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# Pension Updates



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

## Update No. 27

The Legislature is back in session and the action picked up again today. Our focus from last week's extra edition remains the same and we have some new templates for members to use. As always, take the template and personalize it to send to your legislators and this week's action targets.

Check out the [template here!](#)

Also if you missed it, last week's Pension Updates: Extra Edition [is here](#).

## Fact of the Week

Education Minnesota's legislative priorities are developed by our internal, member-led committees and approved by the Education Minnesota Governing Board.

These priorities are never ranked, so any order they might appear in does not indicate their importance to our organization or our members.

## Targets for advocacy

The Big Three – Gov. Tim Walz, Senate Majority Leader Kari Dziedzic and House Speaker Melissa Hortman.

Your legislators – If you've sent emails and messages to your legislators but haven't had a chance to meet face to face, by phone or virtually, set up an appointment to meet and seek direct support for now and in the future.

Education Finance Committee Chairs – If you are constituents of Sen. Mary Kunesh or Rep. Cheryl Youakim, it would be good to reach out and share the importance of supporting pension reforms. They will be involved directly in the conversations about additional funding for plan improvements. To be clear, both of these legislators are strong education advocates and we are looking to gain stronger support specific to pensions. This is direct advocacy with allies.

Superintendents – Currently, there are some superintendents sharing a list of "unfunded mandates" in various forms. They list bills that are introduced but not necessarily headed towards becoming law as discussions and decision making our headed in different directions. Regardless, one of the most listed items consistently is funding for pensions. Talking to your superintendents on supporting stronger pensions as a recruitment and retention tool may be

necessary if your superintendent is supporting that position. We are fighting for funding from the state, whether through direct funding or funding through the formula, to improve pensions.

## **Actions**

Escalating effectiveness moves from letters and messages to meeting face-to-face (including virtually) with legislators.

- If your local has a lobby day established in the next few weeks, ensure that attendees are either versed in our pension advocacy or are prepared to advocate on pensions.
- If your local has already had a lobby day, either contact your president to inquire if there is release time available for an additional day or set up your own meeting outside of the duty day to meet with legislators either one-to-one or with other pension advocates.

### **Bombard the Big Three**

- Contact Gov. Tim Walz, Senate Majority Leader Kari Dziedzic and House Speaker Melissa Hortman and ask them to increase the funding for pensions.
- Speak with your two legislators directly and seek their action to advocate for a bigger investment.

### **Constituent-based action**

- If you are a constituent, contact Sen. Mary Kunesch or Rep. Cheryl Youakim about their support of employer and state funding for pension improvements.

## **What can members do for the next two weeks?**

Member Mondays – Talk to colleagues this Monday and the next and encourage them to take action. Goal: Each of you find two members to send a message (someone who hasn't before) or take another action.

### **Tuesday – Friday (Pick one or more)**

- Meet – Face-to-face meetings with legislators is the next level. Set an individual appointment or with others, and check on your lobby day options.
- Call – Call and leave a message for one of the Big Three.
- Message – Send a message specific to increased funding needed for pension reform.

## **May 20 rally**

One of our actions to get all of our education bills across the finish line will be a Capitol rally for all members on Saturday, May 20.

This is something we've done in past sessions and represents another opportunity for us to show decision-makers how important investing in educators is right now. Some might think the date is too late, but legislative deals are typically happening right up until adjournment.

[Register online here!](#)

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### Resources:

Organizing and Action	General Information
<a href="#">Pension bill action alert</a>	<a href="#">Education Minnesota pensions webpage</a>
<a href="#">Legislative contact template</a>	<a href="#">EdMN Capitol Connection e-newsletter</a>
<a href="#">Tips for contacting your legislators</a>	<a href="#">TRA document on pension basics</a>
<a href="#">Find your legislators</a>	<a href="#">PERA member resources</a>
<a href="#">EdMN Lobby Days info</a>	<a href="#">Public pension terminology</a>
<a href="#">LCPR members</a>	<a href="#">TRA candidate voter guide</a>

If you've missed any past updates, they're [available on our website](#).

If you have any questions, please email [Adam Janiak](#).

Keep organizing, sharing and talking to your colleagues about our plan. [Sign up and forward this Education Minnesota Pension Updates signup today or use the QR code below!](#)

