



CAPSULE

THE KRAMER BROWN NEWSLETTER

Badger, Goodridge, Greenbush-Middle River, Grygla-Gatzke, Kittson Central, Lake of the Woods, Lancaster, Marshall County Central, NWRIC, Red Lake County Central, Red Lake Falls, Roseau, Stephen-Argyle, Thief River Falls, Tri-County, Warren-Alvarado-Oslo, Warroad

Special points of interest:

- KB Rep Assembly
- Local Leader Meeting
- EM Rep Convention
- Virtual Political Conference

WINTER 2022

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2022 Kramer Brown Rep Assembly

January 2022

The 2022 Kramer-Brown I.O. Representative Assembly will be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at the Nordhem Restaurant in Karlstad starting at 5:30 p.m.

The Representative Assembly is for

Kramer-Brown members. Each member is important to maintain your Intermediate Organization (IO) and to voice your opinions and concerns at this level. You Representative carry these concerns to the EM State level.

Only Delegates may vote for any issues brought to the

floor. Each local is entitled one voting delegate plus one delegate for each additional 50 members or fraction thereof. Such as: Thief River Falls – 3 delegates / Roseau and Warroad – 2 delegates.



Please contact your president or building representative so they can let us know how many will be coming.

The local President or delegates please use this link to register <https://bit.ly/3sX3pVn> . Or you can email Andrea at andrea.johnson@edmn.org of the delegate names and the number planning to attend by **Friday, March 4, 2022.**

Kramer Brown IO Local Leaders Meeting Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at the Nordhem Restaurant in Karlstad MN

5:15 Registration/Order Dinner

5:30-5:45 Welcome, Introduction, and Announcements

• Mental Health Issues for School Staff Session

Educators perform a hard job, often under scrutiny and with many of students depending on them. When our members experience mental illness or experience a mental health crisis, what can we do to recognize this and respond with as much help as possible? What protections do our members have, and what resources are available to them? This session will explore those issues.

• Unsession

An UnSession is a participant-driven session in which those present determine the focus of the conversation. This is an opportunity to connect with professional staff colleagues on topics of interest to you. Come with ideas to consider, questions to explore, and issues to ponder. Together, participants will share their thinking on the topics brought forward. Facilitators will kick things off, but the session will really be participant-driven.

8:00 Door prizes and announcements

To register please use this link <https://bit.ly/3sPER0r> or email Andrea Johnson at andrea.johnson@edmn.org

Deadline to register is Friday, February 11, 2022.

All KB governing board members, local presidents, building reps, treasurers and membership chairs are invited to this meeting

From the Field



KEVIN YOUNG

Once again, it is hard to believe we are already near the mid-point of the 2021-22 school year. Unfortunately, for many, this year has been even more challenging than previous years. As I mentioned last year at this time, I have no doubt the challenges of this year have stressed you to your limits. Even so, as educators, you step up to the challenges and meet them head on. It is what educators always do.

You do your best for students, their families, and your communities, helping as many people as possible. We have always known the important role schools play in our communities, but one positive of this ugly pandemic is the fact that many community members outside our school systems now realize the important role schools play and all the hard work teachers do each and every day. Teachers always spend countless hours and do the best job possible of educating each and every one of our students. Teachers also provide the badly needed stability that many students just do not get anywhere else. Yes, these are challenging times, but please remind yourself of the important work you do each and every day.

As I have visited with members over the course of this year, many have shared how teachers were considered heroes when the pandemic started in March of 2020. Now, almost 2 years later, many school districts and educators are being criticized for the work they are doing. This is unfortunate, since I have no doubt you are doing whatever you can to provide the best possible education for students. During times like this it is important to take care of yourself. Many employers have employee assistance programs (EAPs) which staff can access for help. I would encourage all locals to reach out to their District Office to find out if an EAP is available. If one is, make sure that all employees are aware of the resources that can be accessed and how to access them. I also encourage each of you to be supportive of each other and, if need be, reach out to a colleague if you need help. It does not matter if you are new to education or a seasoned veteran, everyone needs help at some time. We all need someone to lean on from time to time. Please know, if there is anything I can do to help, please send me an email or give me a call.

I also want to take this time to encourage all of you to get involved in your local union. Working together to achieve common goals is very rewarding. It also is important to take advantage of professional development opportunities that you have access to as a member of the Union. You can always access professional development on the Education Minnesota web site. Here is the link to MEA Online: <https://www.educationminnesota.org/resources/professional-development/mea-online/>. The KB IO Governing Board will also be sponsoring a Local Leaders meeting on February 16. The site is TBD at this time, but the plan is to hold two sessions. One will likely be Mental Health Issues for School Staff and the other will be a discussion session for local leaders to share information and ask questions. All local leaders are welcome to attend. Registration information will come out soon. Another opportunity for all members to access professional development will be the KB-NU Overnighter, which will be held March 25-26. Registration information will be out soon. This year's focus will be

on member rights. I am looking forward to seeing you and having some time to visit at this event.

I realize I have shared the information below in the past, but since many districts start to look at budgets and future funding shortly after the first of the year, I have included some important dates for you to review regarding non-renewals and ULAs. Please keep in mind all locals should have their own ULA language, so it is important to review contract language, since your local may have agreed to a different timeline when compared to other locals.

Here are some important dates to remember:

April 1 – Date to resign if you are a continuing contract teacher (tenured) during bargaining years the date for you to unilaterally notify the District of a resignation for the following school year is 30 days after your contract is settled or July 15, whichever comes first. You can resign after these dates, but you will need the consent of the District (School Board) to do so. If not you will be breaking a contract for which there might be repercussions.

April 1 -- If you are a continuing contract (tenured) teacher currently on Unrequested Leave of Absence (ULA), **you must notify the District in writing of your continuing desire to be reinstated** with the district should any position for which you are qualified become open. **Please check your contract to see if there is an alternate date to notify your district.**

June 30 -- **If your Teaching License expires in 2021, it expires on this date.** If you do not have a valid teaching license at the start of the school year in the fall of 2021, you can be terminated whether you are a probationary or continuing contract (tenured) teacher. Maintaining and renewing a teaching license is your personal responsibility; if in doubt, check it please.

June 30 -- If you are a probationary teacher, June 30 is the date that the District must notify you in writing of a nonrenewal (layoff) of your contract. June 30 is also the date by which probationary teachers must notify the District in writing if they are resigning their position for the following year. Please check your contract to see if there is an alternate date to notify your district.

ULA -- Check your contract for specific ULA language. Most locals negotiated ULA language a few years ago. There will be a process or timeline outlined in the ULA language. Most contracts still use the July 1 date when the ULA process has to be completed, but that may not be true in your situation. We will have to look at this on a case by case basis.

July 15 – See April 1* above.

Whether you are a probationary or a continuing contract (tenured) teacher, it is critical that you **do not resign** if you receive a notice of nonrenewal or ULA. You may forfeit your rights to due process or unemployment compensation if you do so.

Remember: if you have questions, contact your local president, building representative, member rights advocate or your field staff for assistance.

Keep in mind to never resign or accept a reduced position. As soon as you have been notified by the District of your non-renewal or ULA, contact your member rights advocate or give me



CAPSULE

From the Field (continued)

a call. We all want to make sure you know your rights and that you are treated fairly. Review your master agreement for specific language you may need to follow for recall. There are sample letters available to you as you respond to District. It is your responsibility to notify the District of your willingness to return prior to **April 1 each year (or the date identified in your local master agreement)** if you are on ULA. If you fail to do this, you will forfeit your rights to recall. I strongly recommend you maintain your membership in Education Minnesota by obtaining a reserve membership. Your current membership will end in August and EdMN will not be able to represent you if you are not a member. Always make sure to ask questions and protect yourself.

As always, please do your best to be involved in YOUR Local. TOGETHER we can do so much. I would like all of you to know that I am here to help you in any way I can. Whether you have questions regarding your contract, negotiations, the new tiered licensure system, TD&E, health insurance, elections or any other item, please send an e-mail or give me a call. I can be contacted at the Education Minnesota Bemidji Field Office at 1-218-751-5957 or 1-800-622-4971. My e-mail address is kevin.young@edmn.org Also keep in mind the Education Minnesota website <https://www.educationminnesota.org/home>, is a great resource for you.

Thank You for all the extra work you do each and every day. It is very much appreciated!!



MARA GUST

2021-2022

Kramer Brown I.O. Chair

Happy New Year greetings! The Kramer-Brown Governing board is thrilled to have been meeting in person in recent months and to be hosting events for our members.

The Kramer-Brown Governing board met most recently in December. We reviewed a successful *in-person* Fall Drive In last October, hosted by the Marshall County Central local. We appreciate everyone who attended and hope you found it worthwhile. As with all of our events, we encourage feedback for the governing board. I'd like to give a personal thank you to the Kramer-Brown Governing Board members who continually give of their time and talents to make events like the Fall Drive-In possible.

We have MANY events coming up in the next few months. These are opportunities for you to be a little (or a lot!) more involved in your union at the local, regional or state level. Some of these events are works in progress, as are so many events in this year. Here are just *some* of the scheduled events:

- **February 16** we have the Local Leaders meeting. This is for any local leaders and members who would like to attend. Dinner is provided. The location of this meeting is yet to be determined.
- **March 9** is the Kramer-Brown Representative Assembly. Delegates will attend the EM Representative Convention April 22-23 in Bloomington. Attending the state Rep Assembly is a great way to learn about how your union works and how decisions are made. If you are going to attend the state Rep Assembly, you need to attend the March 9 meeting.
- All of you should consider attending the **Kramer-Brown/Northland United Overnighter** in Bemidji, **March 25-26**. This is our first overnighter in 3 years, with the 2020 event being one of the first events to be cancelled due to Covid. This is a wonderful professional conference for *all members*. Enjoy a night away at a hotel, free continuing education hours, and an opportunity to network with union members. A meal stipend is provided by Kramer-Brown, as well as prize opportunities. Watch for more information coming soon!
- Finally the Kramer-Brown Recognition Dinner is **May 3** in Thief River Falls. This banquet honors Teachers of the Year, Friends of Education and Retirees. It is an enjoyable evening to celebrate our profession. Be sure to visit with your local rep and President about the people who will be recognized at this event.

I can't emphasize enough how getting more involved at a local, regional and/or state level will broaden your understanding of what your union does for you and all members. Don't be intimidated to jump in! Everyone, including me, was a first-time attendee at some function. Remember to visit our website at <https://educationminnesota.org/union/kramer-brown/>. We also have an email for general board questions and communications kramerbrownIO@gmail.com. New this year are **2 scholarship opportunities** for children of members. Please check these out on the *Resources* tab of our website. Your local, regional, and state leaders are working hard for you! As always, if you have any questions please reach out to me or your local Kramer-Brown IO representative.

Minutes

Kramer Brown Governing Board Minutes
October 27, 2021
American Legion @ 5:30pm

Chairperson Mara Gust called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

Members Present: Mara Gust, Heidi Hanson, Deb Koebernick, Alexis Hruby, Denice Nelson, Stacey Leake, Lisa Donarski, and Kevin Young, EM Staff.

- A. Adopt agenda with flexibility/Communications
 - 1. Discussion on getting reimbursement checks.
 - 2. "Thank You" card from Kelly Grahn.

- B. Secretary's Report - Marcy Helling
 - a. Heidi Hanson made a motion to accept the Secretary's Report, second by Lisa Donarski. Motion carried.

- C. Treasurer's Report - Amber Schoepp
 - a. Heidi Hanson made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, second by Alexis Hruby. Motion carried.
 - b. Member Drops/membership numbers discussed by Kevin
 - c. KB Audit/Reid Froiland will present at January Meeting.
 - d. Reminder of locals to pay dues.

NOTE: We are looking for a new treasurer next year and would like someone to "shadow" Amber for the rest of this year. More to discuss at the next meeting.

- D. Old Business:
 - 1. New Hires Meetings - Kevin and Mara
 - a. Poorly attended: 2 in Roseau/6 in TRF
 - b. Ideas: Should we think about a better/different date, how to prevent the many cancellations, and maybe add a gift bag for those who attend. Possibly have a separate drawing at Fall Drive-In for new hires.
 - 2. Fall Drive-In/October 6th/MCC
 - a. Evaluations Handout
 - b. Comments/Suggestions
 - 3. Grants and Scholarships - Check the EdMN website for these

Minutes

E. Action Items:

1. Fall Drive-In 2022 Site/Host
 - a. Warren/Alvarado/Oslo School/Warren, MN
 - b. Maybe add New Hires part to Fall Drive-In
 - c. Look into providing daycare

F. New Business:

1. MEA Highlights
 - a. 250 members showed up in person
2. KB/NU Overnighter/March 25-26, 2022
 - a. We will continue with the same plan that was cancelled last year and also add the sessions of MRA II and MRA III.
 - b. We will need help for this. Marcy and Amber will be at the registration table to take care of registration and money for meal.
 - c. Possible legislative plans for the afternoon on Saturday.

G. Field Office Report - Kevin Young

1. **COVID Update** - the challenging times continue and the stress level is high; even so, it is important to make sure the district is not violating your master agreement; if so, it is important to address the issue with the district and, if necessary, file a grievance.
 - Many COVID resources are available on the EdMN website - here is the link for bargaining COVID: <https://www.educationminnesota.org/members-only/bargaining/COVID-back-to-school-negotiations-resources>
 - Please find ways to connect with members during this challenging time. Make sure all have resources to get mental health services (most health insurance plans have a hot line for this. Check with your district to get this information and share with members.)
 - Please share COVID situations
2. **Membership update:**
 - a. New member applications - if your local has any new member paper applications, please send to the Bemidji Field Office
 - b. State wide 524 drops as of 10-14-2021 (Doubled from last year)
 - c. Additional drops after dues revocation window 4 as of 10-14-2021
 - d. Drops are from approximately 160 locals, so that means approximately 300 locals had no drops
 - e. Overall, currently have approximately 74,050 members
 - f. The numbers for KB IO so far: loss of 11 previous members and 19 new hires didn't join as of 10-19-2021

- g. We need to know if a new hire decides not to become a member, please send me the following information: Name, Address, Work Location, Position, and Subject area
- h. Budgets - make sure you are considering adjustments with the membership drops and a reminder to set budget and dues in April or May. EdMN will be asking for local dues amounts so membership applications can be filled out electronically - plan for this next spring
- i. Make sure you are not sending information that pertains to members to non-members.

3. Membership Rosters:

- a. Reminder, the first round of membership rosters have been **sent via e-mail**. All locals should have them by now. Please review your members and send back to Education Minnesota by **October 31**.
- b. Please make sure all drops are recorded on the roster as a way to double check the accuracy.
- c. At this time, no updates received from Goodridge, LOW, Thief River Fall

4. Updated Leadership Rosters:

Please turn in updated leadership rosters for the 2021-22 school year to Andrea at andrea.johnson@edmn.org. Several are missing. Badger, LOW, Lancaster, MCC, Red Lake Falls, Tri-County. Remember, if no changes, please also report this to Andrea.

5. Audits:

- a. Check with your Treasurer's to make sure audits are getting done and copies are sent to the Field Office
- b. Include list of non-chargeable items and keep a copy for future use.
- c. File 990 e-post card with IRS; take 5 mins each yr.; if not completed for 3 consecutive years, the local will lose tax exempt status which then requires filling out 23 pages of information and paying \$800-\$1000 to regain tax exempt status

Fiscal Period: Due Date:

July 1 - June 30 due by Dec 31 (990 e-post card due November 15)

Aug 1 - July 31 due by Jan 31 (990 e-post card due December 15)

Sept 1 - Aug 31 due by Feb 28 (990 e-post card due January 15)

Jan 1 - Dec 3 due by June 30 (990 e-post card due May 15)

- d. Reminder of KB Audit to be completed and approved at January KB Gov. Board Mtg.

6. Bargaining Update: see handouts for state and KB IO settlement data

Minutes

7. Value of Belonging (VOB):

- I realize this may be challenging this year, but it is important all locals have a Member Engagement Plan in place; more important than ever to find a way to engage members and share what locals and EdMN are doing on behalf of members

- Local planning guides can be found on the EdMN website:

<http://www.educationminnesota.org/members-only/Member-engagement/Resources>

- Reminder that all locals must have a new hires orientation plan on file

- locals that have not already, please submit a copy of your local plans; I will support when possible

8. Presidents/Local Leaders Meeting February 16:

a. Thoughts on this?

b. What sessions should be offered?

9. Political Conference TBD:

10. **KB/NU Overnighter:** Bemidji, Hampton Inn; March 25-26; Member Rights focus; please consider sessions for December meeting.

11. **Summer Seminar:** Aug 1-3, 2022 (Save the dates. Please talk with your District Admin. to keep dates open)

12. **Visibility in locals:** Please send calendar/notification of general membership meetings, events the local is taking part in, school calendars, etc..... I will do my best to attend.

13. **Please make sure the information I share with you at Governing Board meetings is passed on to those in your locals who need the information. Thank You!!!**

14. Other

a. Kevin thinks there will be more retirements in 2022.

H. Other - Next meeting is December 1st at American Legion at 5:30pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:29pm

KB Acting Secretary, Denice Nelson

December Meeting:

Discuss President's/Local Leaders meeting agenda

Treasurer "Shadow" (Any ideas)

Winter Capsule (Dec. 15): Stacey, Lisa, Andrea, Deb S., Maranda (bio), Teresa (bio)

Minutes

Kramer Brown Governing Board Minutes
December 1, 2021
American Legion @ 5:30pm

Chairperson *Mara Gust* called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

Members Present: *Mara Gust, Heidi Hanson, Deb Koebernick, Alexis Hruby, Denice Nelson, Stacey Leake, Marcy Helling, Amber Schoepp, Robin Johnson, Mark Christenson, Rose McDonald, Andrea Eskeli, and Kevin Young, EM Staff.*

- A. Adopt agenda with flexibility/Communications
- B. Secretary's Report - Marcy Helling
 - a. Robin Johnson made a motion to accept the Secretary's Report as amended, second by Stacey Leake. Motion carried.
- C. Treasurer's Report - Amber Schoepp
 - a. Andrea Eskeli made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, second by Denice Nelson. Motion carried.
 - b. Audit Update - almost completed/present at January meeting
- D. Old Business:
 - 1. KB/NU Overnighter/March 25-26, 2022/Bemidji, Hampton Inn
 - a. Registration Table - Marcy, Robin, Mark (Help at 4pm or so) Amber
 - b. Meal Stipend for KB members
 - i. Stacey Leake made. A motion to raise meal stipend to \$20 for the KB/NU Overnighter, second by Deb Koebernick. Motion carried.
 - c. Door Prizes - Kevin will check to see what Northland United is doing. Possible ideas are gas cards, Target, or Walmart.
 - d. Confirm Sessions: KB/NU will each pick the two needed sessions. KB. Picked #74.
 - e. Pizza and Politics: 1-2:30pm on March 26th. Members will register for this. Andrea will reach out to invite legislators.
 - f. Friday Evening Activities: We are planning with NU to do a "fun" event with prizes, etc. on Friday evening. Kevin will keep us updated.
 - 2. Membership
 - a. We need to work at locals to get teachers to join the union. There is a decline in membership overall at this time. Some is due to Tier One staffing...remember to reach out to new staff and support them.
- E. Action Items:

None

F. New Business:

1. KB Representative Assembly/March 9, 2022/Location TBD
 - a. Plan agenda and dinner
 - b. Review delegate allocation
 - c. Changes to constitution - Andrea will send out prior to Jan. meeting
2. Local Leaders Meeting/February 16, 2022
 - a. Meal/Sessions. (#1 Legal/#2 Unsession)
 - b. Andrea may contact the Nordhem and try to hold meeting there...with a possibility of having Rep. Assembly there again, too.
3. January KB Governing Board Meeting
 - a. Audit Presentation - Invite Reid Froiland to attend and have dinner
 - b. Check into a holiday meal with a dessert - possibly the Hobo House or American Legion
 - c. White Elephant Gift (optional)

G. Field Office Report - Kevin Young

1. COVID Update - the challenging times continue and the stress level is high; even so, it is important to make sure the district is not violating your master agreement; if so, it is important to address the issue with the district and, if necessary, file a grievance.
 - Many COVID resources are available on the EdMN website - here is the link for bargaining COVID: <https://www.educationminnesota.org/members-only/bargaining/COVID-back-to-school-negotiations-resources>
 - Please find ways to connect with members during this challenging time. Make sure all have resources to get mental health services (most health insurance plans have a hot line for this. Check with your district to get this information and share with members.)
 - Sub Shortage issues seem to be a major concern - see handout for resources and possible solutions
 - Please share COVID situations
2. Membership update:
 - State wide membership numbers: 73,647 as of 11/21/2021; this is down about 500 from last year.
 - The numbers for KB IO - see handout
 - We need to know if a new hire decides not to become a member, please send me the following information: Name, Address, Work Location, Position, and Subject area
 - Make sure you are not sending information that pertains to members to non-members.
 - **Rosters:** Membership rosters were sent via e-mail on November 17.

Minutes

- o Please make sure all drops are recorded on the roster as a way to double check the accuracy.
- o At this time, no updates received for November 17 rosters from Grygla-Gatzke, Kittson Central, Lake of the Woods, Lancaster, Marshall County Central, NWRIC, Red Lake County Central, Red Lake Falls, Thief River Falls and Warroad.
- o Please make sure to keep an eye out for membership changes at semester time or returning from the Holiday Break - these are common time for changes to take place
- o New rosters will be sent again in late January/early February, so this information needs to get recorded asap so it is reflected in system

3. Local dues amount:

- Local dues amounts are needed from the following locals: Badger, Grygla-Gatzke, Lake of the Woods, Lancaster, Marshall County Central, NWRIC, Red Lake County Central, Roseau, Thief River Falls and Warroad, LOW, MCC, Red Lake Falls, Tri-County
- Budgets - make sure you are considering adjustments with the membership drops and a reminder to set budget and dues in April or May. EdMN will be asking for local dues amounts so membership applications can be filled out electronically - plan for this next spring

4. Updated Leadership Rosters:

Please turn in updated leadership rosters for the 2021-22 school year to Andrea at andrea.gross@edmn.org. Several are missing. LOW, MCC, Red Lake Falls, Tri-County.

Remember, if no changes, please also report this to Andrea.

5. Audits:

- Check with your Treasurer's to make sure audits are getting done and copies are sent to the Field Office
- Include list of non-chargeable items and keep a copy for future use.
- File 990 e-post card with IRS; take 5 mins each yr.; if not completed for 3 consecutive years, the local will lose tax exempt status which then requires filling out 23 pages of information and paying \$800-\$1000 to regain tax exempt status

<u>Fiscal Period:</u>	<u>Due Date:</u>
July 1 - June 30	due by Dec 31
Aug 1 - July 31	due by Jan 31
Sept 1 - Aug 31	due by Feb 28
Jan 1 - Dec 31	due by June 30

Minutes

- Reminder of KB Audit to be completed and approved at January KB Gov. Board Mtg.
- 6. Bargaining Update: see handouts for state and KB IO settlement data
 - See handout for missing bargaining data from locals that have settled.
- 7. Presidents/Local Leaders Meeting February 16:
 - Thoughts on this?
 - What sessions should be offered?
- 8. Political Conference January 29, 2022: More information to come; preregistration link is <https://web.cvent.com/event/899a6479-fd60-4120-82f5-3d468d436746/regProcessStep1>
- 9. KB/NU Overnighter: Bemidji, Hampton Inn; March 25-26, 2022; Member Rights focus; email sent on 11-22-2021 with more info.
- 10. Professional Development now available and has a name change to MEA Online:
 - Cultural Competency training, along with many other professional development opportunities, now available here: <https://www.educationminnesota.org/resources/minnesota-educator-academy/LearnUpon>
 - Trainings are asynchronous, synchronous, or a combination of both.
- 11. Summer Seminar: Aug 1-3, 2022 (Save the dates. Please talk with your District Admin. to keep dates open)
- 12. Visibility in locals: Please send calendar/notification of general membership meetings, events the local is taking part in, school calendars, etc..... I will do my best to attend.
- 13. Please make sure the information I share with you at Governing Board meetings is passed on to those in your locals who need the information. Thank You!!!
- 14. Other
 - H. Other - Next meeting is January 5th @ 5:30pm. More information to come as to location of meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:35pm
KB Secretary, Marcy Helling

January Meeting:
KB Audit Presentation/Reid Froiland
KB Representative Assembly
KB/NU Overnighter

Circus Arts Comes to Red Lake County Central

By Andrea Eskeli, Red Lake County Central Board Rep

As our schedules are filling up with running to sporting events and practices, doing errands and shopping for the holidays, we are winding down another calendar year here at Red Lake County Central. We are wrapping up our curriculum units, and tying loose ends, getting all of our work completed and handed in. I couldn't imagine a better way to end the year than having Benjamin Domask-Ruh from COM-PAS come to our school and teach us the magic of Circus Arts.

Being the teacher in the room, my initial reaction was, "ugh we have so much to do, we don't have time for this." I couldn't have been more wrong. Benjamin Domask-Ruh and his Circus Arts residency was just what the doctor ordered. As Benjamin entered the classroom, you could visibly see that he was going to inject energy into the room immediately (something every teacher fears, for a moment anyway). It turns out an energy injection was just what we needed.

We began by discussing our understanding of circus arts: juggling, trapeze, the teeter, fire juggling, tight rope, and all of the other incredible acts at the circus. We quickly decided that the most practical of these to learn in a classroom would be juggling. The two basic elements of juggling are throwing and catching. I can throw wonderfully, every now and again depending on what is being thrown, I can even catch. Putting the two together presents an entirely new challenge.

During the week we watched videos of famous jugglers performing their special type of juggling. We had no idea there were so many different styles. We practiced juggling scarves, balls, and balancing peacock feathers on various parts of the body. We practiced and learned and learned and practiced until most students had experienced some success. Many students discovered that they are not always in charge of what their brain does. We quickly learned that letting go of that third ball was a definite mind game.

When I say, "the MAGIC of juggling", I truly mean MAGIC. During our one hour block with Benjamin, we learned new things, we tried things that may have been uncomfortable at first, we failed, failed, and failed some more, but we didn't give up. We also didn't worry, or fret about anything but throwing, catching, and balancing. It was as if someone came into the room and erased all of our worries for one fun-filled hour each day.



All the Things I've Learned from the Pandemic By Stacey Leake, Thief River Falls Board Rep

These past two years have been unforgettable. I never imagined going to remote teaching and learning during my son's senior year (2020). I thought we'd be back in school no later than May 1, 2020. Instead, we had to adapt and learn how to help kids learn distantly and still experience the events of their high school years.

Our school came up with ways to celebrate our seniors by creating an information page for each senior to post on social media. Our administration posted the senior video for all to see. In addition, we were able to share the pictures of the personality awards. The graduation ceremony was held outside and broadcast so families could watch. Our school district hired photographers to take pictures, as well.

I know that COVID-19 has caused hardships, depression, anxiety, and loss. We know all too well the struggle and strife we have gone through. As we go forward, I choose to focus on the growth and innovative thinking it creates. Sports would resume in the fall of 2020, but no fans were allowed or only limited fans. We saw a need and worked together to find a solution. We now stream events for all to see. Family and friends who cannot attend can now watch the event online. It didn't just stop at athletics; we found a way to have still events for Homecoming, such as coronation, class videos, and competitions. Schools began providing this service, and soon churches did as well. We can attend meetings even though we are out of town, which has been an excellent addition.

Teachers were provided planning and learning time to create engaging lessons for hybrid or remote learning. Our administrators held weekly meetings to ensure that they checked in with us and truly listened to our needs. I feel we became more resilient as an entire staff because we were "All in it together."

It takes a village, and it takes the entire school staff. We had to ban together since adapting and adjusting meant a lot of stress on teachers. We realized how much we truly need the interaction of our colleagues and administration to be innovative while teaching in hybrid classrooms or during remote learning.



Kramer Brown/Northland United Overnighter

Mark your calendar!!

The Kramer- Brown/Northland Overnighter
Workshop is scheduled for

March 25-26, 2022 at the Hampton Inn in Bemidji.

Your local President will receive information on the
workshop and topics as well as the registration
information.

Burnham elected president of Minnesota AFL-CIO

The vice president of Education Minnesota, Bernie Burnham, was unanimously elected president of the Minnesota AFL-CIO at a meeting of the labor federation's general board On Dec. 14. She will take office early next year.

Burnham, president of the Duluth Federation of Teachers before being elected vice president of Education Minnesota in 2019, will replace Minnesota AFL-CIO President Bill McCarthy who is retiring. Burnham will start as president of the labor federation Feb. 1, 2021. She will be the first person of color to lead the Minnesota AFL-CIO.

The Education Minnesota Governing Board will appoint an interim vice president to serve until a new vice president takes office July 1. A new vice president will be elected at the annual Education Minnesota Representative Convention in late April.



CAPSULE



Calendar of Upcoming Events

January 5

KB Governing Board Meeting, American Legion, Thief River Falls

February 16

Local Leaders Meeting, Nordhem, Karlstad

March 9

KB Representative Assembly & KB Governing Board, Nordhem

March 25-26

KB/NU Overnighter, Hampton Inn & Suites, Bemidji

April 18-22

Administrative Professionals Week

April 20

Administrative Professionals Day

April 22-23

EM Representative Convention, St. Paul River Center, St Paul MN

May 2-6

Teacher Appreciation Week

May 3

National Teacher Day

May 3

KB Recognition Dinner, Quality Inn, Thief River Falls

May 5

School Nurse Day

teacher appreciation Week

On National Teacher Day, thousands of communities take time to honor their local educators and acknowledge the crucial role teachers' play in making sure every student receives a quality education.

Tuesday, May 3, 2022 is National Teacher Day. THANK YOU Kramer-Brown Teachers! This is the time we honor you and recognize all the contributions you do for your school, community and especially the students. Although it does take a lot of people to make a school succeed, National Teacher Day focuses on the teachers who work to make public schools great places for students to succeed in life.

The week of May 2-6, 2022 is designated Teacher Appreciation week by the National PTA.





CAPSULE

Registration now open for our 2022 virtual political conference

Registration is now open for our "2022 Virtual Political Conference: Our vote and our power to collectively bargain, stand up for fully funded schools and fight for racial justice." Register here.

The conference will take place Saturday, Jan. 29, 8 a.m.-noon, including an open forum with Gov. Tim Walz, open to all Education Minnesota members, from 8 a.m.-9:45 a.m.

For democracy to work for all of us, every voter must have our voice heard and our vote counted. That includes all 86,000 Education Minnesota members in Minnesota in 2022.

Join educators virtually from across Minnesota to kick off a historic election campaign to get out the vote for collective bargaining rights, fully funded public schools and racial justice. You'll be able to choose from a menu of options to attend two interactive sessions to gain an introduction to the most pressing issues to educators in 2022 and learn about our plan to get out the vote of every educator in Minnesota.

<https://educationminnesota.org/events/calendar/2022-education-minnesota-virtual-political-conference/>



NEA Representative Assembly

The National Education Association Representative Assembly, the NEA's major decision-making body, will be July 2 -July 6, 2022 in Chicago, IL.

NEA: We Educate America



Over 9,000 delegates will gather for NEA's 160th annual meeting and 101th Representative Assembly. This is an opportunity to unite as one voice for education, teachers, and students.





CAPSULE

2021-22 Education Minnesota Foundation grant deadlines

The Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has multiple grants with a deadline approaching. For details about the grants and how to apply, go to www.edmnfoundation.org. There's a grant waiting for you!

Professional Development Grants for teachers, ESPs and higher education faculty

Awarded twice a year, ESPs and teachers may request up to \$1,500, and higher education faculty may request up to \$3,000 to take the lead in acquiring and sharing new skills and knowledge. These skills might include new instructional ideas, technology, working with parents, attending a conference, etc.

A Professional Development Grant can also be used for groups to either attend professional development or be trained at their worksite.

Deadline: April 11

Second-Year Classroom Grants

Previous classroom-focused grant recipients may request up to \$3,000 to expand on their original objectives, and who have the potential to realize additional goals based on the learning and outcomes of their first grant. Deadline: April 1

IMPACT Grant

IMPACT Grant projects must be coordinated by an active member of Education Minnesota who has teamed up with a nonprofit organization or their local union/school district. Approximately \$15,000 is available for one year. The budget should reflect a one-year project. Deadline: Jan. 7

2022 Education Minnesota Representative Convention

Delegate selection underway for 2022 Rep Convention

Plans are underway for the 2022 Education Minnesota Representative Convention, which will be held at the Saint Paul RiverCentre April 22-23. Education Minnesota hopes the event will take place in person, but will continue monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and will share any changes or safety precautions with members in the coming months.

Major business for delegates includes acting on changes to the union's constitution and bylaws and considering any action items. This year, delegates will also elect Education Minnesota's statewide officers and two National Education Association directors.

The number of delegates allocated to each local and statewide affiliate is determined by the number of members. Delegates are chosen by open nominations and secret ballot. Interested members should contact their local president for details on how to participate.



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS