kill a Mockingbird” might contain a link to the Scottsboro trial, a clip from the Gregory Peck movie and a drawing of the tree where Boo Radley leaves gifts for Scout. The site features over 40,000 glogs from classrooms around the world. The glogs are categorized into 80 topics, across nine disciplines, such as math, social studies and science. Free trials are available, but subscriptions for one user is \$30 one-time fee. Licenses for schools and districts are also available.

For more information or to see a selection of the offerings, go to <http://edu.glogster.com>.

### ClassFlow online SMART board resources

ClassFlow is a the free lesson delivery software that serves as an interactive whiteboard community for educators. The site features lesson plans, assessments, teaching guides and worksheets. The lessons can also be shared across a connected

classroom and sent to students’ Chromebooks, tablets and laptops. ClassFlow is completely free for educators to use with their students once they create an account. ClassFlow for Schools, a paid version, is available for districts or school entities that want additional features. Free student accounts are also available.

For more information or to see the offerings, go to <https://classflow.com>.

## STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Minnesota State Capitol essay contest

Minnesota students are encouraged to submit essays explaining how the State Capitol has shaped our past and will impact future generations. Students are asked to consider one of two prompts: What the Capitol means to you, as well as all Minnesotans or what is one of the most important events that occurred at the Capitol? The essay contest is open to Minnesota students in the following age categories: Grades 3–5, 6–8 and 9–12. The top essay at each level will be recognized at a program at the State Capitol on Aug. 12, where the winning students will be invited to share their essays with fellow Minnesotans. Winners in each category will also receive a \$1,000 Minnesota College Savings Plan, sponsored by the University of Minnesota and TIAA, the financial services company that manages the Minnesota College Savings Plan. Essays are due April 28.

For more information or to see the complete essay questions, go to <http://mn.gov/admin/capitol-restoration/grand-opening/essay>.

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

### McCarthy Dressman academic enrichment grants

The McCarthy Dressman Education Foundation offers academic enrichment grants designed to develop in-class and extra-curricular programs that improve student learning. The foundation considers proposals that foster understanding, deepen students’ knowledge and provide opportunities to expand awareness of the world around them. The grants provide funding for programs that nurture the intellectual, artistic and creative abilities of children from low-income households. The McCarthy Dressman Education Foundation awards grants to individuals in amounts up to \$10,000 per year for a maximum of \$30,000 over three years, provided the eligibility requirements continue to be met. Applications are due April 15.

For more information or to apply, go to <https://mccarthydressman.org/academic-enrichment-grants>.

### Education Minnesota professional development, classroom grants available

The Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is offering its professional development for higher education faculty and education support professionals and affinity grants this spring, with applications due April 3. Higher education members can request up to \$3,000 and ESP members can access up to \$1,500. Second-year classroom and classroom technology grant applications are also due April 3. Both of these grants are available for up to \$3,000.

For more information about the foundation or how to apply for a grant, go to [www.educationminnesota.org/resources/grants/foundation](http://www.educationminnesota.org/resources/grants/foundation).