



MINNESOTA EDUCATOR

A publication for the members of Education Minnesota

June 2018



Education Minnesota endorses **TIM WALZ** for governor

The Education Minnesota Political Action Committee unanimously voted to endorse Tim Walz, a 20-year classroom teacher and current U.S. Congressman, for Minnesota governor.

Read more about Walz and the endorsement process on page 3.

Small gains, big disappointments in legislative session

The Republican-controlled Legislature adjourned May 20, passing funding and tax cut bills that are unlikely to survive the governor's veto pen.

A major victory and bright spot is the Legislature overwhelmingly approved a bill that would adjust public employee pension plans. The changes had broad support from both government employers and the unions representing public employees and retirees.

"A bipartisan group of legislators worked extremely hard to make sure the state kept its promises to its teachers and other public

employees. That work paid off," said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. "All the stakeholders made sacrifices, but in the end, thousands of public employees will now have more stable and dignified retirements."

Educators raising their voices helped make the pension win a reality. High levels of educator engagement also helped defeat a constitutional amendment to dedicate certain sales tax revenue to transportation projects. That would have meant less state funding would be available for public schools.

The \$131 million supplemental spending bill passed by the Legislature includes \$33.5 million for education, including \$20 million for school safety, \$5 million for school-linked mental health grants and \$3.5 million for Minnesota State. But the small amount of money isn't worth the bad policy provisions like a school rating system that come with it.

After balking at Gov. Mark Dayton's recent proposal to include \$138 million in one-time funding to help school districts, Republicans offered their own plan. It made \$225 million available to schools,

but tacked it on to a tax bill that includes corporate tax cuts.

The majority of the emergency money for schools also isn't new money. It was taken from staff development and community education accounts and included a \$50 million shift from the state reserve.

Minnesota State colleges and universities will receive \$129 million in the bonding bill—\$45 million for asset preservation and the rest for individual campus projects.

Dayton has two weeks to decide the fate of those bills. As of press time, he had not vetoed the major spending

and tax bills.

Specht said he should carefully consider whether the flawed policy and gimmicky budget shifts contained in the bills are worth it.

"These bills pack important and popular priorities, like school safety, into a sludge of bad ideas that will create problems for schools and communities for many years," Specht said. "If Minnesotans don't see that now, they will by November. We will make sure of it. We are educators, after all."

Session, page 11

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Read the article about Education Minnesota's Foundation and their new labor-management collaboration training. Then answer the question, "What project would you like to see your administrators and union come together to work on?" 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 or post on Twitter or Facebook using #MNEducator. Find us on Facebook at Education Minnesota and on Twitter @EducationMN. Answers will be run in next month's Minnesota Educator.

Congratulations to last month's contest winner, **Melissa Williams** of Richfield.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

President Denise Specht shares her thoughts on why educators are special people. **Page 2**

Read some of Tim Walz's answers on top education issues from his Education Minnesota screening questionnaire. **Page 3**

Kelly Holstine, an English teacher at Tokata Learning Center in Shakopee, has been named the 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year. **Page 4**

Hear from the other 11 teachers who were finalists for the 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year award. **Page 5**

Report finds that under Gov. Mark Dayton, Minnesota's economy fares better than Wisconsin's has under Gov. Scott Walker. **Page 6**

Filing form for Education Minnesota officer, NEA director positions. **Page 7**

The Education Minnesota Student Program clean up a courtyard at a Minneapolis elementary school as part of a community service project. **Page 7**

Labor-management conference focuses on improving collaboration between administration and the local union. **Page 8**

Sign up to volunteer at the Education Minnesota State Fair booth. **Page 9**

Technology in Schools series. Robots help students learn coding skills. **Page 10**

Early Career Leadership Fellowship looking for members of second cohort. **Page 12**

What makes educators so special?

There is one piece of advice every educator should follow, regardless of where you live or what you teach.

Don't read the comments section of the newspaper's website. Just don't, especially if the article is about education.

A small brigade of anonymous trolls lurk under the articles and write flaming comments about teachers, unions and schools. They aren't true, but the comments are still depressing.

I know this because I recently went spelunking into the dark side of Minnesota's soul under an article about school budgets.

Scrolling through the back-and-forth between TruckMan182, FishyMcIshy and MrBigTacos, I read a short post. It said this, and only this: "What makes teachers so special?"

What an excellent and unexpected question! It was like finding a perfect rose growing out of a sidewalk.

What does make educators so special? Well, troll friends, I'll give three reasons.

First, it is who we are.

Educators are humble enough to know what they don't know, and to recognize they can always be better.



Denise Specht, president

They have enough empathy to understand and share the feelings of their students and colleagues.

Educators stay cool when chaos breaks out.

They hunger for justice in our society and are brave enough to act on it.

Educators can look beyond their own self-interests, while being kind to those who can't.

They are generous with their money and their time.

Educators have the discipline to pull themselves out of bed before dawn and keep working until the work is done. And then do it again the next day.

Finally, it's an old-fashioned word, but educators are peacemakers. They can find common ground when others can't.

There are tens of thousands of educators like that in Minnesota's preschools, schools and colleges. Hundreds more are studying to be teachers in colleges and universities as I write this.

They are young people like Jeri, who was one of my second-graders in the Centennial School District many years ago.

Jeri has grown up. She just finished her student teaching and shared this story on Facebook a few weeks ago:

"Today," she wrote, "I cried five times. It had nothing to do with friends, grades or stress. It had to do with the fact that today, after four months, I had to say goodbye to 93 students, seven amazing English teachers and one fantastic cooperating teacher. ... Saying goodbye to those high school students was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do."

Jeri just experienced one of the most glorious things about being a teacher. That mix of pride and pain is what it's all about. Only exceptional people feel it.

Here's another reason educators are special. Take a moment and think back to your own time as a student. Remember a turning point in your life. Was there an educator there?

When I've asked that question in speeches, people always come up to me afterward to talk about a teacher, coach or education support professional who was there with the right advice at the right time, or the college instructor who pushed just hard enough.

That's the second reason educators are exceptional. It's the lasting impression they can make.

The third reason educators are so special is because our country couldn't function without them.

Public education is a vital part of what makes America work and each member of Education Minnesota is a vital part of public education.

Just as we need clean air, drinkable water and safe bridges, American citizens need the kind of knowledge that comes from a well-rounded education.

As educators, we should not forget our value, nor let anyone try to take it from us. We educate nearly 860,000

children from pre-school through high school in Minnesota. That's about one out of every six people in the state.

Collectively, our role is to strengthen our democracy, give students options and keep moving our country toward that "more perfect union."

So, to sum up for NeroTheCat, TinMan11, MrBigTacos, TruckMan182, FishyMcIshy, MrBigTacos, and the rest; we are special because of what we bring to the job. We are special because our work is measured in lifetimes. And we are special because democracy breaks down without us.

As we head into a busy summer break, please take a moment to appreciate the people we are blessed to work alongside every day, and take a little extra pride in the work you've done this year for your students. You've earned it.

Together,

Twitter: @DeniseSpecht

A version of this commentary was given by Education Minnesota President Denise Specht as her keynote speech at the 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year banquet. The banquet honored the 2018 recipient, Kelly Holstine of Shakopee, but also the other 166 candidates for the award this year. Read more about Holstine, see photos from the banquet and read about the other 11 finalists for the award on pages 4-5.



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PAC board unanimously votes to endorse Walz

Education Minnesota announced its endorsement of Tim Walz for Minnesota governor on May 19.

The 24-member board of the Education Minnesota Political Action Committee had set a three-fourths threshold to endorse in the governor’s race this year. The vote for Walz was unanimous.

Walz taught global geography at Mankato West High School from 1996 until his election to Congress in 2006. His running mate is Peggy Flanagan, a state representative serving House District 46A (St. Louis Park, Golden Valley, Plymouth) since 2015.

“Tim Walz was a classroom teacher for 20 years and is a leader who knows what it takes to prepare each and every student for a successful life,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “His running mate, Peggy Flanagan, has a strong record of advocating for children and families. This is the right team to lead Minnesota for the next four years.”

“This team will lead the fight for working families of Minnesota,” said Roxanne Norlin, a 2nd-grade teacher and chair of the Education Minnesota PAC, of the Walz/Flanagan ticket. “They will defend the freedom of working people to come together in unions, invest in our state’s students, and make sure every CEO and corporation pays their fair share.”

In Walz’s endorsement



As part of Education Minnesota’s endorsement process, Tim Walz spent a full day in Duluth Public Schools, learning about their full-service community schools and hearing from educators and students about what is happening in Minnesota schools.

questionnaire, he pledged to increase school funding (including money for mental health resources and full-service community schools) and fight for racial equity—both in the classroom and out. He is a strong supporter of unions and collective bargaining rights and has vowed to keep vouchers and other privatization efforts out of Minnesota.

“Minnesota has exceptional schools that are the backbone of this state. As a former public school

teacher, I will always do everything in my power to protect our public education system from privatization,” he said.

During his time in Congress, Walz has received a lifetime “A” grade from the National Education Association for his work in advancing public education. He also co-sponsored the Mental Health in Schools Act, the Student Loan Affordability Act, the IDEA Full Funding Act and the Student Loan Relief Act of 2013.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT IN THE ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

- More than 500 members attended the November 2017 candidate forum and provided feedback to PAC members after that event. The video of the forum is still available on Education Minnesota’s Facebook page.
- More than 120 members attended candidate roundtable discussions with candidates that were broadcast on Facebook for all members. The videos from the roundtable discussions are also still available on Education Minnesota’s Facebook page.
- More than 700 members participated in shaping our candidate questionnaire. To read all of the candidate’s questionnaires, go to <http://bit.ly/edmnvotes>.
- PAC board members visited worksites and held one-on-one conversations with more than 100 members.
- PAC board members’ contact information was shared on our website and they received calls and emails from members across the state.

The members of the PAC board interviewed the four candidates who sought the union’s endorsement: state Rep. Erin Murphy of St. Paul, State Auditor Rebeca Otto, Walz and former Minneapolis public schools educator Christopher Seymore.

To be considered for the endorsement, candidates had to complete a new five-step process. This included:

- Participate in a public candidate forum at our November 2017 Political Conference.
- Spend a half- or full-day in a school shadowing educators.
- Participate in member roundtables centering on economic issues.

- Complete a candidate questionnaire that will be shared publicly, with questions developed by members across the state.
- Participate in a screening interview.

Here’s why educators should care about the 2018 elections:

- Public education shouldn’t be at the mercy of politics. But it is.
- The next governor and Legislature will decide classroom issues, such as class size and licensing standards, and pocketbook issues, like student loan debt and health care costs.
- The next governor must also protect our collective bargaining rights.

Here are a selection of Tim Walz’s answers from his Education Minnesota candidate questionnaire. These questions, and more like them, were submitted by members from across the state. To read his full questionnaire, go to <http://bit.ly/edmnvotes>.

How will you pay for more funding for education?

“I support Governor Dayton’s tax plan where the wealthiest Minnesotans pay their fair share. I will continue to pursue a progressive tax plan as governor and ensure funds are dedicated to education across the state.”

How can we move to a more stable and consistent school funding source?

“Our current distribution of school funding between levies, revenue, and state aid is a recipe for instability from community to community and school to school. Increasing the state’s share of funding is key to making sure we have stability in funding for education. Things have gotten better over the past four years, but we are still way down from 2003 levels adjusted for inflation.”

What REAL solutions/plan of action do you have regarding gun safety and gun education for our students and staff?

“The solution is not arming teachers. This is a distraction. Schools are meant to be safe places for our children. Bringing more guns into schools is not the answer. Keeping dangerous weapons out of the hands of dangerous people is the answer. I support outlawing bump-stocks and automatic weapons as well as funding studies on gun violence, having universal background checks, and I oppose any stand your ground and conceal and carry laws.”

What will you do to guarantee high standards for teacher licensure?

“When I walked into my first day in the

classroom, I knew everything. When I walked out that evening I knew nothing; and I spent the next 20 years trying to claw my way back to knowing something.

Content knowledge is important, but there’s so much more involved with being a teacher. Training and a robust licensure system is vital to maintaining the professionalism of the calling that we’ve devoted our lives to, along with improving student achievement. I disagree with the actions taken by the Legislature during this past session that aimed to lower licensure standards. Peggy and I spoke out against the changes publicly and will continue to fight against them if these attempts are made in the future.

When students attend school to become teachers, they do more than learn content—they learn about child development. They learn about working with students from diverse backgrounds. They learn how to teach conceptually, so that students aren’t just memorizing dates and names but learn how to learn.

Last year’s legislation was a ‘solution’ in search of a problem. In terms of concrete steps on licensure, this is what I support:

- Teacher preparation is key. Any candidate who wants to attain a Tier 3 license should have to complete it before the license is granted.
- Retain the best of the best by creating a Tier 5 license.
- Tier 1 teachers should be allowed to be part of the teacher bargaining unit.
- Only those who are actively working toward a Tier 3 license should get Tier 2 designation.

- Summative evaluation should not be tied to licensure status.”

What will you do to decrease the achievement gap for students of color and English language learners?

“We know our achievement and opportunity gaps begin early and need to be addressed early. If all kids had access to high quality early education we can reduce achievement gaps before they begin. That is why I will fight to have universal, all day Pre-K across the state that is affordable and accessible.

I also think it’s important that students have educators who look like them. That’s why I support loan forgiveness programs that remove barriers and help attract more people of color to become teachers and help improve teacher retention.”

What will you do about student loan debt?

“We need to approach student loan debt on both sides of the issue. For those who currently have it, we need tax deductions and to expand the state refinance program to include areas where there are shortages of educators, counselors, therapists, licensed nurses, etc. We also need to fully fund our higher education so that tuition goes down and the state pays two-thirds of the tuition, like it currently states in Minnesota statute and like we were doing prior to 2003. Current students pay for nearly three-quarters of the cost of tuition and fees. Here’s a radical idea; let’s fully fund all levels of education. We also need a robust state aid program so that students and families are able to receive assistance when they need it.”

Holstine wants every student to be seen

Kelly Holstine never dreamed she'd become a teacher.

After starting her career in media, she moved into social work where she first started to see how education was at the root of a person's ability to be socially and emotionally successful.

Recently named the 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year, Holstine hopes to share that message with the world.

"I worked with families suffering from abusive situations. I worked as a case manager for kids who dropped out of school and realized how hard it is for kids to not have a high school diploma," Holstine said. "I started to want to be part of the prevention. I wanted to be part of the successes and celebrations. So many kids and teenagers have a lot of pain and deal with situations that aren't in their control. I wanted to be a consistent, passionate, caring adult for them."

Holstine went back to Augsburg College and got her teaching license in communication arts and literature, and her Master of Arts in education.

She worked as an English teacher in Chaska and St. Anthony before finding her way to a new program being created in Shakopee.

The district was opening Tokata Learning Center, its first Alternative Learning Center, and Holstine was one of their first hires.

"I had to research ALCs before the job interview," she said. "I realized it would combine my social work background with my teaching experience."

Holstine was able to help open the school and create the mission statement and guide curriculum choices.

And now, Holstine can't imagine working anywhere else.

"If there's a rough exterior to a student, it's hard to realize everything that's behind it," she said. "But students can be more themselves here. Especially in my writer's workshop class, they can share their feelings and it helps them reveal more of themselves. It's my favorite part of the job."

Holstine teaches multiple English classes, as well as the writer's workshop, which is a creative writing-focused class.

While she teaches them proper sentence structure, how to analyze a piece of literature or media and the power of semantics, Holstine also wants her students to know they are valued.

"My classes are rigorous," she said. "But I don't make them do it without support. I feel a really high-level of responsibility that they need to be able to compete with mainstream students in college. I want them to have as many options as possible, which means they need to be able to talk well and write well."



Kelly Holstine, the 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year, works with student Alex Abdelwahed in her English class at Tokata Learning Center in Shakopee. Holstine's class has students working on various assignments, depending on how many credits they need to earn their diploma. She works with students individually or in small groups to help them complete their work. Her teaching philosophy is to lead with compassion.

That support is felt school-wide at Tokata. They work with a concept of "not yet," Holstine said.

"If students get below a C, it's called a 'not yet,'" she said. "You're just not there yet. We give feedback and coaching on what they need to add or change, until they get a C or above. They can't pass a course until they get a C or above."

That philosophy fits into the school's model of restorative justice.

"We try not to shame or blame," she said. "I'm a strong believer in passionate accountability. They know what my expectations are and

they are the same everyday."

"Structure is healing and consistency is key. If I have to take their phone away, they know it's because I value their education and I'm doing it out of love."

Holstine plans to spend her recognition year working to change the narrative about ALCs.

"These are amazing students and kids that sometimes just need more compassion," she said. "When students are acting out, there's a need that's not being met. I lead with compassion and if you have a positive relationship with a student, it makes everything

easier. If they have trauma at home or somewhere else in their life, I want them to know they have one place to feel safe and feel kindness."

As this year's representative of Minnesota's outstanding teachers, Holstine's message is simple—all kids matter.

"Some people might think their job is to teach and some people think their job is to help students learn," she said. "If a student is not learning something, I look at what I need to do differently to help get them there. I see it as an opportunity for me to do something different."



The 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year banquet

Teacher of the Year finalists' reflections

Besides Holstine, 11 teachers were also finalists for 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year. Here are their reflections on their professional motivations and teaching philosophy.



Courtney Bell
Social studies
North Academy of Arts and Communications
Minneapolis

"I believe that being able to be a model for my scholars and for them to see what is possible, is the greatest job, the greatest honor that has ever been bestowed on me. And I don't think there will be another honor that will come my way, in my lifetime that will surpass this experience."



Shaylee McComb
Music
Weaver Elementary
North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale

"I believe that music is extremely valuable to every child. When they step into my room, it's a part of their day. It's a part of their life. There is a rhythm to this entire school day – they are walking from class to class, they are memorizing things. I try to collaborate with teachers a lot. What song can I teach them that's going to help them remember?"



Dani Berry
Math
Epsilon
Intermediate District 287

"I do have those moments where students are like, 'Ms. Berry, no one ever told me that I could learn this. No one ever showed me that they believed in my ability to learn this.' And when I see that, it's all worth it."



Malia Norton
Elementary
Medford Elementary
Medford

"We're building citizens. We're making people that are ready to lead the country, ready to improve the country, ready to live their lives, live their futures. I want my daughters to grow up in a world that is happy and healthy. If we don't have good teachers that are preparing for that kind of future, it's not going to be there for them."



Scott Glew
Social studies
Salk Middle School
Elk River

"What I learned in the military was that the things we do in the social studies classroom, matter. The decisions that we make as a country impact people all around the world, and that's a very real thing. I try to bring that into the classroom to help them understand why the things we're talking about in the curriculum really do matter."



Renee Swanson
Biology
High School for Recording Arts
St. Paul

"If we could get every person who goes into education, teacher or not, to start with the mindset that every student wants to learn and every student is capable of learning. And when they walk in the room, that's what's in your head and it's your job to build that trust relationship with them and start to establish those connections. So that when they walk into the room, they know that they're seen and they're appreciated, and you're connected to them."



Adam Kuehnel
English language arts
Minnesota Correctional Facility
Faribault

"In the correctional setting, a teacher has to wear many different hats. Not only do we teach students literacy skills, critical thinking skills, writing skills and employment skills, but we model to them what it means to be a loving husband, a father who cares about his children and a community member, how to become positively engaged in their community, their schools, their workplace."



Sheena Tisland
Language arts
Red Wing High School
Red Wing

"One of my favorite things about teaching is watching the kid's minds open up. Knowing that at the beginning of a month or a unit or a text or the year, they might feel or think or see something narrowly, and then to witness the progress of opening up a little and trying out new words or trying out new ideas, and claiming those ideas as their own. It's awesome."



Alyssa Larsen
Human geography and world history
Waconia High School
Waconia

"I hopefully am able to jumpstart them to ask those really important questions. They are the ones who are going to solve the major problems in our society. I have to expose them to those issues for the first time."



Gregory Truso
Elementary
Wilshire Park Elementary
St. Anthony-New Brighton

"The world needs to know that our profession is the greatest in the world. It really is built on the most wonderful students, the most wonderful families. Public teachers are not just classroom teachers. They are advocates in their communities, for their student's sports, their activities outside of school. What we need from the world is the support."



Tim Leistikow
English
Fridley High School
Fridley

"The best analogy is that we are a master chef. We need to bring together all the ingredients. We need to set it up. But then when it's time to let it cook, you've got to let it cook and step away a little bit. You have to be willing see what happens. Come in and readjust here and there, but know that at the end of the day, it's the product that's important, it's not you."

About the Minnesota Teacher of the Year program

The Minnesota Teacher of the Year program has recognized excellence in teaching in Minnesota for 54 years. The program selects one teacher to represent the state's thousands of excellent educators. The Teacher of the Year and finalists speak to education organizations, community groups, students, legislators and media.

To enter the state program, nominees submit an entry portfolio, which includes their teaching philosophy, professional accomplishments and letters of recommendation. This year, 167 educators submitted portfolios. A panel of 20 to 25 community leaders selects honorees from the portfolios, choosing semifinalists and then

finalists. The Minnesota Teacher of the Year is selected from a group of 10-12 finalists.

Eligible nominees must teach in a public or nonpublic Pre-K through 12th-grade school or ECFE or Adult Basic Education program, working at least 50 percent of the time directly with students; hold a bachelor's degree and a Minnesota teaching license; and have completed three years of teaching by the nomination deadline.

Nominations for the 2019 Minnesota Teacher of the Year award will open Oct. 1. Nomination information will be available on www.educationminnesota.org.

2018 Minnesota
TEACHER
of the **YEAR**
54th Anniversary

Minnesota economy outperforms Wisconsin, report says

A recent report for the Economic Policy Institute shows that since 2010, Minnesota has outperformed Wisconsin on almost every available economic measure. The report looks at the economies of each state since the 2010 elections of Gov. Scott Walker and Gov. Mark Dayton.

“Because of the proximity and many similarities of these two states, comparing economic performance in the Badger State (WI) versus the Gopher State (MN) provides a compelling case study for assessing which agenda leads to better outcomes for working people and their families. Now, seven years removed from when each governor took office, there is ample data to assess which state’s economy—and by extension, which set of policies—delivered more for the welfare of its residents,” said the report summary.

Key findings of the report include:

- Job growth since December 2010 has been markedly stronger in Minnesota than Wisconsin, with Minnesota experiencing 11 percent growth in total non-farm employment, compared with only 7.9 percent growth in Wisconsin. Minnesota’s

job growth was better than Wisconsin’s in education and health care (17.3 percent vs. 11 percent).

- From 2010 to 2017, wages grew faster in Minnesota than in Wisconsin at every level in the wage

- Median household income in Minnesota grew by 7.2 percent from 2010 to 2016. In Wisconsin, it grew by 5.1 percent over the same period. Median family income exhibited a similar pattern, growing 8.5 percent in Minnesota compared with 6.4

than have been moving in from elsewhere in the U.S. The same is not true of Minnesota.

The report includes the years after Wisconsin passed Act 10, the law that stripped unions of their collective bargaining rights.

According to the report:

later, there is no evidence to validate this claim.”

The report’s author says that the clear contrast between the policies pushed by the two leaders of Wisconsin and Minnesota are the cause for the differences in the state’s economies.

“Policymakers in Wisconsin have pursued a highly-conservative agenda centered on cutting taxes for the rich, shrinking government and weakening unions,” said David Cooper, an EPI senior economic analyst, in the press release about the report. “In contrast, Minnesota has enacted a slate of progressive priorities like raising the minimum wage, strengthening labor standards and boosting public investments in infrastructure and education, financed through progressive taxes. The results could not be more clear: workers and families in Minnesota have done far better over the past seven years than their counterparts in Wisconsin.”

To read the full report, go to www.epi.org/publications and click on the link for “Minnesota and Wisconsin had similar job growth trajectories leading up to the Great Recession, but not after it.”

“Policymakers in Wisconsin have pursued a highly-conservative agenda centered on cutting taxes for the rich, shrinking government, and weakening unions. In contrast, Minnesota has enacted a slate of progressive priorities like raising the minimum wage, strengthening labor standards, and boosting public investments in infrastructure and education, financed through progressive taxes. The results could not be more clear: workers and families in Minnesota have done far better over the past seven years than their counterparts in Wisconsin.”

– David Cooper, EPI senior economic analyst

distribution. Low-wage workers experienced much stronger growth in Minnesota than Wisconsin.

- Gender wage gaps also shrank more in Minnesota than in Wisconsin. From 2010 to 2017, women’s median wage as a share of men’s median wage rose by 3 percentage points in Minnesota, and by 1.5 percentage points in Wisconsin.

percent in Wisconsin.

- From 2010 to 2017, Minnesota has had stronger overall economic growth (12.8 percent vs. 10.1 percent), stronger growth per worker (3.4 percent vs. 2.7 percent), and stronger population growth (5.1 percent vs. 1.9 percent) than Wisconsin. In fact, over the whole period—as well as in the most recent year—more people have been moving out of Wisconsin to other states

“Wisconsin’s rapidly declining rate of unionization and the large cuts made to its public sector have serious implications for the state’s short- and long-term economic performance. Gov. Walker contended that his agenda of shrinking the public sector and reducing the power of unions would lead to stronger private-sector growth, which would ultimately lead to better economic outcomes for Wisconsin workers and their families. Seven years



June and July workshops

for members with a TRA pension unless otherwise noted

- June 14** Windom Education MN Office
560 Second Ave.
- June 18** St. Cloud Education MN Office
3051 2nd St. S., Suite 200
- June 19** Prairie Woods - Spicer
12718 10th St. N.E.

- July 10** MN Landscape Arboretum
3675 Arboretum Dr.
- July 10** MN Landscape Arboretum *for members with a PERA pension
3675 Arboretum Dr.
- July 11** Apple Valley Education MN Office
6950 146th St. W., Suite 114
- July 12** Brooklyn Park Education MN Office
9210 Wyoming Ave. N., Suite 200

Watch your email for the link to register or you can contact Deb Skog at Deborah.skog@edmn.org or 651-292-4856 (please leave your name(s) and which session you would like to attend)

Seating is limited
Register early to secure your spot
Spouses/guests are welcome

All summer workshops 9:30 a.m. Registration
10 - 12:30 p.m. Workshop

Topics to be discussed include:

- Local contract information including what to look for in your contract before you retiree
- Pension education including learning how benefits are calculated
- Financial planning including how to bridge the gap between what you will receive from a pension and what you need to retire
- Asset protection including how you can protect your assets and savings



41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103
651-292-4856 800-842-4824
esi.educationminnesota.org

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Labor-management collaboration focus of new Education Minnesota Foundation training opportunity

Research has shown that when the adults in a building or district work together, there are better outcomes for students who attend those schools.

With that premise in mind, the Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has created the Collaboration Lab.

Through the Collaboration Lab, the Education Minnesota Foundation will work with a district’s administration and staff to build positive relationships between staff and management to:

- Create systems and structures that support collaboration, deepen understanding of stakeholders, and provide honest feedback that can lead to better outcomes for a specific project.
- Support sustainability of these systems and structures so that there is collaboration that takes place regardless of the personalities of specific individuals in leadership.
- Reach positive outcomes on a shared goal, project or objective.

Education Minnesota believes that how the staff-management group achieves their shared goal will be just as important as achieving it; process weighing equally with product. Our theory of change is that a better process will lead to a better product.

For districts that desire single-day professional development or collaborative opportunities, the foundation will work directly with stakeholders from staff and management to design these opportunities if they are related to:

- Racial Equity – FIRE (Facing Inequities in Racism and Education) collaboration.
- Relationship building around Teacher Development and Evaluation or specific building issues.

Districts will be charged a \$1,000 base partnership fee that will be a charitable donation to the foundation. This fee will get districts:

- Facilitation at four meetings for a one-year-long project, including all of the tools for collaboration to make that project; OR
- One full professional development day including all trainers; OR
- Two half-day professional development sessions including all trainers.

More information about the Collaboration Lab can be found at edmnfoundation.org/collaboration-lab.

The basis for this new professional development opportunity started in three pilot local unions, who attended the Teacher Union Reform Network (TURN) Conference to start work on a labor-management project of their choosing.

Mounds View Education Association

The Mounds View Education Association considers itself lucky to have a pretty good relationship with school district management, said Stacey Vanderport, MVEA local president.

That foundation was why the union was asked if they wanted to be a pilot local in a labor-management professional development opportunity. The local and district agreed to participate and decided to work on their teacher evaluation process.

“We had systems and

systems in place, but wanted to make sure they had all of the drivers in the right spots.

The process has been a success so far, said Vanderport.

“The admins are checking in with building reps or union leaders before doing something,” she said. “Principals are asking teachers before doing a certain professional development, getting input and changing things if necessary. Our curriculum director and coordinator see the value in moving through the process. It’s a direct link to student achievement.”

While Mounds View had a good labor-management system in place before attending the conference, Vanderport is quick to say that it wasn’t an easy road to get there.

“It takes a long time,” she said. “All of the pieces that

she was asked if she and the district would like to pilot the labor-management collaboration project.

Three teachers and the district staff member hired as the community school coordinator attended the TURN Conference.

“We met and mapped out our goals for the year and a strategic plan,” Hron said. “We talked about how we were going to do a needs assessment and about the things we needed to accomplish and how we were going to do it.”

The needs assessment took place last March with a large number of parents and community members in attendance.

“We asked leading questions to dig down to the real goals and how we can achieve them,” Hron said.

The district created a full-service community

‘thing’ that you both can work toward, with the same end goal. Start small and take baby steps, but if you don’t build a relationship with the district, this won’t work.”

Chaska Education Association

Collaboration has been a value in the Eastern Carver County School District since a teacher strike in 1984, but Chaska Education Association President Chris Commers knew there was still room for improvement.

So when he was approached to attend the TURN Conference and focus on a labor-management collaboration project, he jumped on the opportunity.

“We wanted to really look at the teacher day,” Commers said. “How do we make a teacher’s workday more livable and conducive to success?”

Six administrators and three teachers attended the conference and started looking at what they could do to answer that question.

“We’ve been able to make some significant changes with our PLCs,” Commers said. “We try to make our PLC more parallel and align with student work and teacher development and evaluation. We’re looking for quality and here’s how we’re measuring it, instead of just counting minutes.”

That shift in thinking from counting minutes to looking at results and qualitative measures to see if teachers are being successful is leading to other conversations, he said.

The union and district are talking about making better use of the standard parent-teacher conferences and integrating teacher home visits into that time. They are also talking about the typical workday for teachers and encouraging staff to get out of the building during their duty-free lunch, to take a walk or get something to eat.

“We’re blessed with a district administration that sees student and administration interests in having these conversations,” Commers said. “As society changes, as expectations change, we also have to change how our work is organized.”

Commers suggests that other union leaders interested in pursuing a more collaborative relationship with their districts look for tangible things or projects to frame the discussions around.

“What’s a great need for the local and how can it be framed so the district can see its self-interest?” he said.

Collaboration Conference

Collaborative labor-management teams and their impact on professional practice and student learning.

When the adults in a building or district work together, there are better outcomes for students who attend those schools. This may seem a bit self-evident, but until recently, there was a gap in academic research to back up this collaboration. However, recent research from Rutgers University provides significant proof that the relationships between adults in a school have a direct and important impact on the students in that school's classrooms. (See: Rubenstein, 2014)

Tuesday June 19, 2018

DoubleTree Bloomington-Minneapolis South

This conference is for labor-management teams that are interested in learning more about the power of collaboration, its impact on professional growth and student learning, and exploring avenues of collaboration for your site or district. We look forward to working with teams of any size!

Click here to register:
www.cvent.com/d/rgq0c2

Sponsor:



Partners:



structures in place for many years,” said Vanderport. “We created a joint task force once the teacher development and evaluation law came to be and with Q-Comp. But we looked at the systems that we have and wanted to make sure all of the pieces were connected.”

The local and district became very intentional about tightening up and organizing the existing structures and building capacity within them.

“We looked at all of the components that we had been working through and made the conscious decision to tie them together,” said Vanderport. “We looked at how many union reps we had on district implementation teams. We wanted to make sure the union voice was reflected on school teams.”

Vanderport, as well as two other union members and two district staff, went to the TURN Conference and learned they had a lot of great

people have put into place over the last 30 years have been intentional. That’s why we’re here.”

But this process has created an even stronger focus on the collaboration between labor and management.

“It takes away the stigma of admin vs. union,” she said. “We’re at the table on things that have nothing to do with negotiations.”

Vanderport says that even in districts where there is not as good of a relationship between the administration and union, there is a way to get there.

“You can start small,” she said. “There are always one or two things that you can come together around, and that’s how these things start.”

Deer River Education Association

DeAnna Hron, the president of the Deer River Education Association, was interested in bringing the full-service community school model to her district when

school advisory board and the school opened this fall as an official full-service community school. They are still building programs and finding new needs to meet, but Hron said the successes of the programs they have in place are already apparent.

Participating in the conference and focusing on labor-management collaboration has helped the relationships between the union and administration, said Hron.

“We’ve been able to build a bridge between us and be proactive about things,” she said. “It feels like we have a different relationship, a collaborative relationship. And it’s stretching to other things we’ve worked on, like talking about professional development.”

Hron said that unions shouldn’t be scared about approaching this concept in their district.

“We’re all in it for the kids,” she said. “Find a

Sign up for shifts at State Fair booth

The 2018 Minnesota State Fair returns Aug. 23-Sept. 3. Every year, Education Minnesota member volunteers and staff produce personalized photo calendars for visitors at our booth in the Education Building on Cosgrove Street near the Snelling Avenue entrance.

Shifts are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Sign up today to get the date and time you want by going to www.educationminnesota.org/events/state-fair-booth/state-fair. Only days with open slots will be listed. The booth is open 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Shifts include taking

digital photos and acting as Education Minnesota ambassadors to fairgoers. In 2017, members produced more than 14,000 calendars for booth visitors. Shifts are three hours long; volunteers receive an admission ticket and T-shirt. In addition to the photo

calendar, the booth also features different education groups every day of the fair showcasing their curriculum area or program. Last year, 11 subject area groups were featured at the booth. Fairgoers also use their time in line for the photo calendar to write thank you notes to

educators in their lives who have been influential. Over 4,000 notes were written last year and a selection of the notes have run in issues of the Minnesota Educator. See a selection of notes on page 7.



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Robots bring extra fun to coding in schools

When Jodi Burling enters one of the elementary classrooms in Princeton Public Schools, the students know they are going to have fun. But Burling knows they are going to learn something, too.

As the district technology integration specialist, Burling tries to bring coding and computer science into classrooms. In some classes, that means using robots.

Burling uses Bee-Bots and Blue-Bots, which are toy-like robots that students program to perform tasks by push buttons to create the coding challenges students need to master.

“With the Bee-Bots and Blue-Bots, they do a lot with partners sitting across from each other,” she said. “Then they find more creative and interesting ways to get through the challenges.”

At East Bethel Community School in the St. Francis School District, Ryan Fiereck, the K-5 technology teacher, is also using robots to help teach kids problem-solving and creative thinking skills.

“I spend a lot of time giving

them challenges, like giving them the mat and having them program the robot to run over all the triangles I have placed on it,” Fiereck said. “There are multiple right answers, but they still have to figure out how to solve it.”

Burling agrees that the coding lessons and using robots are a big piece of personalized learning.

“It’s not us saying, ‘This is your assignment and there’s one way to do it,’” Burling said. “There is no right answer or wrong answer.”

Fiereck uses Bee-Bots and Blue-Bots, as well as Ozobots, with his students after he has introduced them to coding through other activities from Code.org.

“We recently expanded our curriculum and went all in on coding,” he said. “Code.org gives me a full curriculum and the ability to set up accounts for the kids that they can log in and use whenever they want.”

The Ozobots allow students to do block-based coding, which Fiereck says is similar to snapping together Legos.

“They upload the coding to the robot, so you tell it what to do,” he said. “There are different problems to solve, like matching that they need to mimic. The programming matches the block-based coding lessons we do from Code.org.”

Fiereck said he also likes that programs don’t rely on the students’ ability to type.

“The typing speed alone is hard, if you want to code,” he said. “Clicking speed is a lot easier.”

Fiereck uses the robots in his classroom, where students from all grade levels come for technology. Burling brings her class kits of robots into classrooms, and tries to work with the teachers to integrate the coding lessons into other subject areas.

“One of the science standards is knowing the flower cycle,” Burling said. “We have the students program the Bee-Bot to go around the mat mimicking the flower cycle.”

Bee-Bots are able to carry out 40 consecutive commands. They come with a rechargeable battery, a USB cable and a guide.

Blue-Bots are similar to Bee-Bots, but are able to be connected to a computer or tablet using Bluetooth technology and can be programmed remotely.

Ozobots are smaller and move through the OzoBlockly app or follow a colored line on a piece of paper.

There are a variety of resources available for educators to use once they purchase the robots. Both companies offer lessons, references, training and guides for educators at www.ozobot.com and www.bee-bot.us.

Code.org also offers classroom resources, as well as other sites like Pinterest.

There are also other coding robots for classroom use, including Botly the Coding Robot, Dash and Dot robots and SPRK+ from Sphero.

Fiereck said he chose the Bee-Bots, Blue-Bots and Ozobots for his classroom because while they are expensive, they are not too expensive.

“Other teachers could raise the money to get them,” he said. He estimated a class set of either robot would cost

between \$1,200 and \$2,000.

He said they are also not too expensive that students wouldn’t be able to purchase a home set, if it is something they really liked.

The hard part of introducing such a fun way to learn into the classroom, is making sure the kids know that they are learning something really important.

“This brings play back into the classroom,” said Burling. “But it’s connecting what they are doing in schools with something fun.”

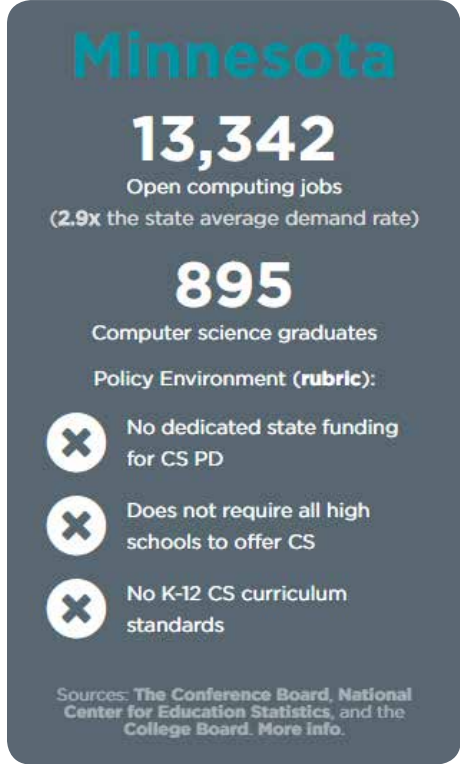
“We get that wide-eyed look of excitement,” said Fiereck. “One of the more difficult parts is getting them to slow down enough to explain that this is tied to that, and what we’ve learned already makes it easier to do the fun tasks.”

“Once you get it in their hands, get out of their way. And it’s great for the wide-span of students. If you really like this, you can go to step 100. If not, then you’ll still accomplish the task at hand.”

TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS



Ryan Fiereck, a St. Francis technology teacher, shared a photo of his students using the Bee-Bots and Blue-Bots on Twitter.

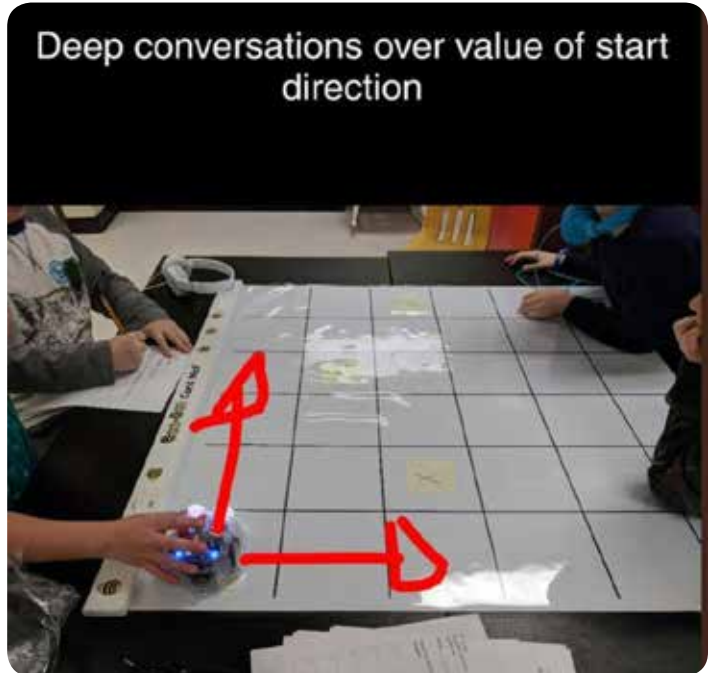


St. Francis students use the coding robots, Bee-Bots, Blue-Bots and Ozobots, to complete challenges while in Ryan Fiereck’s technology class at East Bethel Community School.

(left) Teaching coding skills as early as elementary is a great way to introduce students to the computer science field. According to Code.org, Minnesota has not yet created a state plan for K-12 computer science, but does allow computer science to count for a core graduation requirement.



St. Francis technology teacher Ryan Fiereck charges the Bee-Bots, Blue-Bots and Ozobots he recently purchased for his classroom. The students are able to use them to practice coding with lessons from Code.org.



St. Francis students debate which direction to start their robot in order to complete their challenge of having it pass over all the “X’s” on the mat.

Session *from page 1*
Here's a breakdown of this legislative session.

What happened

Education Minnesota supports

- Maintaining defined-benefit pension plans for current and future generations without putting an undue financial burden on educators, retirees or taxpayers. The bill includes several changes, including:
 - Increases in the employer contribution from 7.5 percent to 8.75 percent phased in over six years. State funding is included to cover this cost.
 - Increases employee contribution from 7.5 percent to 7.75 percent starting July 1, 2022.
 - Reducing the cost-of-living adjustment for retirees from 2 percent to 1 percent for the next five years, then a 0.1 percent increase each year until it reaches 1.5 percent in 2028.
- Ratifying contracts for state employees, including

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT DURING THE 2018 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- 4,400 emails sent during the session
 - Calls to defeat the transportation amendment had the most emails sent, followed by the #armmewith support staff engagement.
- 471 educators attending Lobby Days, from 99 different locals
- 50 Lobby Days

Minnesota State College Faculty.

- Prohibiting school districts from denying a school lunch to participating students, even if they have an outstanding meals balance.
- Delaying rulemaking on the new tiered-licensure system until Oct. 1. Also ensures members of the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board cannot lose pay for time spent volunteering on the board.

Education Minnesota opposes

- Allowing public schools to display “In God We Trust” posters.
- Expanding the grounds for the Professional Educator Licensing

and Standards Board to revoke or suspend a teacher’s license.

- Creating a rating system for schools based on limited criteria, including test scores.

What we fought off

- Amending the state Constitution to dedicate certain sales tax revenue to transportation projects. It did not increase the tax rate, which would have meant less state funding would be available for public schools, nursing homes and health care.
- Requiring school districts to create and enforce policies requiring “academic balance” in their educators’ instruction. This would



“I am deeply, deeply offended. We know what we need for staff development and we need our voice to be heard,” said Rep. Julie Sandstede, a music teacher. Sandstede called out lawmakers during the debate of the omnibus tax/education bill. The bill would allow school districts to use the 2 percent set asides for staff development in other ways, without getting approval of their teachers.

have inhibited good teaching and critical thinking by prohibiting educators from encouraging students to attempt, defend or see the merit in a viewpoint different from their own.

Missed opportunities

The Legislature yet again failed to address what schools really need to help students lead healthy, successful lives and keep educators in the profession.

Education Minnesota proposed a bill that would do just that. SF3926/HF4382 looked beyond the easy

fixes and established class size limits, funded the state portion of special education costs and allowed schools to hire enough counselors, nurses, social workers and other student support services to meet students’ needs.

Education Minnesota staff will host a legislative wrap-up webinar on our Facebook page on May 31. The video will be available on both our Facebook page and our website for later viewing.

For more information about the legislative session, go to www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy.aspx#at-the-legislature.

MEMBERS WANT TO KNOW

IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF FROM IDENTITY THEFT?

What is identity theft?

Identity theft is gaining from the illegal use of someone else's personal information.

- Types of identity theft include: credit card fraud, loan fraud, utilities fraud, employment related fraud, and government documents fraud.
- According to the FTC, it takes an average of 6 months and 200 hours or more of work to recover from an identity theft event.

What can I do to lessen the risk of identity theft?

Be prepared, watchful and vigilant for those trying to gain access to information, always protecting your personally identifiable information when possible.

- Education Minnesota ESI Member Benefits has partnered with Securus ID Inc. (Securus ID) to provide its members access to identity theft products and services at negotiated rates.
- Active Teacher and Education Support Professional (ESP) members receive a complimentary identity theft recovery plan courtesy of Education Minnesota ESI Member Benefits. Register today! Add your family for as little as \$2/mo.
- All members receive a substantial discount on other plan options.

SECURUS ID

Helping Education Minnesota members since 2010

For complimentary plan registration or plan enrollment, visit www.educationminnesota.securusid.com
Questions? Call 877-833-9041

EDUCATION MINNESOTA OPPORTUNITIES

EARLY CAREER LEADERSHIP FELLOWSHIP LOOKS FOR SECOND COHORT MEMBERS

With the help of the Nation Education Association and the Consortium for Educational Change, Education Minnesota is starting the second year of a program for supporting early career educators and propelling them into new leadership opportunities.

The Education Minnesota Early Career Leadership Fellowship Collaborative is a yearlong experience designed to:

- Engage early career educators to grow as leaders.
- Provide them skills and resources to engage other early career educators and identify and plan for a change.
- Activate them to become formal and informal leaders in their local, state and national unions.

The ECLF Collaborative is grounded in the Teacher Leadership Institute competencies, with a focus on overarching, instructional, policy and union leadership.

All ECLF programs have the following program

components:

- Cohort launch meeting with fellows from different locals.
- Monthly local meetings facilitated by an ECLF coach, based on the ECLF curriculum.
- Sounding Board: Each fellow identifies an organizing group of at least five other early career educators to work with during the year.
- Leadership Engagement and Action Plan (LEAP): A group plan which fellows create to seek a desired change identified as a priority by early career educators in Sounding Board conversations.
- Coaches and fellows will each receive a \$500 stipend for participation in the yearlong program.

The first cohort of fellows sought ways in which to be more involved within the local and state unions.

Fellows reported growth in every area of teacher leadership during their ECLF experience. Prior to ECLF,

fellows knew little about and were largely unengaged with their local, state and national unions. Their views on leadership and the association changed positively during the program.

Sample LEAP efforts of the first cohort:

- Improve existing mentorship program with induction component.
- Prioritize student-teacher relationships and benefits over testing.
- Improve stakeholder representation on the school board.

The NEA and CEC have created videos to share the purpose and impact of the ECLF. Go to <http://bit.ly/2s3CfOB> or <http://bit.ly/2jtBatw> to watch them.

If you have questions about the Education Minnesota program and how to apply, contact Allison Labree Whittlef at allison.labreewhittlef@edmn.org.

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.
- 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

New educator webinar on first days of school

The National Education Association Center for Great Public Schools is presenting a webinar for new educators focused on the first five days of school with students. The webinar will explore templates for both elementary and secondary teachers. It will also provide participants with materials to download, as well as opportunities to explore online to better prepare for your first week of school. The webinar will take place on June 11 from 6-7 p.m.

To attend this event, fill out the form at actionnetwork.org/events/your-first-five-days-of-school-3?source=fb.ae and you will be provided a link to join the livestream.

Children's mental health summer training series

The Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health is offering a series of workshops on various mental health issues at four metro-area locations this summer. The seven workshops run June 21-Aug. 7. Locations include Eagan, Minneapolis, St. Louis Park and St. Paul. Topics include key warning signs for early-onset mental illness in children and adolescents, ADHD, using play therapy, anxiety in youth, tough conversations and the gender affirmative lifespan approach. Register at least one month beforehand to receive a 15 percent discount.

For more information about the workshops or to register, go to <http://www.macmh.org/event-page/workshops-trainings/summer-2018-training-series>.

Minnesota DNR summer workshops

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is offering multiple professional development opportunities for educators this summer.

The following opportunities are available:

- The River Starts Here: A Water Workshop for Educators. 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., June 21-22, Whitewater State Park, Altura.
- Growing Up WILD Workshop for Preschool/Primary Grade Educators. 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Tuesday, June 26, Cedar Creek Ecosystem

Science Reserve, Bethel.

- Project WILD & Project WILD Aquatic Teacher Workshop. 12-4 p.m., Tuesday, July 17, Whitewater State Park, Altura.

To see all of the DNR's offerings or to register for an event, go to www.dnr.state.mn.us/education/teachers/calendar.html and click on the link to the workshop.

Writers workshop for teachers

The Kenyon Review Writers Workshop for Teachers is a creative writing workshop designed for high school teachers who love to write. The five-day program is part writers' retreat and part professional development. The workshop takes place July 7-12 in Gambier, Ohio. The application consists of an online application form, resume and sample creative writing lesson plan. There is a limited amount of partial scholarship support available for this workshop. Financial support of up to \$800 per person will be awarded on a first-come basis.

For more information or to apply, go to www.kenyonreview.org/writers/teachers.

Central Minnesota technology summit

Central Minnesota educators are invited to an engaging day of learning centered around technology. Starting with keynote speaker Jen Henga, director of information and learning technology at Byron Public Schools, teachers, administrators and support staff will collaborate, create and be inspired to reach all students using technology as a tool. The summit will take place Thursday, Aug. 7, at the expanded Albany Area Schools in their new theater. The summit is free to Central Minnesota Leadership Partnership members and college students and costs \$50 for non-partnership attendees. Six continuing education units are available to participants.

For more information or to register, go to centralmnlp.weebly.com.

Women in social studies advocacy, networking group

Women in Social Studies Education, a group consisting of educators in K-12, higher education, social scientists in public arenas and pre-service candidates, supports and empowers women in the field of social studies education through advocacy, mentoring and instruction. The WISSE organization will gather on Aug. 14 at the MSU-Mankato campus in Edina from 9-11 a.m. People can join the event via videoconference as well.

Learn more about the group or the upcoming event at wisseorg.weebly.com.

submissions can be architectural working drawings, photography, welding, woodworking, CO2 cars and solar boats. All entries must be submitted by Aug. 7.

For more information on the competition or how to register, go to www.mnstatefair.org/competition/edu.html.

CLASSROOM RESOURCES

British Library Harry Potter pieces available online

Google's Arts and Culture website allows people to explore the British Library exhibition "Harry Potter: A History of Magic." The online resources include an interview with the exhibit's lead curator and the book's illustrator, early sketches and notes from J.K. Rowling, exhibits discussing the history behind the magic classes at Hogwarts, and facts about the history of magic.

To see all of the available resources, go to artsandculture.google.com/project/harry-potter-a-history-of-magic.

Free activities for teaching science, math with music

MathScienceMusic.org, a website from the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz and the NYU MusEDLab, features free resources to help teachers incorporate music in science and math lessons. The activities and apps are designed for all students, kindergarten through college. Subjects covered include geometry and physics, among many others, and all lessons teach students about the strong relationship between music and STEM learning.

For more information or to see all of the offerings, go to mathsciencemusic.org.

GRANTS

Crayola creative leadership grants

The Crayola Creative Leadership Grant program provides funding for innovative, creative leadership team teams to identify and deliver innovative programs that inspire educators to increase art-infused education. The plan should address the specific needs and interests of your professional learning community. Each grant-winning school receives \$2,500 and Crayola products valued at \$1,000. Applications are due June 22 and must be submitted by the school's principal.

For more information about the grants and how to apply, go to www.crayola.com/for-educators/ccac-landing/grant-program.

Digital Wish technology grants

Educators who have an innovative technology-based lesson plan can apply for a Digital Wish lesson plan grant. Educators can submit lesson plans to Digital Wish for a chance to receive one of 50-plus classroom technology grants. The uploaded lesson plans will then be shared with other educators across the country. To be considered, educators need to register their classroom and create a Digital Wish account. Then select a grant from the calendar. Document camera and Robotics grants are due June 30.

For more information on the grants or to see the available lesson plans, go to www.digitalwish.com.