

## Education Minnesota

# Educators to rally for public education Saturday at the Capitol

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ST. PAUL, Minn. May 18, 2017 – Hundreds of educators from throughout Minnesota will rally at the Minnesota Capitol complex on Saturday to promote public education on the final weekend of the 2017 session of the Legislature.

“It’s easy for legislators to forget their decisions directly affect the quality of education of hundreds of thousands of Minnesota students,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “We’re rallying to remind them their decisions will harm, or benefit, real students, parents, educators and communities for years to come.”

At 1 p.m., the union expects about 500 educators to rally outside the Education Minnesota building at 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, before marching down Cedar Street to the state Capitol for a second round of speeches inside the Rotunda starting at 2 p.m.

The rally will conclude with the delivery to the governor’s office of nearly 1,000 handwritten notes from educators and other supporters of public schools. Specht said common topics include lowering class sizes, opposition to school vouchers, reducing the cost of college, protecting pre-K programs and making policy changes so a teaching career is financially sustainable.

However, the most recent batch of notes have focused on the Legislature’s plan to overhaul the teacher licensure system in ways that will allow districts and charter schools to hire people as teachers who have no formal training in education, and who will have no obligation to pursue it.

“It’s outrageous, especially when you consider there would be a separate, lower standard for schools with high levels of racial diversity, or schools in rural areas,” Specht said. “It’s insulting to our profession and potentially damaging to tens of thousands of Minnesota students, especially students on the margins.”

Rally co-sponsors:

- Education Minnesota
- AFSCME Council 5
- Communications Workers of America MN State Council
- Inter Faculty Organization
- ISAIAH
- Minnesota AFL-CIO
- Minnesota Nurses Association
- SEIU Minnesota

- [Take Action Minnesota](#)
- [Teamsters 320](#)

#### Logistics:

- Noon. Crowd gathers at Education Minnesota offices, 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul.
- 1 p.m. Rally begins on steps of Education Minnesota offices.
- 1:30 p.m. March down Cedar Street to State Capitol. Gather in Rotunda.
- 2 p.m. Guest speakers in Capitol Rotunda.
- 2:30 p.m. Present about handwritten notes to office of Gov. Mark Dayton.

Note: In case of thunderstorms, the entire program will move to the Capitol Rotunda. Watch Education Minnesota's website and social media channels for updated logistics on Saturday.

#### **About Education Minnesota**

Education Minnesota is the voice for professional educators and students. Education Minnesota's members include teachers and education support professionals in Minnesota's public school districts, faculty members at Minnesota's community and technical colleges and University of Minnesota campuses in Duluth and Crookston, retired educators and student teachers. Education Minnesota is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association and AFL-CIO.

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