

M I N N E S O T A

# EDUCATOR

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2023

**Educators begin to embrace  
AI while being mindful  
of challenges, too**

**Better together: Minnesota educators  
continue to choose union**



THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

# ***NEA classes now available on MEA Online!***

**Our MEA Online has teamed up with the National Education Association to provide a multitude of online courses for Education Minnesota members.**

MEA Online now includes online classes provided by Education Minnesota's Minnesota Educator Academy, along with all NEA online classes.

Existing users will need to go to <https://meaonline.learnupon.com/users/password/new> and follow the prompts to reset your password.

To access the NEA portal for new classes, go to portal switch button at the top of the page and click "PEP – Professional Excellence Portal." Members will have to take the very short mandatory welcome to NEA training before seeing the full free catalog of courses.

Can't access the portal switcher to find NEA courses?

The portal switcher is available to users who have accounts in two or more portals. If you are in the MEA Online portal and don't have the switcher button, it means you haven't yet registered in the any other portal, like NEA's Professional Excellence Portal (PEP). If this is you, please go to the PEP registration page and register with the same email and password you use to access MEA Online.

All of the information to access the platform and courses will be available on the Education Minnesota and MEA Online websites.

All MEA Online courses are done asynchronously, at every individual's own pace. The site also saves your progress, and automatically awards CEUs to your account and to your email upon each course completion.

**The best part? These courses are FREE to active Education Minnesota members.**



**THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS**

### August/September 2023 – Volume 26, No. 1

The Minnesota Educator publishes every other 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 LSC Communications' union shop in Menasha, Wisconsin. Find copies of the Educator online at [www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org). Go to the News menu, then Minnesota Educator.

#### To reach the publication for queries, story or commentary ideas:

Email: [educator@edmn.org](mailto:educator@edmn.org)  
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#### For general inquiries and business at the state headquarters:

Phone: 800-652-9073 or 651-227-9541  
For information about union activities, work and  
resources, go to [www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org).

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The Minnesota Educator is published for members to share news about education issues and training opportunities for educators as well as union and political news that affects public education in Minnesota.

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## “Did they think this ‘survey’ would fool me? ... I’m sticking with the union”

The plain black-and-white postcards started landing in the mailboxes of educators earlier this summer. It asked them to fill out a “satisfaction survey” of their union.

A member might glance at it and think it was from Education Minnesota itself, but it was from the Freedom Foundation of Washington state, one of the country's biggest anti-union organizations.

Ever since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned 40 years of precedent in the Janus case in 2018, and effectively made the nation right-to-work, groups like the Freedom Foundation have used tricks and lies in direct-mail campaigns to try to break the union movement in America, especially powerful unions of educators.

In the offices of organizations that cash the checks from the DeVos, Koch and Walton families, the political operatives imagine a future without labor unions to defend public education. They wish for the financial benefits of no longer paying taxes to support public schools and colleges, and greater profits due to a withered public sector.

For some of the anti-union groups, it's also about stopping progress in asserting the human rights of LGBTQ+ young people in schools, and of erasing our nation's history of racism from the public debate—one banned book and one academic gag order at a time. They know unions of educators are the first, and best, lines of defense for all of students' freedom to learn in safe and welcoming schools, and to have access to lessons that inform them about America's triumphs and the times when it fell far short of its ideals.

But as educators and unionists, we're up for the challenge.

As members of Education Minnesota, you will soon receive real postcards from your union thanking you for standing strong. You'll receive information about how, by many measures, the quality of life is worse in states with weaker unions. For educators, strong unions mean higher wages and better health insurance. For example, when anti-union lawmakers took over in Wisconsin 12 years ago, they passed Act 10 and teacher compensation plummeted \$10,483 within four years.

However, at Education Minnesota we know members need their union to do much more than just exist. Educators want tangible progress on their compensation, especially pensions and health insurance; better working conditions, including better staffing ratios, prep time and professional development; and more mental health supports for students and staff. You'll be hearing more about our plans for those issues, too.

As for that “survey” from the Freedom Foundation, most Minnesota educators have already seen through it. They've also thought about a future without our union—and rejected it.

A member from St. Paul sent me her edits and replies to that survey. Frankly, I couldn't have done better myself. The survey questions are in bold. The educators' edits in red.

**Why are you a union member? (Mark all that apply)**

- **I am unaware of other options.** *The alternative is being at management's mercy.*
- **I don't want to lose my liability insurance.** *dignity and basic rights.*
- **I'm afraid know if I leave, I will be retaliated against** *mistreated by management.*

**Other feedback:** *They can't scare me, I'm sticking with the union.*

And at the bottom of the form, the educator wrote: “... Did they think this survey would fool me?”

The answer is yes. But we're educators and we know we're stronger as a united voice.

Together,



Twitter: @DeniseSpecht



Denise Specht



## Special Education Minnesota Governing Board Election Notice

Special elections will be held to fill Education Minnesota Governing Board vacancies in Election District D and Election District T this fall. All active Education Minnesota members in these election districts are eligible to run.

Education Minnesota is governed by an elected board, including members from eight at-large zones, three at-large positions and all of Education Minnesota's election districts. Our governing board meets throughout the year to set dues, adopt a budget and carry out directives passed at the annual meeting.

Learn more about what the governing board does on page 10!

Filings open Aug. 28 and close Sept. 8. Filing forms for both election districts will be posted on the Education Minnesota website during the open filing period.

## Getting social!

Educators use social media as a way to connect with their communities, colleagues and the world. We will feature posts from Education Minnesota members and locals each issue! Make sure to follow Education Minnesota on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and Pinterest!

PLSEA PL-S Education  
@PLSEA719

What an amazing tradition PLSEA staff has at every PLSAS graduation! And it's gets larger every year. Teachers from PreK - 12 line up outside the stadium on both sides as the graduates walk into the arena. We will miss you! Good luck on your future endeavors!!!



## Where are you reading your Minnesota Educator?

**Congratulations,  
Paula Braun of Dover-  
Eyota, for being this issue's  
winning submission!**

We love seeing all of the places where you are reading your Minnesota Educator!

Email a photo to [educator@edmn.org](mailto:educator@edmn.org) or share it on social media using #mneducator of where you are reading your Minnesota Educator to be entered into a drawing to win a \$50 Target gift card! Submissions are due Sept. 8. Happy reading!



## Educators in the news!

Education Minnesota members are often interviewed in their local newspapers or TV station. We will feature a quote each issue!

“

***Either I get insurance or I get a paycheck. It's so costly, in fact, that some owe the district money at the end of the year. When educators have the ability to apply to many different places and have the opportunity to go anywhere, the job often filled is the one with the best benefit package.***

”

– Angela Forlund, a sixth-grade teacher in Kingsland, said in the June 24 Rochester Post-Bulletin story, “Rochester-area teachers see large health insurance hikes, search for new options.”

## Embracing, understanding new AI technologies important for educators, students

Jon Fila started seeing student submissions that looked like they could be AI-generated in the last year so he knew he had two options—ban it or embrace it.

"I started getting submissions that looked a little bit off to me, like the proper formatting I'm used to from 12th grade English students. I started hearing more about AI, so I connected those dots," said Fila, an English teacher at Intermediate School District 287's Northern Star Online school. "I was also finding ways to use it as a teacher and how it might help fix some of the issues in education."

Fila started researching more, working with the tools, and has now written three books on the subject and is training educators across the country.

"I try to acknowledge that of course students are going to use it to get out of work, but some fields are using it with remarkable results. It's a tool that many jobs are excited about and we're telling students not to use it.



I show examples of how we might be able to use it," he said. "Today is the worst it's ever going to be. It will become more accessible. If something is inevitable, we can't fight it."

In May, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology released the report, "Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Teaching and Learning: Insights and Recommendations."

The report describes AI "as a rapidly-advancing set of technologies for recognizing patterns in data and automating actions," and "guides educators in understanding what these emerging technologies can do to advance educational goals—while evaluating and limiting key risks."

### Key insights from the report include:

- AI enables new forms of interaction. Students and teachers can speak, gesture, sketch and use other natural human modes of communication to interact with a computational resource and each other. AI can generate human-like responses, as well. These new forms of action may provide supports to students with disabilities.
- AI can help educators address variability in student learning. With AI, designers can anticipate and address the long tail of variations in how students can successfully learn—whereas traditional curricular resources were designed to teach to the middle or most common learning pathways. For example, AI-enabled educational technology may be deployed to adapt to each student's English language abilities with greater support for the range of skills and needs among English learners.

## Working with your library media specialist

The Information and Technology Educators of Minnesota (ITEM), the organization of state media specialists, encourage all educators to reach out to their school or district's library media specialist with questions about these new, emerging technologies or to collaborate on a student lesson regarding AI and programs like ChatGPT.

ITEM President-Elect Laura Gingras, a library media specialist in Waconia, said she is excited to share AI with her teachers and work with them on how it could be a helpful tool.

"If our teachers know how it works and its capabilities, they will be better able to recognize when their students are using it," said Gingras. "When we teach our students about a creator's rights and responsibilities, we talk about how to ensure others find us credible. By sharing our sources and explaining where we get our information, we prove that we took the steps to learn about a topic. If we just say, 'I asked ChatGPT,' it isn't proving that we learned anything."

- **AI supports powerful forms of adaptivity.** Conventional technologies adapt based upon the correctness of student answers. AI enables adapting to a student's learning process as it unfolds step-by-step, not simply providing feedback on right or wrong answers. Specific adaptations may enable students to continue strong progress in a curriculum by working with their strengths and working around obstacles.
- **AI can enhance feedback loops.** AI can increase the quality and quantity of feedback provided to students and teachers, as well as suggesting resources to advance their teaching and learning.
- **AI can support educators.** Educators can be involved in designing AI-enabled tools to make their jobs better and to enable them to better engage and support their students.

Fila said that he has started small on engaging students with the technology.

"I give the AI response and students are able to talk about it or come up with sources to support or detract against the argument AI made. Some of the things aren't accurate, so we must teach them how to interact with it," he said.

Fila starts small when working on this topic with educators, as well.

"It isn't meant to replace anything but let's think about ways to incorporate it with what we are already doing. The uses of the tools are only as good as how we use them," he said.

Fila encourages other educators to just start using the programs and finding how they can be useful, especially with smaller tasks.

"You have to figure out what problem you are trying to solve. Otherwise, it would just be recreating work we are already doing," he said. "Writing a five-question quiz in a learning management system would take me an hour. I can have the system write a 30-question quiz and then work through them, pick the ones I like and export them in the way I need in about 15 minutes," he said.

"There's room for improvement on a lot of things we do. Why not use this to move us forward? Whatever you think it's for today, there's probably more to it than that."

## Resources for educators

### Digital citizenship curriculum

Common Sense Education has a digital citizenship curriculum, which uses digital citizenship lesson plans to address timely topics and prepare students to take ownership of their digital lives. The curriculum has lessons for all grade levels K-12 and can be found at [www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship/curriculum](http://www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship/curriculum).

### Free media literacy tool from AFT

The American Federation of Teachers has teamed up with NewsGuard to provide free access to their leading media literacy tool to all AFT members and their students and families. Included is a browser extension and mobile app that gives users real time access to "traffic light" news ratings and detailed "nutrition label-like" reviews describing the credibility of thousands of news and information websites. To access your free NewsGuard tool, go to [www.newsguardtech.com/AFT](http://www.newsguardtech.com/AFT).

### Research, case studies, tools

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has numerous resources on their website, [www.iste.org/areas-of-focus/AI-in-education](http://www.iste.org/areas-of-focus/AI-in-education). The site includes free professional development, educator guides, research, case studies, blog posts and podcasts.

Jon Fila's website, [www.jonfila.com](http://www.jonfila.com), includes lessons and curriculum resources, in addition to ways where you can purchase his three books, "Student Guide for Using ChatGPT: An Essential Tool for Saving Time, Enhancing Learning, Encouraging Creativity, and Receiving Feedback," "Educator Guide for Using ChatGPT An Essential Tool for Saving Time, Supporting Your Learners, and Thinking about AI for Education," and "Embracing AI: Beyond the Basics Strategies for Educational Transformation."

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology is working to develop policies and supports focused on the effective, safe and fair use of AI-enabled educational technology. Their website, <https://tech.ed.gov/ai/>, includes listening session recordings, blog posts and the full report on AI and the future of teaching and learning.

## Fergus Falls' Christianson brings special focus to her connections with kids, colleagues

Mindy Christianson, a Fergus Falls high school teacher and union leader, was Minnesota's 2023 NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence recipient.

This award not only recognizes and rewards exemplary educators for their outstanding instruction, but also their advocacy to advance the profession.

"I like advocating for people and helping them in any way I can," said Christianson, who currently serves as the Fergus Falls Education Association local co-president. "In our union, we are focusing on forward momentum and what we can accomplish together."

In her classroom, Christianson also focuses on advocacy—for her students and expanding their world view.

Christianson teaches English and concurrent enrollment classes at Kennedy Secondary School.

She has created a college-level Intercultural Communications class, which was her favorite class when she was in college at Hamline University.

"I would have liked to have had the class in high school," Christianson said. "It would have made me a better student and classmate."

The class includes taking the Intercultural Development Inventory, which measures intercultural competence. The class also spends a day in Fargo, meeting new Americans studying at an adult learning center and spending time at different restaurants and international markets.

"We spend time with people, hearing their stories, dispelling a lot of myths," Christianson said.

Throughout the class, students take part in more purposeful experiences, all the while journaling and reflecting on if they have grown a broader perspective on the world.

Christianson also has her students out in their own community.

The last few days of each school year, her junior students do service-learning projects. Students choose if they want to be group leaders, then set up the projects with local businesses or community groups and recruit their teams.



*Fergus Falls teacher and union leader, Mindy Christianson, was honored for her professional practice and union advocacy this year as our state's nominee for the National Education Association's Teaching Excellence award.*

"It's beneficial for themselves and the community," Christianson said.

In Christianson's college writing class, students pick a problem, do research and surveys and find a solution. She then has people like school administration and board members, the mayor, and hospital administrators come in to hear their students' ideas.

"Last year, a few worked on the idea of student mental health coming out of the pandemic," Christianson said. "The high school principals really listened and changed our schedule to include an advisory period each day for additional support. The students felt so heard."

Christianson's focus on listening and communicating is also what makes her an effective union leader, her colleagues said.

"She stops and takes the time to share what needs to be shared," said Renee Erickson, a fellow teacher at Kennedy Secondary School. "She makes sure every member knows everything they need to know."

Christianson continues to expand her own world view, including participating in Education Minnesota's Racial Equity Advocate program.

"I try to find the ways I can to learn from others and make our community the best place for everyone," she said.



## Nominate a deserving colleague for the ESP of Year award

Nominations are open until Sept. 23 for the 2023-24 Education Minnesota Education Support Professional of the Year award.

The program honors exemplary professional and union work by an Education Minnesota member in any ESP job category, including paraprofessional/education assistant, secretarial/clerical, custodial, food service, maintenance and trades, transportation, groundskeeping, security, technology services, health services and others.

All Education Minnesota ESP members who have been members for at least three years as of Aug. 31, 2023, are eligible. Individuals can be nominated by anyone who knows their work and would like to see them honored.

The ESP of the Year represents their peers throughout the profession and connects to communities as an ambassador.

The ESP of the Year receives a \$1,200 honorarium, their choice of an iPad, Chromebook or tablet, plus an all expense-paid trip to the NEA's Education Support Professional National Conference.

Following the receipt of ESP of the Year nomination forms, Education Minnesota reviews all nominated individuals to ensure that eligibility requirements are met. Eligible nominees will be notified and asked if they wish to continue the process as a candidate for Minnesota's Education Support Professional of the Year.

If needed, a two-step selection procedure will determine the ESP of the Year. The initial phase will narrow the pool of candidates to five finalists based on five criteria and judged by a cadre of ESP members from around the state.

Finalists will be notified of their status and will be scheduled for an interview with the Selection Committee.

Candidates are judged according to the five criteria listed below. They will be rated on a scale of 1 to 5, in which 1 represents minimal evidence of the criterion and 5 represents very strong evidence of the criterion.

### *Professional practice*

Describe the worksite responsibilities and personal achievements the nominee has made in their classification or field. How has the nominee demonstrated leadership, creativity and innovation at the worksite? How has the nominee's professional growth made a difference for the school, students and community?

### *Advocacy and association*

In what ways does the nominee serve as an advocate in the day-to-day educational process, for members, the profession and public education? How has the nominee's involvement in Education Minnesota contributed to their success as a professional? How would the nominee persuade a new colleague to join or become more active in the union?

### *Community engagement*

Specify in detail how the nominee has been involved in promoting public education in the community. In what other ways is the nominee involved in community activities/projects?

### *Personal achievement*

How has involvement in Education Minnesota and community activities enabled the nominee to meet their own personal goals? What advice would the nominee give to someone entering the profession?

### *Enhancement of ESP image*

Describe in detail how the nominee's activities have enhanced the image of educational support professionals at the worksite, in the union and in the community.

**To learn more about the program and nominate a candidate for 2023-24 Education Minnesota ESP of the Year, go to [www.educationminnesota.org/news/awards-and-honors/esp-of-the-year](http://www.educationminnesota.org/news/awards-and-honors/esp-of-the-year).**



# HERE

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**FREE  
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## Better together: Educators continue to choose union

Being an educator is one of the hardest jobs—and it's never been more difficult. But through our union, our members have the strongest possible voice to advocate for students, our profession, public education and our communities.

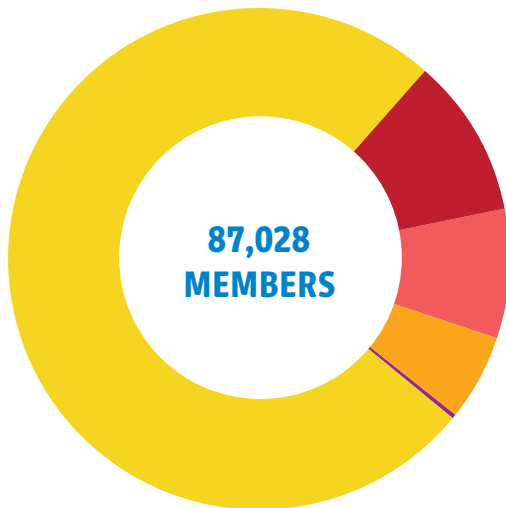
Five years after the Supreme Court ruled that non-members do not have to pay a portion of public sector union fees, Education Minnesota's membership remains strong.

Educators across the state continue to join their local, state and national unions and new locals continue to organize with Education Minnesota.

As the largest labor union in the state, Education Minnesota is a powerful, collective voice for educators and students. Through your affiliation with a strong statewide union, your locals are stronger and have more resources available to you.

***Did you know that your dues make you a member of your local union, Education Minnesota, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers and the regional, state and national AFL-CIO?***

**Together, we're stronger. Together, we're heard.**



- **65,763** Educators licensed by the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board and instructors in higher education – 75.6 percent
- **8,967** Retired educators – 10.3 percent
- **7,245** Education support professionals – 8.3 percent
- **4,859** Student educators – 5.5 percent
- **194** Other (substitutes, reserve, etc.) – 0.2 percent

**Education Minnesota is made up of 475 local unions. Each is organized to meet the specific needs of members in their job settings and communities.**

***Did you know in 2022, Education Minnesota-Retired won an award from the National Education Association for the largest percentage increase in members?***

That year, EM-Retired saw a growth of 7.8 percent, or 755 new members. EM-Retired is Education Minnesota's biggest local union. If you are retiring or retired, and have been a member for at least 10 years, you may qualify for retired membership at NO additional cost. Retired members receive liability insurance for working as a sub and continue to support our work, including pension reform advocacy.

***Did you know between January 2022 and April 2023, six new locals have sought out and joined Education Minnesota?***

We welcome the Springfield Confidential staff, New York Mills paraprofessionals, Robbinsdale Equity Allies, Martin County West Clerical ESPs, Stewartville Administrative Assistant Professionals and the Anoka Hennepin Kitchen Site Supervisors!

We continue to receive requests for information about unionizing and work to make sure all educators in Minnesota feel like they have the support they deserve!

## Where do my dues go?

Education Minnesota works to support members every day and promote union values, provide welcoming and relevant opportunities, focus on the recruitment and retention of members while still providing programming for our members to ensure strong locals into the future. Your dues fund that work.

48%

**Advocate for your career:** Negotiating contracts, improving local learning and working conditions and fighting for fair wages and benefits.

9%

**Professional growth:** Hundreds of local, regional and statewide trainings, as well as our free online professional development platform, MEA Online.

16%

**Voice for public education:** A voice in policymaking and lawmaking at the local, state and national level. For example, this year Education Minnesota spent more resources than ever on pension advocacy.

4%

**Champion for our students and community:** Establishing positive relationships with our allies and the community, including organizing efforts with locals and working with other labor unions and community partners.

The rest—23 percent—goes toward union governance and infrastructure. That includes rent, utilities, equipment and tech support for 13 offices across the state.

## Who represents me at the state level?

### Member-led Governing Board

Education Minnesota is governed by three officers and a 47-member governing board elected by members, representing all parts of the state, to ensure the union's goals and priorities are driven by members.

Education Minnesota's leaders are guided by our statements of principle, our strategic plan and our constitution and bylaws.

Each spring, more than 500 elected delegates meet to set policy and direction for our organization at our annual business meeting, the Representative Convention. The governing board meets throughout the year to set dues, adopt a budget and carry out directives passed at the Representative Convention.

The governing board also sets priorities for its work and for the organization.

The organizational priorities are:

- **Racial equity and social justice:** Co-create equitable schools and anti-racist unions that welcome all students and educators, no matter their color, orientation, economic status, religion, abilities or ZIP code.
- **Full funding for strong public schools:** Establish a full and permanent funding system for public schools to guarantee that students and educators have

the resources they need to deliver the education our students deserve, from early childhood to post-secondary.

- **Strong locals:** Empower locals and members working collectively to be strong, trusted advocates for public education at the local and state levels.

Read more about the progress made on those priorities at [www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org).

### Member-led Standing Committees

Education Minnesota also has numerous standing committees, each comprised of members representing each zone of our state. These committees include a new pension advocacy group to chart a course for our new stage of advocacy; councils of local teacher chapter and ESP presidents, who work on local union advocacy issues; a legislative action committee, who considers and recommends legislative positions to the board; a professional advocacy committee, who considers and recommends policies and programs to the elected officers and other leaders regarding matters pertinent to the professional lives of members; and more.

Find out who represents you on the governing board, standing committees or find any governance documents under the "About Us" section of [www.educationminnesota.org](http://www.educationminnesota.org).



## Why I belong

Education Minnesota members share why belonging to a union is important to them. Every member across the state has their reasons for belonging, and each and every one is important!



"(During distance learning), my local union helped to fight for me to have that time in the classroom and to have extra prep time. Not only to prepare for the different style of teaching I was doing, but also that time to meet with colleagues in order for us to provide more support."

– France Roberts, Wayzata



"The unions are there to fight for what's right. Students are going to benefit from that. Our district passed a resolution to support LGBTQ+. That's going to benefit so many students in our district. If it wasn't for the union being supportive and being there and rallying with our students and our teachers and our family members, I don't know if it would have gone through."

– Melissa Buckley, Osseo



"Our staff felt alone in their frustrations with being underpaid and undervalued and they realized they were no longer alone (with coming together in union to fight for more). We are stronger than ever and excited to work together on our next negotiations."

– Andrea Powers, St. Francis office professionals



"I think of the union as a megaphone. It gives us the ability to take the voice of one person and amplify it and get people to pay attention to what we are working toward."

– Heather Bakke, St. Peter



"(Working with Education Minnesota) has helped us create more leaders within our teachers and provides with us that confidence that our voice matters and it deserves to be heard, and helps us create meaningful and positive ways to engage all our members in union activities. It's really created a much closer and supportive community within our teachers and it makes us better educators for our students, which in the end is what it's all about."

– Jen Trask, Bemidji



"I started out my career at a school that was not unionized. When I then got a union job at an independent school district, it made me realize how much this other school without a unionized staff relied on unpaid labor and people putting in extra hours and how much the union protects educators' ability to have a life outside our job."

– Chad Benesh, Cook County

## Better together: Our historic educator union merger turns 25

Sept. 1 marks the 25th anniversary of the first-in-the-nation merger of the Minnesota Federation of Teachers and Minnesota Education Association to become Education Minnesota.

The merger came after almost a decade of work between local unions, the state organizations and approval from the two national unions.

Before the merger, the two organizations—the MEA and the MFT—were both doing the same things, but just a little differently. But because there were two groups, that inherently created a world of competition, fighting among colleagues, smear campaigns in publications and a division that really served no purpose.

In districts where there were both representatives of the EA and the FT, elections took place to determine who had the majority of support. Whoever won the election became certified as the exclusive representative.

"It was so divisive," said Jim Smola, who was a leader of the first local union to merge ahead of the state, the Dakota County United Educators. "There were even considerations at the bargaining table about what to go for because something could become an issue in a unit election down the road. And the money that was spent at the local, state and national level on these elections was significant."

The fighting was also present at the state level. Politicians and decision makers in education were able to use the two organizations as bargaining chips and try to make them take different positions.



*The publications of both the Minnesota Education Association and Minnesota Federation of Teachers were filled with contrasts between the two organizations, both politically and in the bargaining unit representative elections.*

"I had legislators saying this is crazy, how are we supposed to pick one or the other when you're basically asking for the same thing," said Kathy Hegstrom, a local leader in another merged local union ahead of the state, the Brainerd United Educators.

Because of the risks our leaders took 25 years ago, our union is the strong, statewide voice for students and educators we have today.

"Our focus makes a better school environment for kids, it keeps school districts playing at a level field," Smola said. "It has just made our voices stronger. We're a voice for kids and public school employees. It's a noble thing."

### How are we stronger?

#### Resources

Education Minnesota's unity has meant using resources for what members really need at the state and local level, instead of spending resources on cutting down one organization or the other.

"That unified voice paved the way for more involvement and a lot of new programs and better trainings," said Hegstrom.

#### Collective voice

The union now represents all members in all corners of the state

"We had the whole state active, together," said Smola. "Instead of just a percentage here and a percentage there. That makes a huge difference in how the schools boards, district administration and legislators all see us."

#### Part of a larger labor movement

With the merger, all of Education Minnesota now became affiliated with the AFL-CIO, including access to regional labor federations which provide locals many opportunities to engage with the labor movement, such as working together with building trades unions to pass levy referendums.

## New pension actions begin for next year of advocacy

Education Minnesota is continuing its advocacy for better pensions for all its members. Two new ways for members to be engaged in the work were announced recently.

### NEW Pension Advocacy Network Facebook page

All Education Minnesota members who are interested in educator pension advocacy are invited join our new Facebook group. This is a place where members can connect, have productive conversations about pension solutions and have staff answer questions. Find the group by searching "Education Minnesota Pension Advocacy Network" and asking to join. You will have to answer a few membership questions and membership will be verified to remain in the group.

### NEW Pension Advisory Group

Members have been appointed to our new Pension Advisory Group for the 2023-24 school year. After reviewing applications, ensuring that a diverse group of member advocates is reflected, these members from across the state have been selected to serve. Members were chosen from each of Education Minnesota's election zones, which is standard practice for all of our union's committee assignments. Because of the large interest, there are two representatives from each zone on this committee, to make sure we have a sizable group that could still have in-depth discussions where they can make decisions.

There was an incredible amount of applications for this group. Even if members weren't appointed this year, please continue to weigh in by email, on our new Facebook page and engage in continued pension advocacy events and opportunities. Members who applied may still be appointed to remaining Education Minnesota committees.

- Zone 1: Brian Cole, Moorhead, and Doyle Turner, Bemidji
- Zone 2: Bridget Peterson, Esko, and Michael Sievert, Nashwauk-Keewatin
- Zone 3: David Leom, Milaca, and Jenn Roos, Fergus Falls

- Zone 4: Andrea Sitzmann, Jackson County Central, and Brenda Kellen, Marshall
- Zone 5: Jake Johnson, Rochester, and Craig Brenden, Waseca
- Zone 6: Joseph Wollersheim, Dakota County United Educators, and Heidi Simons, Bloomington
- Zone 7: Todd Richter, Roseville, and Kim Hannan, Osseo
- Zone 8: Dan Foss, Anoka Hennepin, and Elizabeth Keeling, Anoka Hennepin
- Governing Board representatives: Ryan Fiereck, Committee Chair, St. Francis; Lisa Olson, Vice Chair, Elk River; and Marty Fridgen, South Washington County
- Education Minnesota Retired: Jeannie Brown-Kruesel, Faribault, and David Esposito, Robbinsdale
- Officers: Monica Byron, Education Minnesota Vice President, and Rodney Rowe, Education Minnesota Secretary-Treasurer

Members and staff of the group can be contacted at [pensions@edmn.org](mailto:pensions@edmn.org).

### A message from Pension Advisory Chair, Ryan Fiereck:

"I'm excited for this new pension task force to come together to talk about pathways forward toward pension improvement and flexibility. We'll work to come together under a unified vision of what pensions should look like for Minnesota educators. I'm also excited that we're going to dive into the nuts and bolts of how we can get there and provide the guidance for our members across the state of Minnesota as we do this work together."

### Pension Update emails continue

As this group begins work, members will receive any updates on pension-related work in the Pension Update emails. If you are not registered for the emails, go to [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/at-the-legislature/pensions](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/at-the-legislature/pensions) or click the QR code found on this page.



## Supreme Court rules against loan forgiveness, payments resume in October

Education Minnesota's Degrees Not Debt program continues to support members navigating education debt and loans. Numerous updates have occurred in the last few months that affect borrowers – some good and some unfortunately not.

### Supreme Court strikes down Biden's loan forgiveness program

On June 30, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the Biden-Harris administration's student loan forgiveness program.

Immediately after the decision was announced, the administration said they would be working to advocate for loan forgiveness in other ways. The Degrees Not Debt team will keep members up to date on any ways that these new relief programs could affect educators.

- The U.S. Secretary of Education initiated a rulemaking process aimed at opening an alternative path to debt relief for as many working and middle-class borrowers as possible, using the Secretary's authority under the Higher Education Act.
- The U.S. Department of Education finalized the most affordable repayment plan ever created, ensuring that borrowers will be able to take advantage of this plan this summer—before loan payments are due. Many borrowers will not have to make monthly payments under this plan. Those that do will save more than \$1,000 a year.
- In addition, to protect the most vulnerable borrowers from the worst consequences of missed payments following the payment restart, the department is instituting a 12-month “on-ramp” to repayment, running from Oct. 1, 2023 to Sept. 30, 2024, so that financially vulnerable borrowers who miss monthly payments during this period are not considered delinquent, reported to credit bureaus, placed in default, or referred to debt collection agencies.

### Student loan payments to resume in October

This spring, Congress passed federal legislation that included an end to the pause on student loan payments and the resumption of interest accrual on loans. Loan servicers should begin to notify borrowers that payments will be required again after Oct. 1.

For members who are participating in Public Service Loan Forgiveness, the Degrees Not Debt team advises that you complete the enrollment in an income-driven plan in September of this year to be in the best position possible when payments resume.

### Updates from Federal Student Aid

A number of new rules have also been proposed and will be in place this summer into next year. These updates to loan repayment rules are intended to make it easier for borrowers to qualify for loan forgiveness under the rules of income-driven repayment and Public Service Loan Forgiveness. For our members, these are the most important things to note:

- In coming months, Federal Student Aid will change whether certain payments or months are credited toward your loan forgiveness in a one-time account adjustment. When this happens depends on a number of individual factors, but it should help address issues created by loan servicing companies and speed up the timeline for loan forgiveness.
- Borrowers who would like to pursue Public Service Loan Forgiveness but still have ineligible loans have until the end of 2023 to consolidate. If you have FFEL loans, please email [dnd@edmn.org](mailto:dnd@edmn.org) to get more information.
- The Department of Education intends to make more affordable income-driven plans available to borrowers in repayment. Tentative information suggests that these plans will be available when payments resume in October.



## Minnesota Student Loan Advocate position a reality

For the last eight years, members of our union have been tirelessly lobbying for a Student Borrower Bill of Rights. After partial victory in 2021, the final provisions of this legislation become law on July 1 with the creation of a Student Loan Advocate in state government. The advocate will fill the critical role of protecting borrowers' rights and enforcing rules that keep loan servicers accountable, including receiving borrower complaints.

The Degrees Not Debt team will share more information once the advocate is in place to help direct complaints to their office.

## Training, support available

Education Minnesota continues to make our Degrees Not Debt training as accessible as possible. Our most recent webinar is online via our MEA Online platform. We've recently made updates to the system, so please note the directions included on the site if you have not used this platform before. Search the course catalog for Degrees Not Debt, looking for the most recent training.

As always, our Degrees Not Debt staff team is here to help, so please reach out to [dnd@edmn.org](mailto:dnd@edmn.org) with any questions.

## A student debt relief story

Kat Jordahl, a teacher in St. Paul, was not very hopeful about loan forgiveness after hearing about the roadblocks others encountered, but she also knew that getting any kind of forgiveness would be life-changing for her, so she decided to try.

Jordahl had heard about Education Minnesota's Degrees Not Debt program through friends and started emailing with program staff about her chances and began the process of having the team review her loan information.

"I was hesitant because it was some personal information and I am not proud of the total of my loans," she said. "It was a lot and that felt shameful. But (the program staffer) was very friendly and we began the process. The process was actually fairly easy."

Jordahl consolidated her loans, filled out the paperwork and spent a lot of time waiting.

"I knew there would be a lot of waiting involved," Jordahl said. "Once my loans were consolidated I received a letter stating I had not made enough qualifying payments. (Degrees Not Debt staff) told me that this would happen, so I was not dismayed. Then I received a letter saying I had made enough qualifying payments."

Finally, after six months of waiting, Jordahl received a letter saying her loans had been forgiven.

"I was shocked even though (staff) had said I had a really good chance," said Jordahl. "I felt lighter, freer. It was like receiving your first paycheck, like I was being rewarded for 17 years of hard work in the classroom. It still feels unreal to me."

Jordahl said anyone on the fence about attempting loan forgiveness should give it a try and to reach out to the Degrees Not Debt team.

"The support and guidance I received through Education Minnesota was key in understanding the process and being patient," she said.

For more information on Degrees Not Debt, go to [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/degrees-not-debt](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/degrees-not-debt).



## PAC dues go to support pro-public education candidates, member engagement, local elections assistance

Thousands of Education Minnesota members contribute \$25, separately from regular dues, to the union's political action committee. If they choose, members are eligible to request that contribution back, but the PAC is one of the union's main tools to bring educator voice into local and state politics.

"Politicians decide what we teach, how many students we teach and how long you need to teach before you can retire. Everything about our job is political," said Ternesha Burroughs, Education Minnesota-Osseo president and current PAC chair.

"We are passionate about our profession," said Heather Matthews, a special education teacher in Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan and current PAC vice chair. "We became educators for this reason. Our students deserve what they need to be well-educated in our public school system. We are advocating for them. We are advocating for public education. Our strength is in our collective power to do so."

### What does the PAC Board do?

The PAC Board, made up of members from across the state, decides on the campaign plan for each election and how funds will be spent, including the supports for local elections and referendums.

The PAC Board also decides on the endorsement process for candidates. The process now requires candidates to meet with educators from their area for an interview and fill out a questionnaire. All candidates are encouraged to spend time in a school in their area each year. Those educators recommend a candidate for endorsement, who are then approved by the PAC Board.

"It is important for members to know that the PAC has a member from each of our union election districts. These board members are not paid. They are volunteering their time to make decisions that positively impact education in the state of Minnesota. You can contact any member of the PAC with questions, suggestions or clarifications. The board has made many decisions to make its work very transparent and inclusive of our members," said Matthews. "When there are decisions being made, like an endorsement of a public figure,

all voices around the table are heard and respected, even when we may disagree. It has been the guiding principle of the body to respect each other's voice and make the decisions that are most beneficial to the members we represent, to the educational profession, with transparency, foresight and boldness."

### How is the money spent?

The PAC spends a majority of its money supporting candidates who have been endorsed by Education Minnesota members, but almost half of the budget goes to member organizing and support during statewide and local elections.

Education Minnesota also seeks out support from the National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers. Due to Minnesota's important elections as of late, the national unions have also contributed roughly \$1 million to support our efforts.

Twenty-five percent of the PAC funding goes specifically to member organizing, including staff support in buildings to share information, our statewide worksite action leader and get-out-the-vote leader programs and paid time for members to talk to each other about what is important to them.

Fifteen percent of the PAC funding goes directly to local elections, a percentage that continues to grow as more and more locals get involved in school board races and levy and bond referendums. Sixty-five locals took part in Education Minnesota's local elections assistance program from November 2022 to February 2023.

"School board elections, levies, referendums are all political events that affect your personal, local and immediate," said Burroughs. "Giving to the PAC addresses your local concerns more than your state or national political concerns."

## Why Education Minnesota Jordan got involved in local elections

Education Minnesota Jordan has a history of getting involved in local levy referendum elections. They had a successful bond referendum in 2013, but in 2019, saw another building referendum fail.

"I think our members were surprised that not one of the three questions passed," said Ansley Peters, a member who worked as a leader on the campaign. "We have a growing community, and our elementary school was bursting at the seams."

In the spring of 2023, the district was trying again and the local was more motivated than ever to help get a referendum passed.

They worked with Education Minnesota staff and a Vote Yes Committee of union members, other school employees, parents, school board members, local business owners and community members.

"(Education Minnesota) helped to provide a roadmap to passing the referendum and supplied the tools to make phone calls, send mailings and just get our message out," said Peters.

And then the committee and educators got to work.

"We made phone calls. We utilized social media, and encouraged early voting in our district office. This was really key," said Peters. "We also were present with information and volunteer sign ups at spring conferences and school sporting events and activities."

After a lot of hard work, the vote passed this spring and schools in Jordan will be renovated and updated.

"A smaller community like ours may struggle on our own to get something like this passed as there is so much involved in running a campaign," said Peters. "We believe that all students, regardless of where they live, should have access to safe, secure and healthy facilities to learn in and that takes all of us to pitch in and help make that happen. We are grateful for the support of Education Minnesota and for the funds to help us pass this referendum."

## Is your local interested in getting involved in a school board or local levy election? We can help!

Education Minnesota's Political Action Committee makes funds available to locals for campaigns. To be eligible, at least 90 percent of a local's members must be contributing to the Education Minnesota PAC. Qualifying locals are eligible to receive between \$7 to \$8 per member with some matching local funds. All locals, regardless of size, are eligible for a minimum of \$850 per fiscal year.

Education Minnesota is now paying stipends to members to fill Campaign Coordinator and Phone Bank Coordinator positions for locals running campaigns.

Education Minnesota also helps with campaign planning, voter data, equipment for phone banks, design and printing literature and more.

Go to [www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/edmnvotes/local-elections](http://www.educationminnesota.org/advocacy/edmnvotes/local-elections) to learn more.

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\*Membership Share with a \$5 minimum opening deposit required & Checking Account requires additional \$5 minimum opening deposit. Receive \$200 Bonus upon opening a new Rewards Checking Account (either Cash Back Checking or High Yield Checking) through 9/4/23. Offer not valid for those who have or had a checking account with Expedition Credit Union in the last twelve (12) months. To qualify for \$200 offer, new checking account must receive two (2) automatic deposits from payroll, pension payment, social security, or other government payments from an outside employer/outside agency (branch deposits, Shared Branch deposits, bank-to-bank transfers, mobile deposits, ATM deposits, or person-to-person transactions do not qualify) totaling at least \$600 within 120 days from account opening. Account must remain open for six (6) months. \$200 Bonus will be deposited into the Rewards Checking Account within 30 days after meeting the requirements. Expedition reserves the right to terminate bonus payout if the qualifications are not met, the account is not in good standing, or if the account does not remain open for at least six (6) months. Limit one account per Member included in promotion. The incentive is subject to federal & state tax requirements. This offer is subject to end at any time. Qualifications & limitations apply. Insured by NCUA.

## Supreme Court strikes down affirmative action, but need to address racial inequity in education persists

*By Cedrick Frazier, staff attorney, and David Aron, general counsel*

For at least 50 years, higher education institutions throughout the United States have used various forms of affirmative action in their admissions policies. At their core, these policies allow college admissions officers to give an applicant additional points if their race or ethnicity has been historically underrepresented in the school's student body compared to their numbers in society at large.

In its June decision in *Students for Fair Admissions*, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down affirmative action programs at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina, holding that consideration of race as a factor in college admissions violates the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. The court held that the affirmative action policies at issue were unconstitutional because they “lack sufficiently focused and measurable objectives warranting the use of race, unavoidably employ race in a negative manner, involve racial stereotyping, and lack meaningful end points.” However, admissions programs may still consider individual statements from applicants about how race affected their life, “be it through discrimination, inspiration, or otherwise.”

Comparing the court's majority opinion with the dissents reveals a striking divide among the justices, not only in how they interpret the Fourteenth Amendment, but also in their willingness to acknowledge the role that race plays in shaping identity and opportunity in the United States. Unfortunately, Chief Justice John Roberts and the five other conservative justices who joined his majority opinion give short shrift to the historical legacy of racial oppression in this country as well as modern-day disparities in educational opportunity, which educators observe every day in our public schools.

Chief Justice Roberts' majority opinion concludes, “Many universities...have concluded, wrongly, that the touchstone of an individual's identity is not challenges bested, skills built, or lessons learned but the color of their skin. Our constitutional history does not tolerate that choice.” This statement is both factually incorrect

**This Legal Briefs column, written by Education Minnesota attorneys, is one of an occasional series on legal developments that affect educators.**

and breathtakingly naïve. Affirmative action programs, including those of Harvard and UNC, have never treated race as the deciding factor in a student's admission, and none of the evidence in this case supports such a claim. Moreover, this quote ignores the grim reality that race continues to play a profound role in shaping educational opportunity in the United States.

In their dissenting opinions, Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Ketanji Brown Jackson—the first Latina and African American female justices appointed to the Supreme Court—highlight the many fallacies underlying the majority opinion. Justice Jackson writes, “Our country has never been colorblind. Given the lengthy history of state-sponsored race-based preferences in America, to say that anyone is now victimized if a college considers whether that legacy of discrimination has unequally advantaged its applicants fails to acknowledge the well-documented ‘intergenerational transmission of inequality’ that still plagues our citizenry.”

Justice Sotomayor cites a number of sobering statistics to demonstrate the impact of racial inequality on educational opportunity that continues in the present day. She notes, “underrepresented minority students are more likely to live in poverty and attend schools with a high concentration of poverty. When combined with residential segregation and school funding systems that rely heavily on local property taxes, this leads to racial minority students attending schools with fewer resources.”

While the majority refuses to acknowledge the depths of systemic racism within our institutions, Justices Jackson and Sotomayor are keenly aware of them, in part because they have witnessed them in their own lives. Justice Jackson writes, “Gulf-sized race-based gaps exist with respect to the health, wealth, and



## Annual MEA conference back to fully in person this fall

Every October, educators from across the state get ready for the biggest professional development in Minnesota—Education Minnesota's MEA conference in downtown St. Paul.

This year, your union will return to the traditional, in-person conference at the St. Paul RiverCentre on Thursday, Oct. 19. While no virtual conference will be offered on that day, online courses are also available year-round on Education Minnesota's MEA Online for members to complete at their own pace.

The MEA conference and MEA Online are always free and open to Education Minnesota members only.

Registration for both the conference will go live around the start of the school year. Advanced registration is required.

Attendees can earn general continuing education credit for attending the MEA conference. In addition, some sessions might help you fulfill state relicensure requirements in reading instruction, identifying early-onset mental illness in students, positive behavioral interventions, English language learners and suicide prevention. Check with your district's continuing education committee on whether you will receive credit. Other sessions being planned for this year include topics such as supporting students with disabilities,

equity and social justice, and both educator and student wellness.

Free onsite child care will also be available during the MEA conference for in-person attendees. You must register for child care in advance, as well.

A big question we often get asked is...why is the conference held in October? Why not in the summer when school isn't in session?

It is held during the school year for several reasons. Most important, the focus of the conference is on techniques and ideas that teachers can take back to the classroom and use right away with their students. This schedule provides the greatest benefit to student learning. In addition, in the summer many teachers wouldn't be able to attend because they are taking continuing education courses to stay current in their field and fulfill licensing requirements; teaching summer school; or working summer jobs to supplement their salaries. Education Minnesota has always wanted to make this opportunity available to as many educators as possible.

It's a local school district decision whether to make the conference days non-school days. Most do, but some do not. Others require teachers to attend local training on our conference day.

well-being of American citizens. They were created in the distant past, but have indisputably been passed down to the present day through the generations. Every moment these gaps persist is a moment in which this great country falls short of actualizing one of its foundational principles—the 'self-evident' truth that all of us are created equal."

Justice Sotomayor aptly reminds us that "racial inequality will persist so long as it is ignored." Although she was not in the majority, we can and should still heed her words by refusing to ignore racial inequality when we see it in our schools. When we see policies or practices that have disparate racial impacts, we should call them out and work to change them. When we see students with tremendous potential, but who lack the resources, networks or self-confidence to see a post-secondary

degree or certification in their future, we should go out of our way to eliminate those barriers.

Although this is a majority decision from our Supreme Court, it is drafted from a perspective closely aligned with the drafters of the original constitution. Thus, it is sadly and tragically misaligned with the intent of the Fourteenth Amendment, which sought to protect and ensure that the newly freed people and their descendants would be included equally and equitably in the prosperity of the nation made possible by their unpaid labor. Therefore, it is imperative that this decision not be the final word on how educational institutions address racism in our society. It certainly should not stop educators or their unions from working to make our schools places where students from all racial and cultural backgrounds are seen, valued and have a fair opportunity to thrive.

## Political Action Committee Refund Request

Thousands of members of Education Minnesota decide to contribute to the union's political action committee. The PAC is one of our main tools to bring the educator voice to the policy debate by electing people who will listen. Those PAC dollars go back to local unions to help them win school board and levy elections, as well as support pro-public education candidates at the state and national level.

In accordance with Education Minnesota Bylaw Article 2, Section 3, Subd. b, I hereby request the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Please refund to me \$25 of my Education Minnesota's dues that will be contributed to the general account of Education Minnesota Political Action Committee for the 2023-24 academic year.

Non-U.S. citizens should request this refund.

**ALL OF THE FOLLOWING FIELDS ARE  
REQUIRED. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last 4 digits of SS#: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Local/Affiliate: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A request for refund of the Education Minnesota Political Action Committee contribution will not affect membership rights or benefits. Retired members are not assessed, thus do not qualify for the refund.

### DEADLINE FOR REFUNDS:

Refund requests MUST be received by the Education Minnesota Political Action fund:

- 1) By Oct. 31 for continuing members; or
- 2) Within 30 days of signing a membership application for new members.

**Checks will not be mailed until  
the end of November, after all  
forms have been processed.**

**ORIGINAL SIGNATURE NEEDED.**

Return this form to:  
Education Minnesota Accounting Department  
Attn: Refund Request  
41 Sherburne Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55103-2196

## Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Refund Request

Contributions to this foundation will provide financial support for innovative programs initiated by Education Minnesota members, locals and affiliates that promote educational access for learners and excellence in teaching. Grants also support professional development for education support professionals and higher education faculty.

In accordance with Education Minnesota Bylaw Article 2, Section 3, Subd. c, I hereby request the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Please refund to me my \$5 foundation assessment that would be contributed to the Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for the 2023-24 academic year.

**ALL OF THE FOLLOWING FIELDS ARE  
REQUIRED. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last 4 digits of SS#: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Local/Affiliate: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A request for refund of the Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning assessment will not affect Education Minnesota membership rights or benefits but will make you ineligible to receive a grant from this foundation. Retired members are not assessed, thus do not qualify for the refund.

### DEADLINE FOR REFUNDS:

Refund requests must be received by the Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning:

- 1) By Oct. 31 for continuing members; or
- 2) Within 30 days of signing a membership application for new members.

**Checks will not be mailed until  
the end of November, after all  
forms have been processed.**

**ORIGINAL SIGNATURE NEEDED.**

Return this form to:  
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Toll-free: 877-403-2374

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[info@mneducatorshomes.com](mailto:info@mneducatorshomes.com)

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763-689-9023

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





THE VOICE FOR PROFESSIONAL  
EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

Education Minnesota  
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## ***Come visit our booth at the State Fair!***

Every year, Education Minnesota member volunteers and staff produce personalized more than 10,000 photo calendars for visitors at our booth in the Education Building on Cosgrove Street near the Snelling Avenue entrance.

This booth is an opportunity for Education Minnesota members who volunteer each day to visit with fairgoers about the importance of public education and our union. Staff are also on hand to answer questions and engage with members and the public, getting the word out about our union and our members. The booth also features a place for fairgoers to leave a message for a favorite educator in their lives.

Booth volunteers and staff love when members come say hi, get their calendar for the classrooms and worksites, and tell us they are a member!

***Please come visit us at the Great Minnesota Get Together between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. each day Aug. 24-Sept. 4!***