

# MINNESOTA EDUCATOR

DECEMBER 2020 / JANUARY 2021

**MEET OUR NEW  
ESP OF THE YEAR,  
MICHELLE DENNARD!**

**UNITY LEADERS HOLD  
100+ GOTV EVENTS**



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS



# Support for students, educators

Education Minnesota's website continues to be updated with resources for educators regarding educating during COVID-19.



## Information includes:

- ▶ *NEW: Guidance on the new prep time executive order*
  - ▶ *NEW: Top 5 COVID reminders for educators and local union leaders*
  - ▶ *NEW: Workers' compensation for educators who contract COVID-19 at work*
  - ▶ *FAQs on educators with health concerns, distance learning privacy and contractual rights, special education, paid leaves, unemployment and student loan debt relief.*
  - ▶ *Contract bargaining resources including Q Comp guidance, reopening resources, managing workload, ESP-specific considerations and leave provisions.*
  - ▶ *A summary of the state guidance and executive orders.*
  - ▶ *Checklists and guidance around reopening of school buildings.*
  - ▶ *Resources on educator rights and safety concerns regarding reopening of school buildings.*
  - ▶ *Lesson planning links.*
- Go to [www.educationminnesota.org/resources/in-the-classroom/Coronavirus](http://www.educationminnesota.org/resources/in-the-classroom/Coronavirus) to find all of the resources, and watch for updates as the school year begins.**



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

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For information about union activities, work and resources, go to [www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org).

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*COVER PHOTO: 2020-21 Education Minnesota ESP of the Year Michelle Dennard poses at her worksite, the Osseo Education Center, where she works with special education students.*

# TOGETHER, WE'RE GOING TO REACH THE LIGHT AT END OF THE TUNNEL

Certain politicians can say whatever they want, but Joe Biden is going to be the next president of the United States because millions of voters came together to insist their government care for all its citizens, regardless of what they look like, where they live or how they pray.

I'm proud to say the work of thousands of Minnesota educators helped deliver our state's 10 electoral votes for Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris. That win wasn't easy, and it didn't happen by accident.

Only nine months ago, the pundits called Minnesota a battleground state. Too close to call, they said.

Of course, "they" didn't know about the thousands of phone calls and texts educators would make. They didn't predict the more than 110 GOTV events our educators would sponsor. You can bet no one expected the trifecta of farm animals at the "Get out the Goat" event in Dakota County right before Election Day.

Because he didn't understand Minnesotans, the outgoing president believed he could turn our state red. He made four trips here and sent his family members and vice president for others. His campaign spent more than \$6.5 million on advertising alone, according to published estimates. Most of it

was intended to fuel divisions, based race and ZIP code.

But it didn't work. More than 1.7 million Minnesotans across race and place turned out and elected Biden and Harris by 7 percentage points. As I write this in mid-November, the outgoing president continues to make claims without evidence and threatens the transition process. It's a desperate and doomed attempt to hold onto power. Minnesota's educators and our neighbors are ready to move forward to deliver a better future for our families and our students.

We're ready for a new president committed to fighting the pandemic with all the resources of the federal government. We're ready for Education Secretary Betsy DeVos to go home and for Biden to honor his promise to replace her with an educator with classroom experience. And we're hoping the experts are right and a vaccine for the virus that causes COVID-19 will be widely available in the spring or summer.

We're ready for the light at end of the long dark tunnel we're in right now.

A wave of school districts are moving to distance learning during this fall surge of COVID-19. In many places, there are too many educators out sick or in quarantine to open the buildings safely.

Surveys tell us educators are exhausted by learning models that demand they do two jobs at

once and demoralized by administrators who don't support them.

The Legislature comes back in January to face a raging pandemic, a giant budget deficit and a long-overdue reckoning on race—but it's a divided Legislature in which the party that received fewer votes still controls the Senate because of how the electoral maps were drawn.

These are difficult times, there's no denying it, but there's reason to hope. Our union and our allies beat the odds in the race for president because we believe in something better for our communities and we're willing to make it happen.

That same spirit—and a lot of collaboration, deliberation and caution—will bring our schools through this fall surge stronger than they started. We can still insist the wealthiest 1 percent and the largest corporations finally pay their fair share for the things that benefit us all, including public education.

Impossible? No. We're educators and Minnesotans and we can do hard things. Besides, as Nelson Mandela once said, "It always seems impossible until it's done."

Together,



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Denise Specht

## October member survey results

If you have not seen the results of Education Minnesota's member survey that was open Sept. 23-Oct. 5, go to [www.educationminnesota.org/news/Survey/Survey-results](http://www.educationminnesota.org/news/Survey/Survey-results).

Education Minnesota asked educators to share their thoughts and concerns about working conditions in their districts so far this school year. More than 9,700 members responded and said they're feeling stressed, overwhelmed and worried about their physical and mental health.

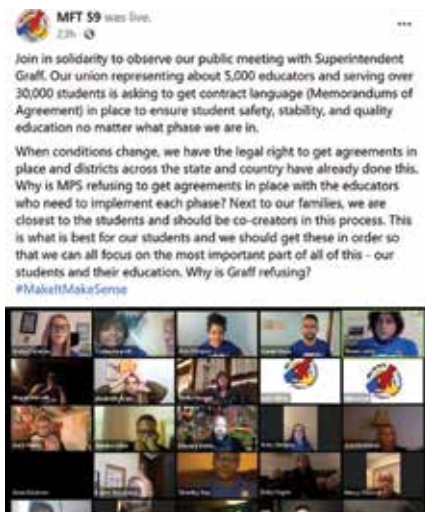
Alarming, 29 percent of those surveyed said they were actively considering leaving the profession.

Of the members who responded to the survey, educators providing hybrid or multimodal education reported the highest levels of negative feelings about their jobs.

The survey also asked if educators believe their current learning model equitably meets the needs of students. Sixty two percent of respondents said no.

## Getting social!

Educators use social media as a way to connect with their communities, colleagues and the world. We will feature posts from Education Minnesota members and locals each issue! Make sure to follow Education Minnesota on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and Pinterest!



## Where are you reading your Minnesota Educator?

**Congratulations, Tom Hus, Osseo ESP member, for being this issue's winning submission!**

We love seeing all of the places where you are reading your Minnesota Educator!

Email a photo to [educator@edmn.org](mailto:educator@edmn.org) or share it on social media using #mneducator of where you are reading your Minnesota Educator to be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 Target gift card!

Submissions are due Jan. 8. Happy reading!



## Educators in the news!

Education Minnesota members are often interviewed in their local newspapers or TV station. We will feature a quote each issue!

**It's the hardest thing I've ever done. I know for all the staff in my building, this is the most trying, most difficult school year they've ever faced.**

– Byron fifth-grade teacher Justin Blom in a Rochester Post-Bulletin article "Local teachers feel the strain of the pandemic era" from Oct. 27. The article shared the results of Education Minnesota's member survey on workload and educator feelings, as well as a survey of Rochester teachers. The top three responses among Rochester teachers were "stressed," "overwhelmed" and "frustrated." The bottom two responses were "happy" and "inspired."



# DENNARD BRINGS PASSION TO STUDENT, UNION WORK

**Michelle Dennard's life has been driven by her desire to continue to learn.**

She started work as an education support professional in a special education program to learn more after her niece was diagnosed with autism.

She started getting more involved with her local union to learn more about where her dues money goes, and has continued her leadership at the state and national level to continue learning about how she can help advocate for herself and her colleagues.

This investment in her work and her union is why Dennard is Education Minnesota's 2020-21 ESP of the Year.

"Taking on roles and attending trainings to better myself helped me realize I can do anything I put my mind to," Dennard said. "We are in this profession together, even if it can feel lonely sometimes. You have people who will help you and make sure you can achieve your goals and reach your potential."

Dennard has been an ESP in the Osseo School District for 16 years, working with special education students. She was named ESP of the Year by her local, Education Minnesota Osseo ESPs, before being nominated for the statewide award.

"I am known for taking on the more challenging students," she said, in her application materials for the award. "I make sure that all students' overall needs are met, regardless of their level, race or gender, and that they have the tools to succeed."

Dennard currently works at Osseo Education Center, a federal setting IV school that serves students ages 17-21 who have significant educational needs requiring a separate site to receive special education services.

"Michelle is an ESP who is focused on recognizing strengths of scholars so they can use those strengths to overcome the challenges they face in our society," said Angela VanHee, administrator at Osseo Education Center, in her recommendation letter for this award. "She builds relationships that results in students feeling valued and confident."



*Education Minnesota's 2020-21 ESP of the Year Michelle Dennard has worked in Osseo Schools for 16 years, supporting special education students.*

Dennard has also taken the lead on improving education at her site and in her district through equity work.

"Michelle took on responsibilities to deliver supports and interventions to students across the tiers," said Joy Fredrickson, the former Osseo district student services coordinator, in a recommendation letter. "She worked collaboratively with students to solve problems and engage in restorative practices. Michelle initiated courageous conversations with students, colleagues and leaders, like myself, to move the equity work forward and ensure equitable opportunities for students."

Her district's equity and positive behavioral interventions and supports teams are

something Dennard has taken on leadership roles in, but that equity lens has also been a big priority for her union work.

Dennard first got involved with Education Minnesota by attending the National Education Association Representative Assembly after getting an invitation to attend as a member of color.

"It gave me goosebumps to see how they were advocating for students and educators," she said. "I saw educators that had a love for their students and the field. I wanted to be a part of it."

Dennard then got involved with Education Minnesota's Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee.

"Michelle is not afraid to step forward and take on the challenges that we face as union advocates," said Delene Thomas-Sanders, a leader who served on EMAC with Dennard.

Dennard talked with Thomas-Sanders and others on EMAC when an ESP spot opened on Education Minnesota's Governing Board and was considering running. They all encouraged her to go for it.

She ran and won, and was recently reelected to a second term.

This year, another opportunity for a new experience arose when elections were held on the governing board for the executive committee.

"Someone approached me about running because of the need for more representation," Dennard said. "I wanted to bring more representation on the executive committee. It's such an important role. I'm so honored to be a part and see that you not only represent people of color and ESPs. I take that job very seriously."

Making sure members of color feel included and represented is something Dennard has taken on in her local level, too.

Dennard is currently serving as the vice president for the Osseo ESP local, but also has formed an affinity group for ESPs of color to connect around union issues and how educators of color can be better supported.

"When I became a union member, no one ever told me what the union was about," she said. "A lot of ESPs, especially ESPs of color, probably feel the same way I did."

"The group is a place where the voices that are not being heard finally are being listened to," said Sieara Washington, an ESP in the Osseo local, in her recommendation letter. "Michelle goes above and beyond for ESPs regarding support, advice, a listening ear and as a mentor."

Dennard's commitment to helping others is seen in her school, union and community work.

The Osseo ESP local, with the help of Dennard, organizes many donation opportunities throughout the year, including a book drive for students at the district's Freedom School and a winter clothing drive.

Dennard also volunteers at her church and helps coordinate toy and food drives for the community.

Dennard is excited about more opportunities to continue her learning.

She recently applied and was accepted into the NEA Education Support Professionals Leadership Institute.

"We are doing the meetings via Zoom, but even so, when we are together, it's powerful," Dennard said. "The trainings are about union leadership. We talk about organizing, running to be in leadership. Dealing with colleagues. Recognizing different skills in all of us for leadership."

As Education Minnesota's ESP of the Year, Dennard receives a \$1,200 honorarium; her choice of a Chromebook, iPad or other tablet; and an expense-paid trip to the National Education Association's ESP National Conference.

In addition to recognition at the state level, Dennard will be Minnesota's nominee for the NEA ESP of the Year program.

Dennard looks forward to using this title to continue amplify the work and voices of ESPs.

"I want to make sure ESP voices are heard," she said. "Whether that's at the local level or testifying at the Legislature, people need to know our job is important."

"We are not 'just ESPs,' but instead we are education support professionals who care deeply and are highly qualified to do our jobs."

# VIRTUAL MEA CONFERENCE OFFERS PD IN A NEW WAY

**The 2020 MEA conference was held virtually Oct. 15 with nearly 30 live sessions, and many online asynchronous classes available for educators.**

More than 1,100 educators logged on to sessions throughout the day. The conference was once again open to Education Minnesota members and aspiring educators only.

The conference began with keynote speeches from 2020 Minnesota Teacher of the Year Qorsho Hassan and professor and award-winning author Dr. Bettina Love.

Hassan, a fourth-grade teacher in the Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan district, talked about the need for educators to demand racially just, fully funded schools where students are seen, not just taught.

"Educators need to prioritize creating magical learning experiences for all students," she said. "We as educators need to work on ourselves. We need to be intentionally anti-racist."

Love continued the conversation about educators, parents and communities building schools rooted in abolitionist teaching and equitable classrooms that love and affirm Black and Brown children.

"Our physical bodies are deserving of love and education," she said. "Education is a key factor in who lives and dies during this pandemic."

Love talked about how Black, Brown, Asian and Indigenous people are being hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic, and how access to education and other social safety nets are at the core of that.

"One preexisting condition of COVID is education," she said. "Sixty percent of individuals who can stay home are college educated. BIPOC are more likely to be essential workers."

The fight for equality in educational access has been a fight happening since Ruby Bridges took her famous walk into that New Orleans school, said Love.

"Ruby Bridges is only 66 years old. This wasn't centuries ago," Love said. "We have been fighting for an educational system that embodies democracy. If we can't get it right

in education, then what is the banking world going to do, or housing, or the medical field?"

Those systems not seeing BIPOC is at the crux of the Black Lives Matter movement, said Love.

"In these institutions we need every day, we have seen that our lives are disposable," she said. "What we are shouting, marching, petitioning is that be 'no more.'"

Love talked about the difference between racism, which is a denial, and anti-Blackness, which is a disdain.

"Anti-Blackness and racism are spirit murderers of our children," she said. "When you walk into schools and teachers don't look like you, when your language isn't spoken, when police are there, with the history that is taught, your spirit is slowly murdered."

Love encourages educators to stop asking the question about race, but to ask yourself, what you are going to do about racism.

"We have reports, committees, equity offices in our schools, but where is the actual equity," she said. "Anti-racist education has to be showing the love and humanity of Black people. Show who I am, not who has gunned me down."

Abolition is not to reform or the reimagining of anything, Love said.

"We need to build schools and systems from the ground up, that are just and loving from the beginning," she said.

After the keynote session, there were nearly 30 live sessions throughout the rest of the day.

These sessions included topics such as educator self-care, classroom management, LGBTQ issues, racial equity, assessments and teaching and learning during COVID-19.

Fifty-five educators joined the session on anti-oppression led by Minnesota Educators



Against ICE. Participants talked about how they have addressed the racial uprising events of this summer in their classrooms and work.

The session included breakout rooms where participants talked about what people are doing to be anti-racist and anti-oppressive, and how educators can help each other. Shared after those breakouts was the importance of our collective power and how powerful sharing stories across the state can be for this work.

OutFront Minnesota hosted an afternoon session titled LGBTQ 101. The session had more than 50 people in attendance who discussed common LGBTQ terms and a thoughtful discussion around gender. Participants also talked about how to have conversations and classroom

structures in place so all students feel welcome and that they can bring their authentic self.

In the last session group of the day, a class titled Classroom Mindfulness had more than 90 people logged in.

Participants talked about ways to weave mindfulness practices into every grade level and every subject area. Ideas for apps to use or practices to incorporate like mindful walks or even mindful eating were discussed.

While the live sessions took place on Oct. 15, many Education Minnesota members accessed relicensure sessions and other asynchronous learning on our LearnUpon platform. More than 500 members accessed LearnUpon sessions during the week of MEA and in the weeks since.

## WHAT MEMBERS SAID ABOUT THE 2020 MEA CONFERENCE

Education Minnesota members shared their thoughts about the conference on social media! Here are some of their responses:



# ONLINE, FREE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFERINGS EXPAND

**With the addition of many of the MEA Conference sessions, Education Minnesota's LearnUpon platform continues to expand its offerings.**

More than 500 members are accessing LearnUpon each week, accessing the free, high-quality professional development.

To access the platform, members must use the login information that was sent by the LearnUpon system on July 1. Often these messages can go into spam or junk folders, so please check all folders to find the email from [notifications@learnupon.com](mailto:notifications@learnupon.com). If you still can't find your email invite or have any questions, please email [learnupon@edmn.org](mailto:learnupon@edmn.org).

## **New classes added from the MEA conference include:**

### **ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 (PBI RELICENSURE)**

Participants will discuss the purposes of different types of assessments used to check for student understanding in both remote and in-person classroom settings, how to use various resources on the new Testing 1, 2, 3 website to improve the rigor of standards-based classroom assessments, and how to use and act on the resulting assessment data to improve instruction and learning for your students.

### **JIM CROW OF THE NORTH: BRINGING MINNESOTA'S DIVERSE HISTORY INTO THE CLASSROOM**

TPT's Minnesota Experience history producers present how educators can use documentaries like Jim Crow of the North to amplify Minnesota's diverse stories, create deeper connections with all cultures and make this history relevant for the challenges we face today.

### **ENGAGE STUDENTS WITH "CROSSROADS: AN ANTHOLOGY OF RESILIENCE AND HOPE BY YOUNG SOMALI WRITERS"**

Improve your own understanding of Somali communities' strengths and challenges, and consider how "Crossroads," an engaging, relatable and diverse collection, can further your learning objectives for all students.

### **FINDING OUR WAY THROUGH: NAVIGATING THE MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES OF OUR CURRENT WORLD**

Explore strategies for coping with anxiety, stress, depression and overwhelm that many of us are experiencing during this time of difficulty. Take a look at some helpful theories for understanding why it's so tough these days, and some learn tools to help you find your way through.

### **MUSLIMS IN THE CLASSROOM: PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR EDUCATORS**

Learn the basics of what impacts Muslim students and their daily lives in the classroom, including diet, dress, gender relations, prayer, fasting and Muslim holidays. The workshop is meant to help identify and address Islamophobia and Islamophobic bullying in the classroom.

### **CLASSROOM MINDFULNESS**

Participants will learn about mindfulness practices as well as how they can be used in a classroom to help students focus and manage their own emotions. After the session, participants will walk away with an easy to use action plan they can implement in their classrooms. Different strategies will be discussed for various teaching levels.

### **GOOGLE'S APPLIED DIGITAL SKILLS WORKSHOP**

Google's Applied Digital Skills is meant to spark students' creativity and teach foundational computer science concepts in your classroom. In this hands-on workshop we will do a deep dive into the pedagogy and content behind Applied Digital Skills, then plan for implementation in your school or district.

### **MOVING LIVES MINNESOTA: STUDENT-DRIVEN STORYTELLING AROUND IMMIGRATION**

Educators will learn about this Minnesota Public Television Association initiative, discuss best practices for student-led media creation, receive lesson plans and ways to be involved and practice telling their own immigration story.

# TRANSGENDER RIGHTS IN SCHOOLS SUPPORTED BY COURT DECISION

In 2015, N.H. was a freshman at Coon Rapids High School and on the school's swim team. His normal start to a school year was not a foregone conclusion, though; N.H. is transgender and his mother had worked with the school district to make sure that her son would be safe at school.

And he was, for quite some time. N. H had been using the boys' locker room, and without incident. However, shortly before the end of the swim season, the district told N.H. he would have to use the girls' locker room. Although the district quickly backtracked, it resulted in N.H.'s hospitalization due to a mental health crisis.

Despite the toll on N.H., the district continued to push the issue. It went as far as remodeling the boys' locker room to create a segregated space. N.H. declined to use this area until finally, the district told his mother that he would be disciplined if he did not use the segregated facility. N.H.'s mother then pulled her son from the district and filed a charge of discrimination in violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act. A lawsuit followed, and while N.H. initially won, the district appealed that decision to the Minnesota Court of Appeals.

The district asserted that an earlier interpretation of the MHRA permitted them to bar N.H. from the locker room that matched his gender. The earlier case that the district relied upon was *Goins v. West Group*, a case from 20 years ago that arose in the employment context. However, on Sept. 28, the Court of Appeals found that that earlier interpretation did not apply in the realm of education, which is a major win for transgender students.

The Court of Appeals also found that the type of segregation that the district put in place may violate the state constitution, but disagreed with the district court about how to analyze this potential violation. It asked the district court to review that part of N.H.'s claims again.

Education Minnesota submitted an amicus brief in support of N.H. Education Minnesota was joined by Anoka Hennepin Education Minnesota, the

*This Legal Briefs column, written by Education Minnesota attorneys, is one of an occasional series on legal developments that affect educators.*

American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association. This means that while Education Minnesota was not a party to the case, the court permitted us to offer arguments to help supplement the analysis of the case. Education Minnesota's brief made the case for why anti-discrimination law needs to shift to account for the needs of transgender individuals, as well as why schools need to be safe places for transgender students to learn. Education Minnesota's was one of many briefs supporting N.H.'s effort to secure safe and supportive school facilities.

The district may appeal the decision of the Court of Appeals, or it may try to relitigate one of the legal issues before the district court. Education Minnesota remains hopeful that the district will resolve this case and agree to provide educational opportunities on a non-discriminatory basis going forward.

## **This case offers a few important takeaways for our members:**

**1. The world is changing, and so is the law.** The district offered concern about student privacy that was, in reality, barely cloaked homophobia on the part of adults who probably never even met N.H. The Court of Appeals noted that the privacy interests in a locker room that is designed to permit students to change side by side do not outweigh the interests of students to be free of discrimination in that space.

**2. Educators have the legal right to advocate for their students.** The Minnesota Human

LEGAL BRIEFS, CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



# EDUCATORS STEP UP TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE VOTES

**In 2018, Education Minnesota launched a program where educators talked with their colleagues about the importance of voting. This year, the program added in talking with friends, family, parents and community members.**

The Worksite Unity Leader program trained hundreds of educators in 2020 throughout the state who were ready to work toward electing pro-public education candidates and continue that work into the 2021 legislative session.

"The Worksite Unity Leaders have done amazing work, in the most challenging conditions, connecting with their colleagues, communicating with parents and organizing events that are fun, engaging and safe," said President Denise Specht, in a press conference highlighting the work of the program Nov. 2.

Throughout the year, these leaders were adjusting their plans due to COVID-19 and changing learning models, but they still found ways to connect with colleagues and others.

"What this fall did provide was a concrete example of how the

union works for its members, and how elected leaders directly impact our work and how our students learn," said Jinna Collins-Jwacu, a worksite unity leader at Monroe Elementary in the Anoka Hennepin district, during the Nov. 2 press conference. "Our elected school board is the one who decides when and how we work in a pandemic. Our elected leaders at the state and federal level are responsible for providing the funding and resources to make sure everyone can be successful as we teach and learn in completely new ways."

During the fall, Collins-Jwacu and her colleague who joined her as a Worksite Unity Leader shared information about voting and even made a bulletin board in their staff lounge where people could share their vote plans and if they had voted early.

Actions like that were taking place in buildings throughout Minnesota this fall. Educators who were teaching virtually got creative with videos, social media posts and texting.

In New London-Spicer, educators took selfies with their "I voted" stickers or when they were mailing or dropping off their ballot, and then shared them on their social media channels.

"They shared them on their own social media pages and

with their own networks, with a message about why they are voting," said Tracy Detloff, union leader and worksite unity leader, at a leadership assembly ahead of Election Day. "People have been saying things like, because our opinion matters, because our voices count and our students are counting on us. We're making a local Instagram page and posting them all."

"It has been a challenge to make connections with our members while teaching during the pandemic, but they have stepped up and thought of unique ways to build relationships and share information about how important this election is to public education," said Jenifer Stehr, a special education teacher in the Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan school district and an organizer with the Dakota County United Educators.

In the weeks leading up to Election Day, Worksite Unity Leaders started planning get-out-the-vote actions. Education Minnesota mailed each member a window cling that said "I vote for public education" and many educators used that to connect with a community member and share a window cling with them, too.

Worksite Unity Leaders planned more than 110 get-out-the-vote events in the week



*St. Louis Park educators got creative with their message to vote.*



Educators in Red Lake held a parking lot rally to share their vote messages.

leading up to and on Nov. 2, as a final reminder to their colleagues and community.

Duluth Federation of Teachers members stood on a busy intersection in their schools neighborhood with signs saying "Vote!"

"As elementary school staff we are teaching children every single day about citizenship," said Stacey Achterhoff, the DFT member who organized the event, at the Nov. 2 press conference. "We teach children to be inclusive, to stand up to bully behavior and to engage in civil discourse. Voting is an active way to be a part of our community."

In Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan, educators held a variety of different events, said Stehr at the Nov. 2 press conference.

"Our unity leaders have been handing out doughnuts as members entered their school in the morning to remind them 'DONUT forget to VOTE,'" she said. "We've also had 'Bagels and Ballots' to give members information on how to vote early and to help them with their voting plan. Unity leaders have also been very creative, and have had bingo games to participate in during the debates, made music videos, selfie contests

with their 'I voted' stickers."

But the most creative event may have taken place at Eagan High School and Dakota Hills Middle School, where a unity leader rented three goats and had them at the entrance of school this morning where members got to meet the goats and vote for their favorite for a raffle prize. They called it "The Great Minnesota 'Goat' Together, Vote Together."

Collins-Jwacu knew it would be harder to get her staff to do an event on Nov. 2, since they had a professional development day. So in the weeks prior, she bought white masks and fabric markers and created an art station in the staff lounge.

"We sent a note encouraging our colleagues to decorate a mask to wear with students and parents to show their commitment to vote," she said.

But members know that the work didn't end on Election Day, but that Education Minnesota's Unity Campaign now moves to holding elected leaders accountable for supporting public education, educators and students.

"This fall, we really have been talking to each other, whether or not we agree with each other, about voting," said Detloff.

"No vote means no voice, and you don't get to have an opinion. This is where you get to make a change and make a difference for the future of ourselves and our students."

"That's why it's so important for people to be involved with Education Minnesota's Unity Campaign. When Election Day is done, the real work begins. This is just a prep for everything to come."

## Election stats

More than 49,000 Education Minnesota members, including retired and aspiring educators, voted early. And while we won't know if we reached our goal of 100 percent of all members voting until early 2021, we do know Minnesotans once again voted at a record rate.

Current and former Education Minnesota members were elected to the Minnesota House and Senate. Congratulations to:

**Rep. Julie Sandstede**

**Rep. Dean Urdahl**

**Rep. Paul Marquart**

**Rep. Jennifer Schultz**

**Rep. Cheryl Youakim**

**Sen. Jason Isaacson**

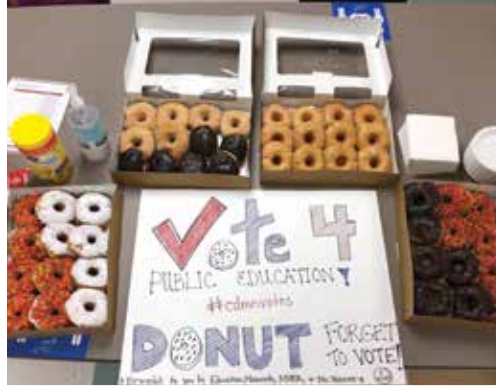
**Sen. Mary Kunesh-Podein**

**Sen. Steve Cwodzinski**





Chaska Education Association car parade



Mounds View Education Association



Dakota County United Educators



Bagley Education Association



New Prague Education Minnesota



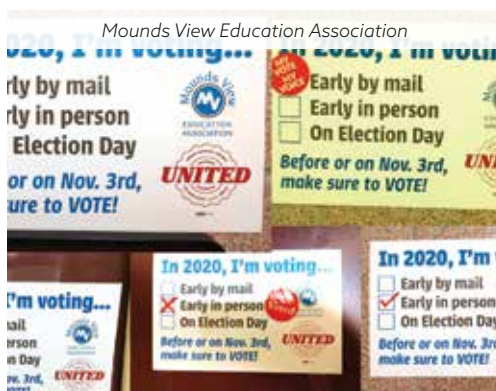
Duluth Federation of Teachers

## #EDMNVOTES IN ACTION

More than 110 get-out-the vote events were held by local union Worksite Unity Leaders in the week leading up to Election Day! The events were held to encourage educators, parents and community members to vote.



Education Minnesota-Red Lake



Mounds View Education Association



Elk River Education Association



Marshall Education Association



Forest Lake Education Association





# LEGISLATIVE SESSION WILL LOOK DIFFERENT, STILL BE BUSY

**The 2021 Minnesota legislative session promises to be a busy one as state lawmakers grapple with crafting a two-year state budget amid a global pandemic that threatens our health, safety and economic security.**

Minnesota has a projected \$1.96 billion deficit over the next biennium, setting the stage for intense battles over spending and increasing tax revenue, as well as the state response to COVID-19. Session begins Jan. 5.

The COVID-19 crisis reinforced the fact that schools are the bedrock of our communities. It also highlighted something educators already knew—the glaring inequities our students and working families face every day in Minnesota, particularly people of color and low-income families.

That's why Education Minnesota will continue to push for fully funding public education so students and educators—no matter what they look like or where they come from—have the safe and racially just schools they deserve.

Our state needs to get serious about funding what works. Minnesota's share of funding for public school districts hasn't kept pace with inflation—it's now 11.8 percent less than 2003 in real dollars.

Education Minnesota's full legislative agenda can be found at [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/at-the-legislature](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/at-the-legislature). Some of our main areas of focus during the 2021 session include:

- Increasing racial equity funding. Creating a new funding stream and increasing American Indian aid so schools can better serve students of color and Indigenous students.
- Passing an ESP Bill of Rights. This includes fair compensation for their vital work, affordable health care and safe working conditions.
- Recruiting and retaining educators of color. Minnesota can do this by increasing starting salaries, creating loan forgiveness, mentorship and other programs and protections to support educators on the job.
- Increasing student support services. We can strengthen mental health and trauma support for

our students by restoring staff cuts and adding more counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses and other job classifications back into our schools.

- Broadening access to full-service community schools. This is a proven way to help all students succeed in school by putting social, medical and before- and after-school academic services and enrichment activities where they are most accessible—on the school campus.
- Increasing student loan forgiveness. Post-secondary education must be affordable and accessible to attract more students to the education profession.
- Universal access to child care and early learning.
- COVID-related relief such as expanding broadband services, waiving TDE requirements and giving educators a voice in creating quality, safe learning models during the pandemic.

Your union will also advocate for policy changes. This includes improving the tiered licensure system to both honor teacher preparation and recognize different pathways into teaching and ensuring ECCE and ABE teachers are covered under the continuing contract and tenure rights laws.

The 2020 election did not drastically change the makeup of the Legislature. Democrats still control the Minnesota House and Republicans the state Senate.

The House and Senate had not named the chairs of the education committees as of press time. It is the job of each committee to hold public hearings on bills, put each bill into its best form and to recommend only those bills that the committee feels merit further consideration. Committee chairs can control who is able to testify and the overall discussion of a bill.

# HOW TO STAY INFORMED, GET INVOLVED THIS LEGISLATIVE SESSION

This legislative session is poised to look like no other. While final details on exactly how the session will run are being worked out, Education Minnesota still wants as many members as possible engaged in the process.

And with the pandemic affecting teaching and learning, as well as the upcoming funding debates, educators need to have their voices heard more than ever before. Your voices help keep strong public schools as a priority for our legislators. Educators are the most effective advocates for public schools.

## Share your story at a lobby day

While we do not anticipate many or any in-person lobby days, Education Minnesota staff are working on virtual options for members to meet with their local legislators and share their stories. More details will be released as the legislative session plans are finalized. Watch [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/at-the-legislature](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/at-the-legislature) for details on how these events will take place in 2021.

## Meet with legislators when they are back in their district

Even with the pandemic, we expect legislators to be back in the districts they represent during session. Watch your legislators' schedules to see when they are in the district and if they are having any public meetings virtually. Invite your local legislator to your school, campuses and classroom, in a safe way. The more they can see and hear about what is going on in their local schools, especially during COVID-19, the more likely they might be to fight for what you need. If locals or members want to schedule a formal meeting with the legislator, contact your Education Minnesota field staff.

## Raise your voice by testifying at a hearing

Committee hearings are a focal point of the legislative process at the Capitol and give educators the chance to share their stories and make their voices heard. While they may

be virtual this session, we still believe we will have many opportunities to testify. Contact Education Minnesota's lobby team at [lobbyteam@edmn.org](mailto:lobbyteam@edmn.org) if you're interested in testifying. The team can help you prepare your remarks and make sure you are where you need to be.

## View our legislative agenda online, connect with our lobbyists on issues you care about

Education Minnesota has lobbyists who spend their time fighting for public education and educators every day. But we still want to hear from you! Contact [lobbyteam@edmn.org](mailto:lobbyteam@edmn.org) if there is something you care about that you would like us to fight for. Education Minnesota's legislative agenda is an overarching vision of what the organization believes the Legislature should do to ensure Minnesota has the best learning and working conditions in its public schools. Read our full legislative agenda at [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/at-the-legislature](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/at-the-legislature).

## Read the Capitol Connection e-newsletter

Every Monday during the legislative session, Education Minnesota sends an e-newsletter called Capitol Connection to all members. Capitol Connection summarizes the most recent actions affecting public education at the Legislature, and looks ahead to upcoming activities. If you're a member and don't receive Capitol Connection once the session begins, contact [webmaster@edmn.org](mailto:webmaster@edmn.org) and put Capitol Connection in the subject line.

## Connect with Hustle text alerts

Education Minnesota uses Hustle, which is a peer-to-peer mobile texting app. If you have given Education Minnesota your cellphone number, you may start receiving texts in regards to legislative issues that need your attention or action. If you receive a text, you will be able to write back and engage in a conversation about how to get involved and active.



MINNESOTA STATE

# PATHWAY<sup>to</sup>18

Concurrent Enrollment Credentialing



Teachers instructing concurrent enrollment (dual credit) courses are now required by the Higher Learning Commission to have a master's degree in the subject they are teaching, or a master's degree and 18 graduate credits in the subject they are teaching.

**The seven Minnesota State universities are here to help you earn the credits you need quickly and affordably!**

Your Minnesota State universities offer the graduate programs and courses you need to meet HLC concurrent enrollment guidelines, delivered online to fit your schedule.

**REGISTER TODAY**

at [MinnState.edu/Pathway18](https://MinnState.edu/Pathway18)

**Scholarships may be available to help with funding as well.**

We've created an easy, one-stop-shop with everything you need to know about funding sources, what courses are offered, when they are offered, and how to get started.



# DELEGATE SELECTION FOR 2021 NEA RA

The National Education Association Representative Assembly, the major decision-making body for the NEA, is currently planned to be held in person July 2-6 in Denver, CO.

All active Education Minnesota members are eligible to run to be a state-credentialed delegate for the NEA RA. The filing period closes Dec. 11.

Elections will take place in local districts during the 15-day window beginning Feb. 1 and ending Feb. 19. Elections will be held on weekdays only during this period.

Ballots will be mailed the last week of January to all local presidents in districts where an election is necessary.

Nominations for state-credentialed student delegates closes Feb. 12. Elections will take place on a date to be determined in April, if necessary.

## Funding information for state-credentialed delegates

To receive funding, state-credentialed delegates must be in attendance for the entire Representative Assembly, beginning with the first caucus meeting through adjournment the night of July 6. State-credentialed delegates are expected to attend all caucus meetings and to be on the convention floor for all proceedings.

Funding includes: Airfare—travel arrangements to be made through the designated travel agent and direct-billed to Education Minnesota (alternative transportation will be reimbursed up to a predetermined amount); the cost of a double-occupancy room at the delegation hotel (to be direct-billed) for an authorized number of nights; and reimbursement for meals and other convention-related expenses (with original itemized receipts).

Substitute costs for state delegates working in year-round school settings will be covered as outlined in the Education Minnesota Financial Policy for Governance and Members.

Mileage to and from the airport is reimbursable at 20 cents a mile, along with the cost of airport parking.

No funding is available for Category 2 delegates, those who are retired or inactive members.

## Funding information for small locals

A funding program is available to help locals with 150 or fewer members send a delegate to the Representative Assembly or the American Federation of Teachers TEACH conference. Local presidents will receive information. If you have any questions around the small local grant program, please contact Jessica Schmidt, [jessica.schmidt@edmn.org](mailto:jessica.schmidt@edmn.org).

## FILING FORM FOR NEA RA STATE-CREDENTIALLED DELEGATE

This form must be filed with the Office of the Elections Committee of Education Minnesota. Please print clearly.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby submit my name for state credentials to the NEA RA to be held July 2-6, 2021, in Denver, CO.

OR

I, \_\_\_\_\_, wish to nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for state credentials to the NEA RA to be held July 2-6, 2021, in Denver, CO.

I further certify that the nominee is eligible for state credentials as a delegate from:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Active Member – Election District:** \_\_\_\_\_ (K-12; statewide affiliates; and school-related personnel)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Category 2** (inactive NEA life member and not an Education Minnesota Retired member)

### Please complete the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Local: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work email: \_\_\_\_\_ Personal email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do not submit before filing period begins on Nov. 2. Deadline is 11:59 p.m. Dec. 11, 2020.**

**Scan and email completed form to [elections.committee@edmn.org](mailto:elections.committee@edmn.org), submit by mail to: Office of the Elections Committee, Education Minnesota, 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103 or by fax to: 651-767-1266.** If you do not receive confirmation of receipt within seven days after submitting, inquire by email to [elections.committee@edmn.org](mailto:elections.committee@edmn.org). Note: Candidates may submit a photo and statement for inclusion on the Education Minnesota website. The photo and statement must be submitted using the online submission form at [www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org). Statement and photo must be submitted by **Dec. 17, 2020.**

(For official use only)

This filing form was received on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_. Membership was verified on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

## FILING FORM FOR NEA RA STATE-CREDENTIALIAED DELEGATE – STUDENT

This form must be filed with the Office of the Elections Committee of Education Minnesota. Please print clearly.

I hereby submit my name for state credentials to the NEA RA to be held July 2-6, 2021, in Denver, CO. I further certify that the nominee is eligible for state credentials as a delegate from:

### STUDENT

(must be an Education Minnesota Aspiring Educator member)

#### Please complete the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ College: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work email: \_\_\_\_\_ Personal email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Summer address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do not submit before filing period begins on Nov. 2. Deadline is 11:59 p.m. Feb. 12, 2021.**

**Scan and email completed form to [elections.committee@edmn.org](mailto:elections.committee@edmn.org), submit by mail to: Office of the Elections Committee, Education Minnesota, 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103 or by fax to: 651-767-1266.** If you do not receive confirmation of receipt within seven days after submitting, inquire by email to [elections.committee@edmn.org](mailto:elections.committee@edmn.org). Note: Candidates may submit a photo and statement for inclusion on the Education Minnesota website. The photo and statement must be submitted using the online submission form at [www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org). Statement and photo must be submitted by **Feb. 19, 2021**.

(For official use only)

This filing form was received on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_. Membership was verified on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

# 2021 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

 **EDUCATOR AWARD**

 **EDUCATION MAJOR AWARD**

 **STUDENT AWARDS**



**DEADLINE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2021**

Apply now at [www.uecu.coop/scholarships](http://www.uecu.coop/scholarships)

Federally Insured by NCUA

# MEMBER HONOR ROLL

## 2020 Minnesota Rural Education Association Educators of Excellence

### NORTH:

**Jacqueline Stoffel**, Bemidji

### SOUTH CENTRAL:

**Chad Powers**, New London-Spicer

### SOUTH:

**Andrew Hopkins**, Waseca

## 2020 WEM Outstanding Educator Awards

The WEM awards program is run by Synergy & Leadership Exchange, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering collaboration to advance the development of ethical citizens, providing educational resources, and celebrating achievement and best practices in Minnesota schools, businesses and communities.

### ETHICS IN EDUCATION AWARD:

**Darcy Reese**, Lincoln High School and Franklin Middle School, Thief River Falls

**Tammi Hendrickson**, Zimmerman Elementary School, Elk River

### TEACHER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:

**Virginia Mancini**, Mahtomedi Middle School, Mahtomedi

### ACADEMIC CHALLENGE COACH AWARD:

**Amanda Laden**, Wayzata High School, Wayzata

### ATHLETIC COACH AWARD:

**Rick Toward**, Bemidji High School, Bemidji

## School Nurse Organization of Minnesota Nurse of the Year award

**Deb Landin**, Warroad

## Minnesota Association of Family and Consumer Sciences 2020 MN Teacher of the Year

**Heather Baumbach**, Shakopee

## 2020 Minnesota Council on Economic Education Educator of the Year Teaching Awards

### GRADES 6-8 AWARD:

**Joseph T. Eustice**, Ortonville

### GRADES 9-12 AWARD:

**James Schreiner**, Sauk Centre

## Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History 2020 Minnesota History Teacher of the Year

**Mark J. Westpfahl**, South St. Paul

## Minnesota Council for the Social Studies 2020 Teacher of the Year awards

### ELEMENTARY:

**Michelle Simon**, McKinley Elementary STEAM School, Owatonna

### MIDDLE:

**Stacey Olinger**, Highview Middle School, Mounds View

### HIGH:

**Kara Cisco**, St. Louis Park High School, St. Louis Park

### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT:

**Nancy Krenner**, Red Rock Elementary School, South Washington County

## Minnesota School Counselor Association 2020 Counselor of the Year awards

### MIDDLE SCHOOL:

**Kayla Sandersfeld**, New Ulm

### SECONDARY:

**Amanda Bomstad**, Mankato

### MULTI-LEVEL:

**Theresa Fett**, Frazee

## Minnesota Association for Environmental Education Awards

### FORMAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR:

**Jean Schneeweis**, Rockford

## Art Educators of Minnesota 2020 awards

### ART EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AND HIGH SCHOOL ART EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR:

**Sara Underhill**, Pierz

### K-12 ART EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR:

**Molly Kidd**, Wrenshall

### ELEMENTARY ART EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR:

**Tiffany Erie**, Rochester

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD:

**Ted Mitshulis**, Anoka-Hennepin



## Professional development

### NEA WEBINARS

The National Education Association is regularly hosting webinars to help educators navigate this new, stressful environment and connect with students. To see the full list of resources, go to [www.nea.org/professional-excellence/professional-learning/resources](http://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/professional-learning/resources). Included in the featured offerings are self-care, how ESPs can support students in times of crisis, trauma-informed remote learning and using Schoology and Seesaw more effectively.

### AFT ONLINE RESOURCES

AFT's Share My Lesson has dozens of new professional development webinars—available now, for free—to help educators navigate this new learning landscape. Topics include educator health and wellness, distance and hybrid learning models, social emotional learning and engagement strategies. Find links to these webinars and more at [www.sharemylesson.com/webinars/distance](http://www.sharemylesson.com/webinars/distance).

## Classroom resources

### PHYSICSQUEST EXPERIMENT KIT

The aim of PhysicsQuest is to introduce students to the basic concepts of physics, through fun experiments that will sustain their interest in math and science. PhysicsQuest experiment kits demonstrate the fun and relevance of science to middle school students as they learn more about the physical world. In this year's kit, students will learn the physics of falling, swinging, flinging and the basics of orbital motion that Katherine Johnson used to help put the first Americans in space. Sign up to request a kit or access other online experiment and lesson ideas at [www.physicscentral.com/experiment/physicsquest](http://www.physicscentral.com/experiment/physicsquest).

## Grants

### EDUCATION MINNESOTA FOUNDATION GRANT DEADLINES APPROACHING

The Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has multiple grants with a deadline approaching. For details about the grants and how to apply, go to [www.edmnfoundation.org](http://www.edmnfoundation.org). There's a grant waiting for you!

### Classroom-Focused Grants

Applicants may request up to \$3,000. Deadline: Dec. 4

### Bruce Vento Science Educator Grant

For educators who teach science as part of their day and want to acquire and share new skills and knowledge; this grant may also fund equipment or materials needed in science classrooms. Deadline: Dec. 4

### IMPACT Grant

IMPACT Grant projects must be coordinated by an active member of Education Minnesota who has teamed up with a nonprofit organization or their local union/school district. Approximately \$15,000 is available for one year. The budget should reflect a one-year project. Deadline: Jan. 8

### FINANCIAL LITERACY GRANTS AVAILABLE

United Educators Foundation will provide up to a \$500 grant to teachers, departments or schools to support financial literacy efforts with their students. Submitted applications should support instruction of content related to budgeting; credit; money management; economics; saving and investing; or other personal finance topics. Applications for grants must be postmarked by Dec. 17. Go to [www.uecu.coop/about/united-educators-foundation.html](http://www.uecu.coop/about/united-educators-foundation.html) for more information on the grants and how to apply.

### UNITED EDUCATORS SCHOLARSHIPS

United Educators Foundation will grant one \$2,000 Educator Award for educators who wish to attend an accredited institution for professional development, one \$1,500 Education Major Award for current college students studying education and three \$1,000 Student Awards to high school students who are members or dependents of United Educators Credit Union members and plan on attending college in the fall of 2021. The deadline for these awards is Feb. 5. Application requirements and instructions on how to apply are available at [www.uecu.coop/about/united-educators-foundation.html](http://www.uecu.coop/about/united-educators-foundation.html).

# THREE SEATS OPEN ON TRA BOARD

The Teachers Retirement Association Board of Trustees is seeking candidates to fill three active-member seats on the board. The terms of Richfield social studies teacher Mary Supple, Ridgewater College math teacher Will Baumann and Osseo special education teacher Noel Raph expire June 30, 2021.

Raph was appointed as an interim board member when a vacancy arose in mid-term. As a result, three active members will be elected in early 2021. Two members will be elected for four-year terms; one member for a two-year term. The new terms for these positions begin July 1, 2021. There are no term limits on board positions.

Trustees meet about six times a year to oversee the administration of the pension fund. Board members act as TRA fiduciaries in accordance with Minnesota law and are subject to state economic interest disclosures.

To request an application, call TRA at 651-296-2409 or 800-657-3669 or download one at MinnesotaTRA.org. The application must be received at TRA's office by 4:30 p.m. on Fri., Dec. 18.

In early spring, eligible members will receive ballots and candidate biographies. Only active members are eligible to vote for active member board positions.

Election results will be certified by the Board of Trustees in June 2021 and published on MinnesotaTRA.org.

Education Minnesota members who want to screen for the union's endorsement can contact Jodee Buhr at [jodee.buhr@edmn.org](mailto:jodee.buhr@edmn.org) or 651-276-2156 by Dec. 18.

## Additional contest entries



Emma Ryan, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan



Heather Carlson, Waconia



Debra Koebernick, Greenbush-Middle River



Sheila Hetzel, Northfield

## LEGAL BRIEFS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Rights Act makes it unlawful for an employer to fire or discipline any employee for reporting or advocating against a violation of the act. If you have concerns about a policy in your district, and the way that it may make students less safe, you have a right to voice those concerns – and do so in writing.

**3. There are resources to help districts make the right choice.** The court highlighted, and encouraged people to review, the Minnesota Department of Education's publication, A Toolkit for Ensuring Safe and Supportive Schools for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students. This is an excellent starting place for districts who are beginning to review their policies to ensure that they are inclusive and safe.

Education Minnesota will continue to follow this case, and continue to advocate for positive school environments in which all students are valued.

– Meg Luger-Nikolai

Luger-Nikolai is a staff attorney for Education Minnesota.

# MEMBERS WANT TO KNOW

*Empowering members to maximize their hard-earned dollars*

## Discounts from Education Minnesota ESI and NEA Member Benefits

for Education Minnesota members only



### Buy Now and Pay Over 6 Months

Get up to \$2,500 to shop thousands of products on Zebit. No Zebit membership fees. No hidden fees. No FICO pulled.

Shop millions of products including electronics, furniture, toys, jewelry, appliances and more.

Set-up your account today at <https://zebit.com/edmn>



### New Program from NEA Member Benefits

Now you can earn cash back while you shop great deals with our all-new NEA Discount Marketplace with cash back powered by Rakuten. Shop deals from over 2,500 top retailers, online stores, local restaurants and more— all in one place!

Start earning cash back now at [neamb.com/marketplace](http://neamb.com/marketplace).



### 1800FLOWERS Family of Brands

Surprise family and friends with a seasonal bouquet or gourmet gift at 20% off. In addition to flowers, you can choose from Harry & David, The Popcorn Factory, Cheryl's Cookies and more. Visit [neamb.com](http://neamb.com) and look for the "Everyday Savings" heading.

### Magazines—Great for Holiday Gifts

Choose from dozens of titles suitable for all age groups including preschoolers, children and teens at up to 85% off newsstand prices.

View the list of titles at [neamb.com/magazine](http://neamb.com/magazine).



**ESI**

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[esi.educationminnesota.org](http://esi.educationminnesota.org) [esi@edmn.org](mailto:esi@edmn.org)

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THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

Education Minnesota  
41 Sherburne Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55103

## ***Loan forgiveness program tools online***

Education Minnesota's partnership with the loan forgiveness program Summer continues.

As a member, you have free access to the service.

Through Summer, members are able to use a loan consolidation tool, get assistance in developing an income-driven repayment plan and submit for the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

Summer also can help members find out what savings programs they are eligible for, compare options side-by-side and help members enroll in programs – all online.

Minnesota was the first state to roll out the program, in conjunction with the American Federation of Teachers. Members will need to sign in with their Education Minnesota member ID number.

To get started, visit Education Minnesota's signup page at [www.meetsummer.org/education-minnesota](http://www.meetsummer.org/education-minnesota).

Also, Education Minnesota's popular Degrees, Not Debt training is now available on our online professional development platform, LearnUpon, as a self-guided training.

Once you log into your LearnUpon account, search the catalog for Degrees, Not Debt: Self-guided training.

The training discusses the types of loans, loan forgiveness plans and what you need to know as you apply.

Full details about our Degrees, Not Debt program, and information about the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Student Loan Provisions, is available at [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/Degrees-Not-Debt](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/Degrees-Not-Debt).