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 overwhelming 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 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 were finalists for the 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year. Hear from the other 11 teachers who were finalists for the 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

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

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 tucked 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 tax bills.

We will make sure of it. We are educators, after all.”

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

“The 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.”
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 very interesting.

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, FishyMcLchy 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 sea of garbage.

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.

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.

What makes educators especially special is that they have the knowledge, determination and strength to keep working until the work is done.

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 NereoTheCat, TimMan11, MrBigTacos, FishyMcLchy, 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

Denise Specht, president

The Minnesota Educator is published for members to share news about education in whole or in part on the condition that readers are welcome to reproduce any article in whole or in part on the condition that they give credit to Education Minnesota. All rights reserved, but

Advertisements

Education Minnesota (ISSN 1521-8062) is a monthly publication. Periodicals are postage-paid at St. Paul, Minnesota, and additional offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Minnesota Educator, 41 Sherburne Ave, St. Paul, MN 55103-2196.

Minnesota Educator All rights reserved, but readers are welcome to reproduce any article in whole or in part on the condition that they give credit to Education Minnesota. The Minnesota Educator is published for members to share news about education and create opportunities for educators as well as union and political news that affects public education in Minnesota.

June 2018 – Volume 20, No. 10

The Minnesota Educator publishes each month. It is one of the union’s print and digital publications to educate, inform and organize the community of members. The Educator is reported, edited and designed by union staff members. The paper is printed in RR Donnelley Co.’s union shop in Long Prairie, Minn. Find copies of the Educator online at www.educationminnesota.org. Go to the News menu, then Minnesota Educator.

To inquire about advertising in the Educator or on the website:

Email: ilissa.morrow@edmn.org
Phone: 651-292-4805

For general inquiries and business at the state headquarters:

Email: susan.lynskey@edmn.org
Phone: 651-292-4805

To report a change of address or end subscription, send a change of address.

Email: educator@edmn.org
Phone: 800-652-9073 or 651-227-9541

For information about union activities, work and resources, go to www.educationminnesota.org.

Online Education Minnesota on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

To reach the newspaper for queries, story or commentary ideas:

Email: educator@edmn.org
Mail: Minnesota Educator
41 Sherburne Ave
St. Paul, MN 55103

To report a change of address or end subscription, send a change of address.

Email: susan.lynskey@edmn.org
Phone: 651-292-4805


For information about union activities, work and resources, go to www.educationminnesota.org.

Online Education Minnesota on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.
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 Sylvester, president of Education Minnesota. “His running mate, is 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.

“The team will lead the fight for working families of Minnesota,” said Roxanne Noriel, a 2nd-grade teacher and chair of the Education Minnesota PAC, of the Walz and Flanagan ticket. “They will defend the freedom for 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 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.

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.

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 Rebecca Otto, Walz and former Minneapolis public schools educator Christopher Seymour. Walz was 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.

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, not battlegrounds. Bringing 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 concealed 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 refinancing program to include areas where there are many public sector workers, 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 education and fees. Here’s a radical idea: let public colleges offer 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.”

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT IN THE ENDORESEMENT 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.

ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

- 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.

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, not battlegrounds. Bringing 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 concealed 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 refinancing program to include areas where there are many public sector workers, 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 education and fees. Here’s a radical idea: let public colleges offer 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.”
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.

“If 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.

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.

“Center, and Holstine was one of the first Alternative Learning Tokata Learning Center, it’s created in Shakopee. A way to a new program being Anthony before finding her teacher in Chaska and St. Arts in education. Literature, and her Master of communication arts and got her teaching license in August. I want them to be able to talk well and write well.”

That support is felt school-wide at Tokata. They work with a concept of “not yets,” 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.”
Here are their reflections on their professional motivations and teaching philosophy.

Besides Holstine, 11 teachers were also finalists for 2018 Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

**Teacher of the Year finalists’ reflections**

**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.”

**Dani Berry**

**Math**

Edison 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.”

**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.”

**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.”

**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.”

**Tim Leistikow**

**English**

Fridley High School

“Step away a little bit. You have to be willing to see what happens. The best analogy is that we are a master chef. We need to come in and readjust here and there, but know that at the beginning of a month or a unit or a text or the year, they might feel or think 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.”

**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?”

**Malia Norton**

**Elementary**

Medford Elementary

“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.”

**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 when then they walk into the room, they know that they’re seen and they’re appreciated, and you’re connected to them.”

**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.”

**Gregory Truso**

**Elementary**

Wishbone 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 teachers, 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.”

**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 worked at least 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

**Www.educationminnesota.org | June 2018**

**Educator**

**Page 5**
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 distribution. Low-wage workers experienced much stronger growth in Minnesota than Wisconsin.
• Gender wage gaps also shrank more in Minnesota than 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. 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 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 than in Minnesota have done far better over the past seven years than their counterparts in Wisconsin.”

— David Cooper, EPI senior economic analyst

“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.”

June and July workshops

For information on the TIAA pension or the TIAA annuity, visit www.tiaa.org.

June and July workshops for members with a TIAA pension unless otherwise noted

June 14 Winona Education MN Office
560 Second Ave.
June 18 St. Cloud Education MN Office
305 2nd St. S., Suite 200
June 19 Prairie Woods - Spicer
12718 10th St. N.E.
July 10 MN Landscape Arboretum
3675 Arborum Dr.
July 10 MN Landscape Arboretum
3675 Arborum 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

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

Watch your email for the link to register or you can contact Deb Skog at Deborah.skog@edmn.org or 651-292-8656 (please leave your name(s) and click on the link for “I would like to attend”)

Franchisees are limited Reserve early to secure your spot Spouses/guests are welcome

Planning for retirement?
Attend an upcoming ESI workshop this summer

Topics to be discussed include:

• Local contract information including what to look for in your contract before you retire
• 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

Planning for Retirement Button

Planning for Retirement
Watch your email for the link to register or you can contact Deb Skog at Deborah.skog@edmn.org or 651-292-8656 (please leave your name(s) and which session you would like to attend)

Planning for Retirement
Watch your email for the link to register or you can contact Deb Skog at Deborah.skog@edmn.org or 651-292-8656 (please leave your name(s) and which session you would like to attend)

Planning for Retirement
Watch your email for the link to register or you can contact Deb Skog at Deborah.skog@edmn.org or 651-292-8656 (please leave your name(s) and which session you would like to attend)
Student program brings clean outdoor space to Minneapolis school

Bringing new life to the courtyard at Bethune Community School in Minneapolis was the focus of the University of Minnesota –Twin Cities chapter of the Education Minnesota Student Program’s annual Outreach to Teach event.

“We wanted to make it an expansion of the classroom,” said Anna Reget, president of the Education Minnesota Student Program State Council. “It will be an amazing space for students and faculty to use.”

Reget met Bethune teacher and Minnesota Federation of Teachers Secretary Greta Callahan at the National Education Association Representative Assembly last summer, and when she said the chapter was looking for a community service opportunity, Callahan invited them to her school. Bethune’s courtyard had years of dead plants and garbage to clean out in order to make it a usable space. “No one had touched the courtyard for years,” said Reget. The Student Program members met with teachers at Bethune and asked them what they envisioned for the space once it was cleaned up.

With $3,000 in grant money from the NEA CREATE program, the Student Program purchased picnic tables, gardening boxes, soil, seeds, gardening tools, sensory tables, thermometers so students can track the weather, and 120 birdhouses, paint and brushes for students to decorate and hang in the courtyard.

“We wanted to get the birdhouses so the students could have their voice in the project,” said Reget.

The project was originally scheduled for the weekend of the Student Program’s state conference so all members of the program could participate, but due to the late-April snowstorm, it was rescheduled.

“We still had about 20 student members, plus Education Minnesota Retired members and a number of teachers and administrators from Bethune with their family members,” said Reget.

For five years, the Education Minnesota Student Program chapter at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities has put on the Outreach to Teach event. The chapter plans the event and has now added it to the state conference’s agenda so all members can participate.

“Through this, I realized that a small thing can make the biggest difference to students,” said Reget. “We took three to four hours on a Saturday, but it gave them a space to learn and grow for the whole year.”

Filing open for officer, NEA director positions

Candidate filings for Education Minnesota officer and National Education Association director positions are open from June 1 until Dec. 14.

The current three-year terms for president, vice president and secretary-treasurer will expire June 30, 2019. Candidates for these offices will file by submitting a signed filing form (copy below) to the Education Minnesota Office of the Elections Committee by Dec. 14. These offices are now held by President Denise Specht, Vice President Paul Mueller and Secretary-Treasurer Rodney Rowe.

The current three-year terms for two NEA director positions now filled by Don Sinner and Robin Courrier will expire Aug. 31, 2019. Candidates for these positions will file a signed form (copy below) by Dec. 14.

FILING FORM

(This form must be filed with the Office of the Elections Committee of Education Minnesota.)

1. (please print clearly), wish to file for the following position:

   OR

   2. , wish to nominate , for the following position:

   You may only select one position

   _____ President _____ Vice President _____ NEA Director (Position 1)
   _____ Secretary-Treasurer _____ NEA Director (Position 2)

Candidate Information

Mailing Address:
City/State/ZIP:
Local:
School Phone:
Home Phone:
Cell Phone:
Email:
Signature:
Date:

__________________________________________________________

(For official use only)

This filing form was received on ____________________________ by ____________________________
Membership was verified on ____________________________ by ____________________________

DEADLINE: 11:59 p.m. Dec. 14, 2018

Return completed form by fax to: 651-767-1266, or mail to: Office of the Elections Committee, Education Minnesota, 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103, or scan and email to elections.committee@edmn.org.

---

Thank you, educators!

Every year, thousands of kids and adults thank educators who were influential in their lives at Education Minnesota’s State Fair booth. We will feature a selection in each issue of the Minnesota Educator this year. Keep an eye out for your name!
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 buildings.

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 process-weighing equally staff and district leadership to:

• Create systems and structures that support collaboration, deepen union-employer relationships, and provide honest feedback that can lead to better products.
• 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-working 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:

• Professional Equity – FIRE (Facilitating Inequities in Racism and Education) collaboration.
• Relationship building around Teacher Development and Evaluation law.
• 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 any one collaboration to make that project; OR
• One full professional development session, including all training; OR
• Two half-day professional development sessions including all trainers.

More information about the Collaboration Lab can be found at the foundation. 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 structure and district agreed to participate and decided to work on their teacher evaluation process. We had systems and structures in place, but wanted to make sure they had all of the drivers in the right space.

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

"The admins are checking in with building reps or union leaders before we start anything,” she said. “Principals are asking teachers before doing anything for 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 was 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 set 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, making big steps or 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 Schools since they experienced a teacher strike in 1984, but Chaska Education Association President Chris Commers knew there 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 calendar,” Commers said. “How do we make a teacher’s workload manageable 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. They have made their 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, through hours 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 other formal or informal parent-teacher conferences and integrating teacher home visits. 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 people change, we also have to change how our work is organized.”

Commers suggests that other union leaders reflect on their collaborative relationships with their districts look at the tools, the models or projects to frame the conversations.

“Nothing great is needed for the local and how can it be framed so the district can see its self-interest?” he said.
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.
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 pushing buttons to create the coding commands. Burling uses mats to create the 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 robots 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.”
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.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- Ratifying contracts for state employees, including 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.
- 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 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.
- Creating a rating system for schools based on limited criteria, including test scores.

**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.

---

**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 Hammemeath support staff engagement.
- 471 educators attending Lobby Days, from 99 different locals
- 50 Lobby Days

---

**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, utility 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 Security ID Inc. (Security 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

---

**EDUCATOR**
EDUCATION MINNESOTA OPPORTUNITIES

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 with skills 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 ECFL Collaborative is grounded in the Teacher Leadership Institute competencies, with a focus on overarching, instructional, policy and union leadership. All ECFL programs have the following program components:

- Cohort launch meeting with fellows from different locals.
- Monthly local meetings facilitated by an ECFL coach, based on the ECFL 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
- 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 ECFL experience. Prior to ECFL, 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 programs with induction components.
- Prioritize student-teacher relationships and benefits over testing.
- Improve stakeholder representation within the school board.

The NEA and CEC have created videos to share the purpose and impact of the ECFL. Go to http://bit.ly/2z3CD0B or http://bit.ly/2jtBatw to watch them. If you have questions about the Education Minnesota program and how to apply, contact Alison Labree Whittall at allison.labreewhittall@edmn.org.

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 exhibition’s 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 www.greatdichotomy.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, including students with hearing loss 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 Grant program

The Crayola Creative Leadership Grant program provides funding for innovative, creative leadership team projects to identify and develop 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/or-educators/ccac-landing-grant-program.

Digital Wish technology grants

Educators who have an innovative technology-based lesson plan can apply for the Digital Wish lesson plan grant. Educators can submit lesson plans to Digital Wish for a chance to receive one of 50 plus classroom technology packages. The uploaded lesson plans will then be shared with other educators across the country. To be considered, educators have to register to 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.