

Education Minnesota

Minnesotans see through the politics of division and elect leaders for everyone

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ST. PAUL, Minnesota, Nov. 7, 2018 – Minnesota voters supported candidates who promised to bring our state together for the common good of everyone by returning control of the Minnesota House to the DFL, choosing Tim Walz as the next governor and electing 11 current or former members of Education Minnesota to state offices.

“Minnesotans of different races and from different places joined together Tuesday to reject the candidates who tried to divide us against each other based on how we look, where we pray, who we love, or how much money we have,” said Denise Specht, president of Education Minnesota. “Voters saw all the fear mongering for what it was – deliberate attempts to distract voters from the real issues we can only solve by coming together and making sure the greedy few who rig the rules pay their fair share. Now it’s time to fix health care, fully fund our schools, repair our roads and rebuild our communities.”

The members of Education Minnesota endorsed Tim Walz in May, before the DFL convention, in the most open and engaging endorsement process in the modern history of the union. More than 1,000 members participated.

That enthusiasm for Walz and many other endorsed candidates carried into the campaign. On Election Day alone, there were get-out-the-vote events in more than 1,100 worksites throughout Minnesota. In the 12 months preceding Election Day, 2,067 members of Education Minnesota were trained and equipped to organize their colleagues and encourage them to vote. The union’s GOTV campaign began in September and more than 12,000 educators voted early in 2018, according to union data.

“Congratulations to Tim Walz, the next governor of Minnesota and a longtime member of Education Minnesota,” Specht said. “Tim was a teacher for 20 years and made educators all over Minnesota proud by running a campaign that brought people together under his vision for One Minnesota. The members of Education Minnesota volunteered in unprecedented numbers to phone bank, door knock and, most importantly, talk to their communities about the importance of electing an Educator in Chief. We look forward to working with Tim to fully fund public education, lower the cost of high-quality health care and make Minnesota a great place for working families.”

Walz was one of two former members of Education Minnesota to win statewide office on Tuesday. The other was Julie Blaha, a former math teacher, former president of Anoka-Hennepin Education Minnesota and former chief financial officer of the Minnesota AFL-CIO. Blaha was elected state auditor.

“Julie Blaha once said that when politicians are willing to call anything they don’t like ‘fake news’ and fear-mongering on race and religion is a routine campaign tactic, wouldn’t it be nice to have a state auditor you can trust to play it straight with the numbers and explain the issues as a good teacher would?” Specht said. “On Tuesday, Minnesotans answered her questions with a resounding ‘yes.’ Congratulations Auditor-elect Julie Blaha!”

Education Minnesota members actively campaigned to pass 32 levy questions around the state on Tuesday. Minnesota voters in 16 districts approved 72 percent of those questions. There are more questions than districts because districts typically put multiple levy questions to their voters.

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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