

# Potential member talking points and conversation guide

## Overarching frame—why belong to the union?

Working in a union gives educators the power to make meaningful improvements for students, our profession, public education and our communities. We can compel change when we have a collective voice.

Tell your union story! Why did you get involved? What made you realize that you had power as being a part of our union?

Then, from your conversation(s) with the member, determine which of the following values-based talking points speaks to that member:

- **Voices:** Our voices are elevated and heard when we join together as Education Minnesota. All educators – no matter their position – should have a seat at the table when decisions are made about our classrooms, schools, campuses, profession and public education because the only people who know more about what students need are their own parents.
- **Champions:** Minnesota educators enjoy better pay, pensions and teaching conditions than educators in many other states because previous generations of educators collectively fought for them. We have a responsibility to work in union to defend past victories for students and educators and to win our own.
- **Unions:** Education Minnesota believes individuals are strengthened when they work together for the common good. When we unite and advocate collectively, we can build welcoming public schools where all children – no matter race or place – can strive and succeed. As part of the larger labor movement, we can fight for a fair return on our work, affordable childcare for our kids and quality health care for our loved ones.
- **Professionalism:** As educators, we value and promote educator quality and professional development. It's up to us to help each other grow in our professions and prepare students for the future. Being a part of Education Minnesota means frequent, diverse and valuable training for educators, by educators, across the state.
- **Justice:** We value those who came before us who fought for the rights of all Minnesotans. Educators are preparing all students to pursue their dreams in a more diverse America by eliminating systemic racism, gender discrimination and poverty. By joining together with nearly 90,000 educators across Minnesota, we have the power to make change.
- **Unity:** We are stronger together when advocating for students and the conditions in which they learn and we work, but when even one educator opts out of our union, it weakens us all. That means less power at the bargaining table and in policymaking at the local, state and national levels.

## The ask—making the commitment:

As educators, we need to show the district (or administration if higher ed), our students, our communities and each other that we are committed to working together to improve public education. Will you join your colleagues and belong to your union?

Updated: July 27, 2021

[www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org)

Education Minnesota is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association and AFL-CIO. ©2019 2280



**THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS**